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



## **EU – MOLDOVA: COOPERATION NEWS**

JANUARY - MARCH 2025



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## MOBILITY AND PEOPLE

### Dialogue on the European Future of the Republic of Moldova

Over 300 representatives from civil society, the business sector, youth organizations, ambassadors, and national partners participated in a dialogue on Moldova's

European future with President Maia Sandu and the President of the European Council, António Costa, on March 3.



The visit marks three years since Moldova submitted its application for EU membership and reaffirms the EU's support for the country's European path.

**Maia Sandu, President of the Republic of Moldova:**

*"The European Union means prosperity. It means security. It means a better future. But above all, it means peace. We live in uncertain times, with a war at our border. Only within the European Union will we be protected. Only in the EU will we be safe. EU membership is the guarantee of a future built on peace, freedom, and development."*

**António Costa, President of the European Council:**

*"Moldova is living a defining moment on its path to the European Union – one that will*

*profoundly shape its future for generations to come. Moldovans have chosen a European future and have shown their commitment to democracy, freedom and a better life for their children. Some seek to undermine Moldova's path to progress, prosperity and stability through energy blackmail, fake news and hybrid attacks. But the people of Moldova have stood up and strengthened the country's European path in the referendum just a few months ago. The European Union has demonstrated that we stand with the Moldovan people through challenges and crises. You can count on us as a predictable and reliable partner".*

The event can be watched here: <https://youtube.com/live/qdNHeUJhcsQ>



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# Presentation of the Preliminary Results of the 2024 Population and Housing Census

Around 2.4 million people - this is the population of the Republic of Moldova, according to the preliminary results of 2024 Census. The data were presented to the public on 30 January.

During the event, were disseminated the preliminary results of the 2024 Population and Housing Census, covering data on population size and structure by sex, major

age groups, place of residence, and country of birth, as well as the distribution of the population by development regions and ethno-cultural characteristics (ethnicity, religion, mother tongue, usual spoken language, and difficulties in daily activities). Additionally, were provided methodological explanations regarding the determination of usual residence and other aspects related to PHC 2024.



## Key Findings of the 2024 Census

**Total population with usual residence:**  
2 401,2 thousand people

### By regions:

North – 604.7 thousand people (25.2%),  
Center – 667.5 thousand people (27.8%),  
Chişinău Municipality – 719.7 thousand people (30.0%),  
South – 306.1 thousand people (12.7%),  
U.T.A. Gagauzia – 103.2 thousand people (4.3%)

### Citizenship:

Republic of Moldova – 83.4%,  
Republic of Moldova and other countries – 15.6%,  
Other countries – 0.9%.

### Country of birth:

Born in the Republic of Moldova – 95.9%,  
Born in other countries – 4.1%

*More information about the 2024 Census results (press release, Excel tables, infographics and other useful data) can be found at <https://statistica.gov.md/ro> under "2024 Census / [Preliminary Results](#)" or by scanning the QR code.*

The final summarized results of the PHC are expected to be published within 12 months after the census, while the detailed final results, including breakdowns by age group, sex, locality, etc., will be available and published within 18 months after the census completion.

The successful implementation of this important and complex exercise was made possible thanks to the support of central and local public authorities, the assistance provided by the European Union, UNFPA Moldova, other UN agencies, as well as other national and development partners.

The Population and Housing Census takes place every 10 years and is a nationwide activity that provides a complete demographic picture of the country. This is the third census for the Republic of Moldova since the declaration of independence and for the first time the data collection took place in digital format.



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# Launch of EU Accelerator 2.0: A New Boost for Youth Engagement in the European Integration Process of the Republic of Moldova

Over 80 young people from eight regions of the Republic of Moldova gathered in Chişinău on March 21-22 for the launch of the initiative "EU Accelerator 2.0: Empowering Young People from Moldova for European Integration." The event, organized with the financial support of the European Union (EU), marked the beginning of a program dedicated to empowering young people to become active promoters of European values and the European path of the Republic of Moldova.

During the two days, the participants – members of Euro Clubs and the network of EU Information Centers – took part in interactive sessions, practical workshops, and team-building exercises. Among the topics discussed were the core values of the European Union, combating disinformation, developing critical thinking, and advocacy skills. Additionally, the young people participated in team-building sessions and debates on the European path of the Republic of Moldova.



The activity concluded with a session for planning the next steps, where the youth established action strategies for 2025. They are set to implement educational initiatives,

information campaigns, and local activities aimed at strengthening support for European integration.

EU Accelerator 2.0 is a dynamic initiative aimed at supporting young people in the Republic of Moldova with the knowledge, skills, and motivation necessary to actively contribute to the country's European integration process. Through a well-structured program that combines training, engagement, and research, the initiative seeks to strengthen a community of young people who can support constructive discussions about the European Union (EU) at the local level.

By empowering young people with a solid understanding of EU values, institutions, and policies, EU Accelerator 2.0 aims to counter fake narratives and disinformation, promote critical thinking among young people, and encourage dialogue regarding Moldova's path in the European integration process. The initiative aims to create a lasting impact, transforming young people into leaders of change and strengthening support for the European future of the Republic of Moldova.





# EU Ambassador Jānis Mažeiks in Dialogue with People of Căușeni About Moldova's European Future

Over 100 local community leaders from Căușeni participated in the EU Talks event, where the European Union Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, Jānis Mažeiks, discussed the impact of European support on local communities and the European integration process.

During the meeting, the EU's Economic Growth Plan for Moldova was presented, the largest financial support package offered by the European Union since the country gained independence.



The discussions highlighted the long-term impact of this support on Moldova's economy and society.

The event took place in an interactive format, where local government representatives, entrepreneurs, agricultural producers, and civil society members asked questions and received answers directly from the EU Delegation team. The dialogue provided a clear perspective on European opportunities in infrastructure, education, and the economy.

A central topic of the meeting was local development in the context of Moldova's EU accession negotiations. Among the topics discussed were the preparation of local authorities for the implementation of European projects, regulations on the export of Moldovan products to the EU market, the role of civil society in the European integration process, and the ways in which the European Union supports the development of Căușeni and the country as a whole.

“EU Talks” events are organized by the European Union Information Center in Moldova – Europe Café, with the support of the European Union, providing a platform for open dialogue between European officials and communities in the Republic of Moldova. These discussions reflect the benefits of European integration, cooperation on joint projects in various fields, as well as

the culture, traditions, and history of the EU and its member states. The initiative demonstrates the EU’s commitment to supporting Moldova’s development on its European path, emphasizing the value of the strategic partnership between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, as well as its member states.



# Moldovan journalists strengthen grant writing skills with the European Union support

The European Union (EU) continues to support independent media in the Republic of Moldova by equipping journalists with the necessary tools to access funding and sustain their work. In this context, on March 14-15, a workshop on grant proposal writing for media funding was held at the EU Information Center in Chișinău – Europe Café.

The event brought together over 20 journalists from major independent local and national media outlets. Under the guidance of international media expert Ioana Avădani, participants explored the complex process of identifying funding opportunities and drafting competitive grant applications.



Over the two-day training, journalists gained insights into EU funding opportunities for the media sector. They learned how to craft high-quality project proposals, identify relevant funding sources, understand donor requirements, and structure applications effectively. Additionally, they worked on developing project proposals tailored to the needs of the media sector and aligned with funding call criteria.

This initiative comes at a crucial time when the European Union is strengthening its support for Moldova, including independent media. By enhancing their skills and learning how to secure funding, independent media representatives can sustain their work professionally and contribute to a diverse and resilient media landscape.



# A safe courtyard at Cîrnăţeni School with the financial support of the European Union

**Cîrnăţeni high school yard to be modernised with the support of the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.**

Pupils and teachers from the "Grigore Grigoriu" Theoretical High School in the

village of Cîrnăţeni, Căusenii district will now have a safer journey on their way to school. The area in front of the high school will be upgraded with the support of the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP.



The school, attended by more than 350 students, has not seen any repairs to its schoolyard since the high school was built in 1989. The courtyard in front of the educational institution will be modernized by laying paving stones, landscaping driveways, installing curbs and recreation areas. A ramp will be installed at the main entrance to the school building, thus improving equitable access and inclusivity of the educational institution.

*"We run different activities in the courtyard of the high school and its renovation became necessary due to the deteriorated asphalt, which posed a risk of injury to the children. Our school is attended by children from the locality, but also from other parts of the country, we even have teachers from Tiraspol, Tighina (Bender) specialized in arts such as music theory, music, etc.,"*

***says Natalia Paniş, the principal of the "Grigore Grigoriu" Theoretical High School with arts profile from the village of Cîrnăţeni, Căusenii district.***

The village of Cîrnăţeni, along with 11 other communities, has been receiving support for sustainable local development since spring 2024. Since then, the formed initiative group has been assisted in identifying, formulating and planning local initiatives. This is how they were able to participate in the competition for the selection of infrastructure projects funded by the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.

In addition to the EU financial support, the contribution of the community of Cîrnăţeni and of diaspora will top-up the budget for the infrastructure works, namely the installation of a new fence at the entrance to the schoolyard.

Previously, in 2016, the "Grigore Grigoriu" Theoretical High School in Cîrnăţeni benefited from another infrastructure project, which included the renovation of the facade and roof of Block A. Also, these works were carried out with the support of the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.



## Over 1000 people learn more about cash settlements within a seminar organized by EU HLA Mission and the Ministry of Finance

Over 1000 taxpayers participated in a new information session on cash settlement organised by the European Union High Level Advisers' Mission and the Ministry of Finance jointly with the State Tax Service, and media support from the "Monitorul Fiscal FISC.md" periodical publication on 29 January. The event was designed to provide more information on the interpretation, application mechanisms and procedures, and provide a clear understanding of the new regulations on cash settlements.

The opening session, moderated by the Director of "Monitorul Fiscal FISC.md" publication, Rodica Musteata-Staci, was attended by the Minister of Finance, Victoria Belous, the EU High Level Adviser on Customs and Tax Policy, Rosario De Blasio, Director of the State Tax Service Olga Golban and Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance Cristina Ixari. Keynote speakers emphasized the importance of informing taxpayers transparently and accurately regarding legislative changes, reiterating the call to continue the proactive communication between state institutions and the business environment.





Representatives of the Ministry of Finance and the State Tax Service discussed topics related to cash settlements, as well as the international restrictive measures accompanying the entry into force of the related regulations. Joining the speakers were the EU High-Level Adviser on Anti-Money Laundering and Assets Recovery and Management, Žydrūnas Bartkus and the EU High-Level Adviser on Financial Services, Nicolae Grigore who presented EU practices in this field and the benefits of implementing the concept.

The provisions of the Law on cash settlements will apply from April 1, 2025. Mainly, the law provides for limiting the value of cash transactions between two natural persons to 100 average national salaries (approximately 1.6 million lei or 80 thousand euros in 2025) for real estate transactions and to 50 average national salaries for vehicle transactions. Any payment operation exceeding these amounts will have to be processed via electronic means.



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# Description of Moldova's Education System Available on the European Eurydice Platform

Starting from March 2025, a detailed description and an overview of the national education system of the Republic of Moldova are available on the online platform of the Eurydice network – [Eurypedia](#). This initiative marks an important step in Moldova's integration into the European educational space and facilitates access to updated information on the structure and functioning of the national education system.

Since 2024, Moldova, alongside Ukraine and Georgia, has joined this network, contributing to a better mutual understanding of education systems across Europe.

[The Eurydice network](#) was established in 1980 by the European Commission and the Member States to support European cooperation in the field of education. All EU member states are part of Eurydice, along with some non-EU countries. The network helps improve education systems in Europe through providing high quality information on a wide range of aspects of education policy and practice. Eurydice provides descriptions of national education systems, comparative studies devoted to specific topics, indicators and statistics. Eurydice reports show how countries tackle challenges at all education levels: early childhood education and care,

primary and secondary education, higher education and adult learning.

The description of Moldova's education system on the [Eurypedia platform](#) includes detailed information on the structure of the education system, fundamental principles, national policies, and the organisation and governance of education at central and regional levels. Users can access data on educational levels and cycles according to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-2011), the principles underlying education in the country, and the legislative framework regulating the functioning and development of the education system.

The Eurydice network is part of the Erasmus+ programme starting from 2024. The [National Erasmus+ Office in Moldova](#) manages the Eurydice National Unit, with the responsibility of developing, updating, and disseminating information about Moldova's education system. Through this platform, Moldova reaffirms its commitment to promoting transparency and cooperation in education at the European level, facilitating access to essential information for researchers, policymakers, and the general public interested in European education systems.



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# Cahul becomes a safer city with an intelligent video monitoring system

An intelligent video monitoring system has been developed in Cahul, thanks to an investment of about 79,000 euro, made through the "EU4Moldova: Focal Regions" programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF.

The intelligent video monitoring system includes 58 high-resolution IP cameras strategically located in intersections, streets, recreational areas, public institutions and waste collection platforms, an extensive fiber optic network of about 6 kilometres and high-performance software.

By installing video cameras in the city, the authorities will be able to prevent illegal dumping of waste, protect urban infrastructure from damage and optimize the logistical processes of public services, ensuring more efficient management of resources. This project is an important step in strengthening partnerships between local public authorities, regional waste management operators and law enforcement, with the aim of creating a safer and more efficient community.



*"The inauguration of the video monitoring system in the municipality of Cahul marks an important step towards a safer and more secure city. This modern system will allow us to prevent and fight crime more effectively, intervene quickly in emergency situations*

*and ensure a climate of order and safety for all citizens. We thank the partners who have contributed to the implementation of this essential project for our community",*

**said Stefan Nucă, Chief of the Cahul Police Inspectorate.**



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The Video Monitoring Center, created within the Cahul Police Inspectorate, has been equipped with the latest technology, with the support of the EU and UNDP. The equipment includes a high-resolution video wall and high-performance servers, which ensure secure closed-circuit data storage for over 60 days. The centre also benefits from two modern workstations equipped with IT technology, which allow operators to respond quickly and efficiently to alerts, thus optimizing monitoring and response capacity.

The intelligent video monitoring system is equipped with advanced analytical software capable of categorizing vehicles, monitoring crowds and analysing events or incidents in real time. It is compatible with the Smart City platform, managed by the Cahul City Hall and allows interconnection with third parties through an external access module, thus facilitating collaboration between various institutions.

The smart video monitoring system inaugurated in Cahul is modular, which will enable its further development by adding up to a thousand video cameras. A similar intelligent video monitoring system was inaugurated in November 2024 in Ungheni municipality.

The “EU4Moldova: Focal regions” Programme(2019-2025)supportsintelligent, inclusive and sustainable social-economic development in the regions of Cahul and Ungheni to ensure better standards of living to the citizens. The programme has a total budget of 23 million euro, is funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).



## Tereza Sobolevschi Kindergarten in Ungheni has been renovated with the support of the European Union

The Tereza Sobolevschi Kindergarten in Ungheni, one of the largest and oldest preschool facilities in the municipality, has been renovated for the first time since its establishment in 1980, with the support of the European Union through the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme. The renovation, valued at 3.3 million MDL—of which 2.8 million was funded by the EU—primarily focused on rehabilitating the damaged roof, ensuring a safe and comfortable environment for the

approximately 350 children attending the kindergarten. This investment helps improve citizens' living conditions and promotes the sustainable socio-economic development of the region.

Details: <https://www.unicef.org/mol-dova/comunicate-de-pres%C4%83/gr%C4%83dini%C8%9Ba-tereza-sobolevschi-din-ungheni-fost-renovat%C4%83-cu-sprijinul-uniunii>



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## The Delia Kindergarten in Ungheni has been reopened after a decade of inactivity, equipped with furniture and materials worth 310,000 MDL

The Delia Kindergarten in Ungheni has been reopened after a decade of inactivity, thanks to the support of the European Union and UNI CEF, which provided furniture, teaching materials, and educational toys worth 310,000 MDL (approximately 16,763 EUR). This investment provides access to early childhood education for 130 children aged 2 to 7, offering them a suitable educational environment and supporting local families.

Details: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/comunicate-de-pres%C4%83/uniunea-european%C4%83-%C8%99i-unicef-au-sprijinit-redeschiderea-unei-gr%C4%83dini%C8%9Be-%C3%AEEn>

Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yd7gdaqNn44&list=PLujLd9hMbSSzXTyF\\_9y5e36jv\\_C8wYcRp&index=7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yd7gdaqNn44&list=PLujLd9hMbSSzXTyF_9y5e36jv_C8wYcRp&index=7)





# Strengthening Strategic Communication Capacity and Resilience to Disinformation

The project 'Strengthening Government Capacity on Strategic Communication and Information Resilience in the Republic of Moldova' funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Practitioners' Partnership Network (PractNet) enhances the capacity and capabilities of key institutions and professionals in Moldova to foster societal cohesion and increase the resilience of society against information manipulations and interference. As part of this effort and in the framework of this project, PractNet has facilitated the provision of international and local expert assistance to key institutions to enhance strategy development on strategic communication and its implementation as well as organised capacity-building activities including workshops, seminars, and working visits.

## **The expert assistance to key institutions to enhance strategy development on strategic communication in the first quarter of 2025:**

Strengthening state-level systemic legal and administrative cooperation to tackle foreign information manipulation and interference: Practical seminar in January brought together representatives of the

Centre for Strategic Communication and Countering Disinformation, law enforcement, judges, and prosecutors.

Panel discussion led by foreign policy and strategic communication experts from Moldova: a think-tankers oriented discussion to raise awareness and provide insights for an international audience including think-tanks, researchers, and diplomatic community, about the current challenges and strategy concerning the information space of Moldova in February. Organised in Estonia by PractNet in cooperation with the International Centre for Defence and Security (ICDS) and the European Commission Representation in Estonia.

Workshop to enhance external communication and to strengthen internal cooperation, in March: strengthening internal communication for the representatives of the Office of the President addressing state and strategic communication and building societal cohesion and resilience against information manipulations.

PractNet also provides support to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture on capacity building on strategic communication.

# Over 100 Young People Took Part in the Second Edition of Model European Union Moldova

More than 100 young people from the Republic of Moldova participated in the second edition of Model European Union Moldova (MEU), an interactive simulation of the EU's decision-making process. Held from March 28–30, 2025, at the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, the event gave participants the opportunity to step into

the roles of Members of the European Parliament, European Commissioners, political advisors, and journalists. They debated real legislative proposals, negotiated amendments, and worked together to find solutions to citizens' challenges.



Throughout the three-day event, participants formed political groups, mirroring the composition of the European Parliament. This allowed them to familiarize themselves with different political ideologies and positions on key issues.

By taking part in this hands-on experience, they learned how political alliances are built, how European legislation is negotiated, how amendments are formulated, and how decisions are made at the EU level.

## Voices from the Event

### ***Doina Gherman, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova:***

*"Today, I see the future in front of me. You are the future parliamentarians, ministers, and state secretaries. I have full confidence that the Republic of Moldova is in good hands because you are the European Union generation. You, young people, are our hope, the ones we count on to carry forward the European agenda of our country."*

### ***Jānis Mažeiks, EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova:***

*"Moldova has set the goal of becoming an EU member by 2030. In just five years, many of you will be leading this country and directly contributing to this historic transformation. And that change starts today, right here. Model EU gives you the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the complex decision-making processes at the European level. You will see how EU institutions work and how they shape the daily lives of people."*

### ***Margret Maria Uebber, German Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova:***

*"The growing involvement of young people in European processes is becoming essential. We firmly believe that simulations like this offer valuable opportunities for young people to deepen their understanding of the European Union and become active supporters of Moldova's European integration."*

### **The Debate Topics**

This year's MEU edition focused on two major topics:

- ▶ Moldova's EU accession process and the European Parliament's non-legislative procedure for approving the accession treaty
- ▶ The debate on the European Digital Services Act (DSA) and its provisions related to combating online disinformation.

The parliamentary sessions were covered by a team of young participants acting as journalists from major EU and Moldovan media outlets.



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To ensure a high-quality debate, participants took part in dedicated workshops covering the two main topics, the functioning of EU institutions, debating techniques, and public speaking skills. The exercise aimed to develop critical thinking, effective communication, cooperation, and leadership among participants.

**Ovidiu-Artur Harunjen, Model EU Moldova participant:**

*"Taking part in these legislative simulations and my passion for politics motivated me to join this year's MEU team."*

*"This event is a great opportunity to learn more about the European legislative process, build new friendships, and create lasting memories with other young people."*

**About Model European Union Moldova**

Model European Union Moldova (MEU) is an interactive simulation of the EU's decision-making process. The first edition took place in April 2024, bringing together over 80 young participants. This year, more than 100 young people from 20 districts across Moldova engaged in realistic decision-making simulations, learning about political alliance-building, European legislative negotiations, and decision-making at the EU level.



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Model European Union Moldova is organized with the support of the EU and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, as part of the “EU4Youth: Youth Engagement and Empowerment” project. The initiative is implemented by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) in collaboration with the

Young European Ambassadors, the National Youth Council of Moldova (CNTM), and the EU Information Center in Chişinău – Europe Café.

For more details on the first edition of Model EU Moldova, visit <https://eu4moldova.eu/ro/model-european-union-moldova/>



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# Consumer protection at the forefront

The first international scientific conference, “Consumer protection: Integrated approaches in the legal system”, took place on 13–14 March 2025, organised with the financial support of the European Union and the Soros Foundation Moldova, in the context of World Consumer Rights Day, marked annually on 15 March.

The event was initiated by the NGO “European Consumer Centre of the Republic of Moldova”, in partnership with the “Ștefan cel Mare” Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, and “1 December 1918” University of Alba Iulia, Romania.



The conference was held in a hybrid format, bringing together experts, representatives of public institutions, academia, consumer protection organisations, and international donors. The opening session featured remarks by Cristina Ceban, State Secretary at the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation; Julda Kielyte, Team Leader for Competitiveness and Economic Growth at the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova; and Stephanie Darmanin, Policy Officer for Consumer Law Enforcement – Cross-Border Cooperation, Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, European Commission.

## Forum participants addressed key aspects of consumer rights protection, including:

- ◆ The harmonisation of national legislation with European consumer protection standards;
- ◆ The role of public institutions and non-governmental organisations in strengthening consumer rights;
- ◆ The challenges faced by consumers in the digital age and solutions for effective protection;
- ◆ The economic and social dimensions of consumer protection, among other topics.



Experts highlighted the importance of a robust legal framework and active cooperation between authorities, academia, and civil society to ensure consumer rights are respected and upheld.

The scientific conference served as an important platform for the exchange of experience and expertise among legal professionals, economists, public authorities, and civil society representatives. The conclusions of the forum will be reflected in future legislative and advocacy initiatives aimed at improving consumer protection

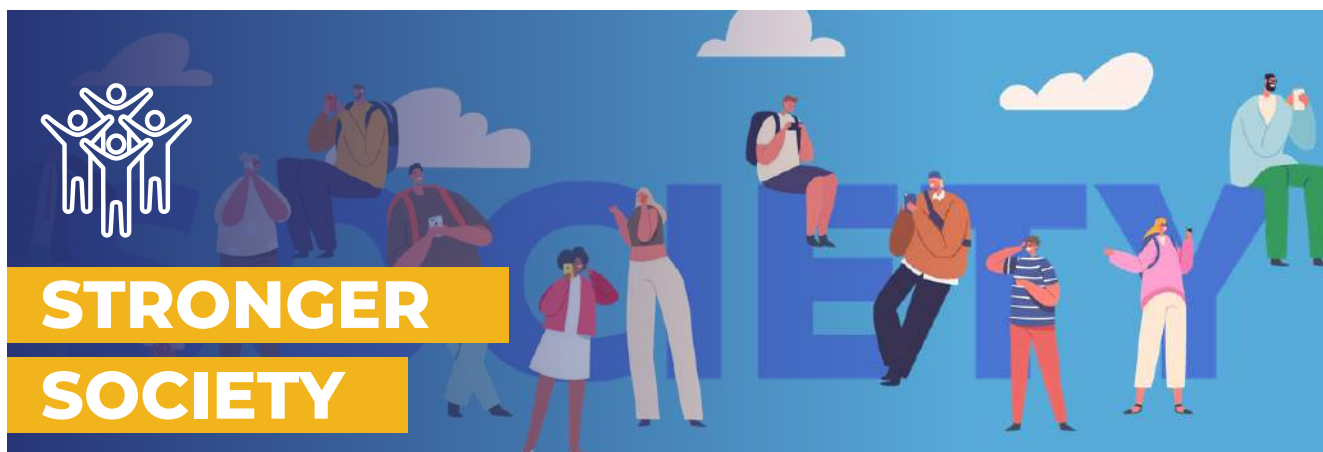
in the Republic of Moldova and will also be included in a forthcoming scientific publication.

The conference was organised as part of the project “Consolidating the consumer protection framework in Moldova”, implemented by the Independent Analytical Centre Expert-Grup as consortium lead, in partnership with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms, and funded by the European Union and the Soros Foundation Moldova.



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## Telemedicine bridges the gap between regions and the capital

When Maria and Sergiu Lisa from Ungheni learned that their three-year-old son, Iachint, was showing signs of autism, they were devastated. Facing social stigma and misconceptions, they sought specialised help. At the “Voinicel” Early Intervention Centre, they discovered the benefits of telemedicine. With the support from the European Union, “Voinicel” Early Intervention Centre now provides healthcare services remotely.

Through online consultations, they accessed specialised services quickly, avoiding costly travel and saving time. By participating in online training sessions, they learned how to engage actively in Iachint’s play, observing significant progress in his development. Telemedicine has helped them overcome geographical barriers and provide Iachint with the necessary support for harmonious development.

Read more: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/articole/telemedicina-reduce-decalajele-dintre-regiuni-%C8%99i-capital%C4%83>



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## Ten Child Development Offices were set up in Ungheni and Cahul

With the support of the European Union, ten Child Development Offices have been established and equipped within health centres in the Cahul and Ungheni districts. These dedicated spaces allow medical consultations to take place in a child-friendly environment, equipped with facilities such as new-born examination tables, electronic scales, paediatric measuring devices, nursing pillows, ergonomic furniture, and washable toys.

The procurements, totalling MDL 350,000, were made under “Strengthening the capacity of primary healthcare care workers to provide quality maternal, child and adolescent health services in Cahul and Ungheni regions” project. Thanks to these improvements, children now have access to higher-quality healthcare, while parents receive expert guidance in a comfortable and secure setting.



Details: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/articole/10-cabinete-de-dezvoltare-copii-or-au-fost-amenajate-%C3%AEn-localit%C4%83%C8%9Bile-din-ungheni-%C8%99i-cahul>

## The Child Development Booklet: an essential support for around 16,000 parents in Ungheni and Cahul

More than 16,000 families in the Ungheni and Cahul districts have received the Child Development Booklet, a guide developed by UNICEF Moldova as part of the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme, funded by the European Union. This booklet provides parents with essential information on the growth and development of children from birth to 18 years, covering topics such as immunization, nutrition, and medical

check-ups. Parents can record details about hereditary or chronic conditions and track their child's daily progress, ensuring informed and attentive care. Family doctor Natalia Bargan emphasises that the guide is easy to use and helps parents monitor their child's development daily.

Details: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/articole/unicef-moldova-%C3%AEn-sprijinul-p%C4%83rin%C5%A3ilor>





## Approximately 3,000 teachers and educators from Cahul and Ungheni have adopted child-centred teaching techniques: 18,500 children benefit from equitable education

Nearly 3,000 teachers and educators from the Cahul and Ungheni regions have been trained in formative assessment and student-centred teaching techniques, thanks to the collaboration between UNICEF and the Step by Step Educational Programme, with support from the European Union. This approach, inspired by the Finnish and Estonian educational systems, replaces traditional tests with practical activities, enabling children to develop their creativity

and interact effectively with their peers. As a result, more than 18,500 children in these regions now benefit from an inclusive and equitable education, tailored to their individual needs.

Details: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/articole/elimin%C3%A2nd-barierele-construind-viitorul-18500-de-copii-beneficiaz%C4%83-de-educa%C8%9Bie-echitabil%C4%83>



## More than 300 nurses from the Cahul and Ungheni districts have been provided with anthropometric kits for home visits

More than 300 nurses from the Cahul and Ungheni districts have been provided with anthropometric kits, including portable scales and stadiometers, to enhance the monitoring of children's growth and development during home visits. This initiative, part of the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP and

UNICEF, aims to ensure high-quality medical services and identify potential health issues in children at an early stage. A total of 305 kits were donated, with a total purchase value of 398,000 lei.

Details: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/comunicate-de-pres%C4%83/echipamente-de-antropometrie-pentru-asisten%C8%9Bii-%C8%99i-asistentele-medicale-din>



# Building a safer and more inclusive environment for LGBTI persons

The Council of Europe joined forces with the National Agency for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (ANPCV) in the Republic of Moldova, to provide a common platform for discussion between state authorities and civil society organisations on LGBTI rights.

The event was organised as a follow-up to the [regional conference](#) held in Sarajevo in November 2024, and initiated discussion with key actors on the existing policies and strategies to prevent and combat

domestic violence faced by LGBTI persons, the provision of social and psychological support services, including safe spaces and shelters for victims at national level.

As the intolerance against LGBTI community manifests in complex and varied ways, the dialogue with key actors contributes to development of measures and practices to counter discrimination and hatred. Diversity in sexual orientations, gender identities and sex characteristics need to be considered by policy makers and law enforcement agencies in their activities and actions.



The Istanbul Convention, which we are implementing at national level, establishes a clear framework: any form of violence must be condemned, and the protection of victims must be guaranteed, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or other status. Intersectional discrimination

amplifies the risks of violence, and our response must be tailored and inclusive. It is essential to strengthen social support mechanisms, develop effective public policies and involve all relevant actors to guarantee a safe environment for all.



The meeting resulted in identification of needs and further activities, such as capacity building, awareness raising initiatives, and advancing the cooperation platform between state authorities and CSOs, to ensure improvements in line with Council of Europe standards and best practices at the regional level. The conclusions and recommendations shared by participants will also contribute to the development of more efficient public policies and strategies for sustainable protection of LGBTI persons in the Republic of Moldova.

*This event is part of the [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”](#)*



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# The 15th Meeting of the EU–Moldova Civil Society Platform: Progress in the Bilateral Screening Process and the Role of Civil Society

On March 24, 2025, the fifteenth meeting of the Civil Society Platform European Union - Republic of Moldova took place in Chişinău, during which the progress made by the Moldovan authorities on the thematic chapters of the EU accession negotiations such as environmental liability, human rights and justice, consumer and health protection, company law, foreign security and defence policy and the economic growth plan offered by the EU.

At the opening of the event, it was emphasized by Cristina Gherasimov, Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, that the decisions and transformations carried out in the country – aimed at improving the living standards of citizens – are made together with civil society, the business community, and the academic sector. It was noted that reaching the halfway point of the bilateral screening process and completing the first three clusters within just nine months was made possible due to the joint efforts contributed in this regard.



At the same time, the members of the platform appreciated the progress made by the Republic of Moldova over the last six

months in the bilateral screening.

An important aspect of the meeting was the discussion on Moldova's Growth Plan,

a crucial financial instrument for economic development announced by the European Commission. The €1.9 billion plan consists of grants and loans and was approved by the European Parliament on March 11, 2025.

As a result of the debates, members of the European Union - Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform adopted a joint declaration which included the key conclusions of the debates and a number of strategic recommendations for accelerating the necessary reforms in the European integration process. The full declaration and other details of the event are available on the project website: <https://www.euromonitor.md/en-joint-declaration->

The European Union - Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform was created on the basis of Article 442 of the Association Agreement and is composed of

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

The fifteenth meeting of the EU – Moldova Civil Society Platform was held within the framework of the project "[Civil Society for European Integration](#)" funded by the European Union and co-financed by "Friedrich Ebert" Foundation Moldova, which is implemented by the Independent Analytical Center Expert-Grup, as the lead partner, in partnership with the Institute for European Policy and Reform (IPRE), A.O. Institutum Virtutes Civilis (IVC) and "Friedrich Ebert" Foundation Moldova.



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# Launch of the Monitoring Report on Budgets Allocated for the Protection of the Rights and Legitimate Interests of Vulnerable Persons in the Republic of Moldova by the Center for Social Justice “Echitate”

The Center for Social Justice “Echitate,” beneficiaries within the project “Civil Society for European Integration,” funded by the European Union and co-funded by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Moldova, has launched a report analysing the budgets of the National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid (CNAJGS) allocated to state-guaranteed legal assistance for vulnerable persons during the period 2021–2024. The report was developed under the guidance of expert Marina Soloviova, Program Director at the Independent Think Tank “Expert-Grup.”

## The main findings of the report indicate that:

Actual budgets are decreasing – Although the allocated funds increased by only 2.5% from 2021 to 2024, the cumulative inflation rate of 45% has significantly diminished purchasing power.

Disparities in remuneration – 86% of the budget is directed toward lawyers, while paralegals—who are essential for providing primary legal advice in rural areas—receive only 5%.

Security Zone Center is the most affected – Only 4 paralegals serve 36 localities, and the absence of a clear mechanism for involving NGOs limits access to free legal services.

Incomplete legal framework – Although the law allows for NGO involvement, there is a lack of clear regulations and direct funding mechanisms for them.

The full report is available on the project webpage: <https://www.euromonitor.md/lansarea-raportului-de-monitorizare>



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The Center for Social Justice “Echitate” is one of 15 civil society organizations selected through an open call to implement activities within the “Civil Society for European Integration” project, which aims to strengthen the capacity of CSOs to monitor public budgets at both central and local levels and to encourage their engagement in advocacy activities to align budgets and policies with the priorities of the European integration agenda. More information about the project is available on the dedicated page: <https://www.euromonitor.md>



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# Moldovan civil society engages in a policy dialogue on better public participation policies

A genuine democracy means more than just holding elections every few years actively involving people in making key public decisions that govern and impact their lives. To achieve this, consistent policies are needed to ensure public participation.

On February 5, 2025, over 30 civil society representatives gathered for a [policy dialogue session](#) facilitated by the Center for Policies and Reforms (CPR). They discussed the necessity of drafting a new public participation law, the principles and key elements it should include, and how it should be implemented to ensure that citizens' voices are heard.

The event began with discussions on the need to introduce and define the term "public participation" in legislation, as it is used by

international institutions. The current law does not define "public participation" but only "transparency," and its scope is unclear since transparency is defined merely as the "provision of information" about decision-making processes.

Participants agreed that public participation should be broadly defined to include all stages in line with international standards—information, consultation, and engagement. Moreover, participation should cover the entire public policy cycle, from identifying public issues and formulating policy options to implementation and monitoring. Another key discussion point was the need for a clearer definition of the forms of public participation and ensuring a minimum level of accessibility and representativeness.



The recommendations from this dialogue were submitted to the State Chancellery and discussed within the working group established to improve legislation in this area. To further advance the legal framework for public participation, CPR continues to facilitate the policy dialogue and has launched a public call for citizens to join the discussion by filling out [this form](#).

The INSPIRED Moldova project aims to support civil society in Moldova in actively influencing national policies and contributing to the country's EU integration by engaging CSOs in political processes at the national and local levels, including with a digital component. Additionally, the project will encourage dialogue and collaboration with public authorities, ensuring that civil society becomes a key player in promoting democracy in Moldova.

The project INSPIRED Moldova is funded by the European Union and implemented by the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD), the European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA), the National Center

for Assistance and Information of NGOs in Moldova CONTACT, the Center for Policy and Reform (CPR Moldova), Democracy Reporting International (DRI) and People in Need (PIN).



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# IOM Cash assistance for protection supported by the EU, a vital resource to address the immediate needs of vulnerable refugees

*"The support we received in Moldova is very important to us; my daughter has a disability. With this assistance, we paid the rent for this apartment, bills, medicines, and clothes for the children. We feel good here,"*

***Nigar, from Azerbaijan, fled the war in Ukraine with her family.***

Since May 2024, thanks to the financial support of the European Union, the IOM Moldova Mobile Protection Team has provided comprehensive case management to 81 vulnerable migrants. Of these, 61 who fled the large-scale war in Ukraine also received protection cash assistance, a vital resource to address their immediate needs and strengthen their coping capacity. Services were tailored to individual needs and included information sessions, psychosocial counselling, referrals to state and non-state partners, and legal assistance

to assist beneficiaries secure legal identity, travel documents, or regularize their status.

Watch the video: [Video](#) | [Facebook](#)

## Information Session for Vulnerable Ukrainians and Migrants in Moldova

As part of the EU-funded project "Addressing the urgent humanitarian needs of vulnerable refugees and third-country nationals in the Republic of Moldova", IOM Moldova Mobile Protection Team organizes information session for vulnerable Ukrainians and migrants residing in Moldova. The participants learned about the criteria for accessing assistance, as well as the risks and prevention measures related to human trafficking, gender-based violence. They also have the opportunity to receive social and legal assistance.



## Cash Assistance to cope with harsh winter conditions with the EU support

Thanks to EU funding, International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Moldova is providing winter cash assistance to vulnerable families,

helping them cope with harsh winter conditions.

Ina, from Kharkiv, Ukraine, and her family in Dnestrovsk, are among the 362 families benefiting from this support.



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*"We were not at all prepared for the cold season. My husband had serious surgery and with this assistance we can buy the medicines needed for his recovery as well as take better care of our children,"*

**said Ina.**

The winterization program offers vital support to Ukrainian families on the left bank of the Nistru, addressing basic needs and complementing Moldovan authorities' energy vulnerability program.



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## Over 400 Returnees supported through the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) program in the Republic of Moldova

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has implemented Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programs worldwide. In the Republic of Moldova, the AVRR program is implemented by IOM Moldova thanks to the generous financial support of the European Union, assisting both nationals and third-country nationals with their return and reintegration.

*"With the building materials we were able to purchase with the support of IOM, we can finally renovate the house so that we will no longer live five in one room and have decent living conditions. And I can continue to purchase essential medicines to treat diabetes and hypertension,"*

**said Piotr.**



In 2024, IOM assisted 143 Moldovan returnees in their reintegration back home.



## Voluntary Humanitarian Return: Supporting Third-Country Nationals

Under the EU-funded Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) program, IOM Moldova is also supporting third-country nationals and their close Ukrainian family members fleeing the war in Ukraine to return to their country of origin in a voluntarily, safe and dignified

manner and in achieving sustainable reintegration with full respect for human rights, regardless of their status.

Since January 2025, IOM Moldova has assisted 124 people with returning to their country of origin, and 4 have been provided a reintegration program to support their long-term reintegration.



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# Over 2,723 Vulnerable Persons Relocated to European Countries through EU+Air Transfers Program

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Moldova is assisting vulnerable Ukrainian refugees, migrants and third-country nationals (TCNs) in relocating to European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) Member States through the EU+Air Transfers program.

Thanks to generous financial support provided by the European Union, 2,723 individuals have been assisted in their relocation, including Alina, who fled the war in Ukraine from Odesa.

*"I hope that Norway will bring us new opportunities, a better life, and stability for our unborn child. We are ready to start a new life,"*  
**says Alina.**





# EU Supports IOM's Health Mediators in providing essential health information for refugees

IOM Moldova's 11 health mediators are ensuring that refugees in Moldova receive accurate information on health services and assistance in managing their medical needs through information sessions.

Supported by EU4Health funding, the health mediators regularly organize such sessions across the country, including on the Left Bank, to explain the Moldovan health system

and the procedures for accessing health care for Ukrainian refugees under Temporary Protection.

Since April 2024, over 350 sessions have reached more than 5,400 refugees, both directly and by supporting them in accessing health services based on Temporary Protection status.



## Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Moldova is

conducting training sessions on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) for the NGO ADRA operating on the Left Bank.



Participants are equipped with knowledge and tools

to identify, address, and prevent instances of sexual exploitation and abuse, focusing on risks, reporting mechanisms, and leveraging the role of PSEA networks in Moldova.

The training, made also possible thanks to the generous financial support of the European Union, reflects IOM's ongoing efforts to safeguard vulnerable communities, and promote ethical practices in humanitarian response.

# Social laundries: spaces of hygiene, solidarity and communion

With the financial support of the European Union and thanks to a close collaboration between civil society and public authorities, 13 social laundries have already been opened in several localities in the Republic of Moldova. These community centers will provide free laundry services to approximately 1,500 vulnerable people, thus contributing to improving their quality of life.

Through the project funded by the European Union and co-financed by a consortium formed by three civil society organizations, Keystone Moldova, Neumanist and Dorcas-Moldova, the spaces for these laundries were renovated and equipped with modern equipment.



## Places where generations unite

In addition to essential hygiene services, social laundries host socializing activities

that bring together children, adults and the elderly. Here, generations communicate and learn from each other, in activities such as:



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Traditional sittings, where stories are told, as in the old days, and old crafts, such as embroidery or wool spinning, are learned.

Creative workshops, where children and adults paint, model clay or make decorative objects.

Cooking group activity, where the community prepares food together for the neediest.

Reading sessions, where the elderly together with the young discover stories, poems and local traditions.

### **Access to hygiene and better living conditions**

Another important aspect of the project is the equipping of social laundries with modern showers.

Many households are not connected to the sewage system, and these facilities ensure minimal hygiene conditions for the beneficiaries. Thus, not only clothes, but also people can enjoy cleanliness and comfort.

### **An effective collaboration model**

This project was realized thanks to the involvement of the European Union, local public authorities and civil society organizations - Keystone Moldova, Neومانist and Dorcas-Moldova. The European Union reaffirms its support for such initiatives, contributing to the development of sustainable solutions for the social integration of vulnerable people.

Social laundries are more than hygiene centers - these are places of communion, solidarity and mutual support, where people help each other, rebuilding community spirit and hope for a better future.



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# Interactive leadership and civic engagement programme for youth in the north of the country

In northern Moldova, we introduced young people to the key skills and development tools that foster leadership, communication, and civic engagement through an interactive programme funded by the European Union.

In a period marked by social changes and challenges, supporting active leaders is more important than ever. That is why we value every civil society initiative that creatively involves young people in developing projects for their communities.

CIDP ANIMA launched a high-impact initiative by organising the "CATalizador Social" winter school. This is a programme designed to help young people aged 15 to 25 develop leadership, communication, and civic engagement skills, equipping them with the necessary tools to bring positive change to their communities.

The winter school held three sessions across January and February, bringing together participants from 10 regions in northern Moldova: Drochia, Floreşti, Făleşti, Sângerei, Glodeni, Rîșcani, Dondușeni, Bălți, Edineț, and Soroca. During these sessions, participants explored key topics such as:

- Writing and managing projects;
- Effective communication with local public authorities;
- Civic participation and solving community issues;
- Ways to involve young people in local decision-making processes.



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Each session lasted three days, during which participants engaged in training, workshops, and practical exercises. From the very first day, participants were encouraged to establish common rules and build connections through dynamic activities such as the "BINGO" game and the "Problem Tree" method.

Participants were encouraged to apply for funding for small community projects upon completing the programme. Fifteen of the best initiatives received financial support of up to 6,000 MDL each (approximately €300), ensuring the implementation of the best ideas developed by the participants. With the support of mentors, they will be able to turn their concepts into reality and have a direct impact on their communities.

The final day of each session was dedicated to reflection and feedback; participants shared their impressions and lessons learned. The atmosphere was full of energy, enthusiasm, and a strong desire to get involved. The participants returned home with new perspectives and motivation.

*"We came here with the goal of learning how to write a project, how to implement it, how to set a budget, and I think we absorbed all this information. It was a great experience—the environment, the mentors, the location—everything was organised at a high level,"*

***shared a participant.***

The winter school was implemented by CIDP ANIMA in partnership with People in Need Moldova as part of the "Moldova ASSIST: Improving Access to Quality Public Services and Social Cohesion" project, funded by the European Union.

Through this initiative, AO ANIMA continues to inspire and educate future generations of young leaders, providing them with the necessary resources to make a difference in their communities.



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## Mobile Teams: Bringing Social Inclusion Home

Supported by the European Union, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, and the Territorial Agency for Social Assistance North, we have created an accessible and efficient mechanism of social assistance delivery.

We are fostering inclusion through the use of Mobile Teams. These teams are specialised social services tailored to the needs of people. The teams bring social assistance and support into the homes of people who need us. The teams include psychologists, lawyers, social workers, physiotherapists and speech therapists.

The work of the mobile teams has been complimented by support provided by A.O. Casa Speranțelor, which provides home-based assistance to people in the Soroca district who have benefited from these essential services. Such is the case of Marina.

At the age of 35, Marina was widowed, left alone with two young., Marina's troubles didn't stop there with her husband's death: for 8 years, her son has been suffering from severe kidney disease.



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Marina works hard to support her family but also to provide treatment for her child, who needs dialysis three times a week in Chişinău. The travel costs, the medical products, the bills—they are too much for her.

Marina's case was reported to the Soroca Mobile Team by a local social worker, who learned of her difficult situation. The Casa Speranțelor team intervened quickly. Through the project "Support for the protection, integration and social inclusion of refugees and vulnerable local people", they gave Marina the necessary help at the right time. Marina obtained psychological counselling to encourage her to remain strong in the face of hardship. In addition, she was provided with a package of special food and hygiene products, detergents, and clothes.

Thanks to A.O. Casa Speranțelor's activities, over 180 Ukrainian refugees and local people from Soroca, Ocnita, and Dondușeni districts have benefited from home-based support through assessments, intervention plans, and access to essential services.

In addition to the support of mobile teams at home, our partners - Casa Speranțelor are promoting the Romanian language and Moldovan traditions to refugees from Ukraine, eager to get to know Moldovan values and culture.

The courses were organised thanks to the financial support of the European Union through the project "Moldova Assist: improving access to quality public services and social cohesion", implemented by People in Need.



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## Spot on: Crisis Communication Chapter Takes Action in Soroca

Imagine bringing together a group of strangers in the local community of Soroca, where they will collaborate over the next few months, focusing on a single topic that addresses the most urgent crises facing their community. This is more than just a goal; it is happening now.

Through the project **TRIMEDIA** – Trustworthy Reporting, Impactful Media, Engaged Communities, DW Akademie and the Association of Independent Press (API) have

successfully gathered a diverse group in Soroca. Its members include representatives from local media, public authorities, civil society organizations (CSOs), and local community initiative groups. Their goal is to form a working group dedicated to tackling a pressing issue within the local community. So, the journey begins. The 11 members of the CCC in Soroca are receiving training from March to April 2025, led by several international experts and a local crisis communication expert.



The training aims to strengthen the group while enhancing their knowledge about the role of media in crises, fact-checking, content production, and distribution of useful information. This is followed by hands-on media training, where they learn to speak in front of the camera and express themselves on crisis-related issues. Finally, the group will undergo a session on organizational development. All this training serves as the foundation for their upcoming work, where they will collaborate intensively on creating an information package for the community, which will be distributed across various channels to different audiences. A key element is CCC's focus on the constructive dialogue format, by informing the public—

particularly vulnerable groups in the context of crisis—and engaging with communities to contribute to problem-solving.

Over the past year, the previous Crisis Communication chapter has shown that local communities can make a significant impact, as the CCC in Căușeni educated the community about natural and man-made disasters.

As the project enters its second year, bringing the Crisis Communication Chapter to life is both exciting and rewarding. Most importantly, it's inspiring to watch a collaborative community grow, working together towards a shared goal: to inform the public, mitigate risks, and ensure a safer environment.



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# TRM's first media literacy show: combining entertainment and education for enhanced critical thinking skills among Moldova's elderly citizens

Starting 15 December 2024, the public broadcaster Moldova 1 has added to its grid a new TV show format, aiming to provide mature audiences with improved critical thinking skills while entertaining them all along. The new show, titled „Răspunzi și

câștigi”, was developed by Teleradio-Moldova (TRM) with support from DW Akademie in the framework of the project TRIMEDIA – Trustworthy Reporting, Impactful Media, Engaged Communities.



***The program proved highly successful among rural audiences and especially female viewers, with one viewer saying***

*"It's a sort of relaxation – it also brings out issues which are hidden under the covers in our society. I'm happy to continue watching it, as I hope to see some good things coming out of it, and that more people will be enlightened."*

For another viewer, the MIL TV show created an opportunity for self-reflection and for pondering their own media consumption habits:

*"I was really thinking about myself, with this Facebook. I don't share as much as I used to, but first I look at the comments - sometimes it's clear that it's fake, other times you can see that some people are posting comments specifically to provoke, to make you angry, so that you want to write them back."*

With the experts' tailored mentoring, so far 8 episodes out of 16 initially planned have been produced and aired on Moldova 1 and can be currently accessed on the public broadcaster's [website](#). Fuelled by the promising viewership and with many more ideas for topics, the team at TRM is confident of the value of such a TV format and intends to continue developing it further.



Stronger Together



# Civil society organisations challenge gender norms in the EU's Eastern Partnership countries

Sixty changemakers from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine participated in the Conference of Civil Society Partners in Chişinău from 29 to 31 October 2024. Part of the EU4Gender Equality programme, the conference brought together representatives from various organisations to collaborate, share knowledge, drive meaningful change in gender norms, and address gender-based violence in the region.

*"Civil society organisations are important partners for the EU to give voice to citizens' concerns, including disadvantaged and marginalised groups and work to further democracy and human rights,"*

**said Lena Karlsson, a Gender Expert and Advisor for the European Commission's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations.**

Participants exchanged innovative tools, practical strategies and their most successful initiatives. These included efforts to engage men through programmes like the Fathers' Schools and collaborating with the private sector and faith-based organisations. The participants shared their communication strategies for involving youth in dialogues on redefining gender norms and advocating for and with women with disabilities.

*"Upholding the right to work for women with disabilities is essential for their economic freedom and social inclusion. Employing women with disabilities in the open labour market should become standard practice,"*

**mentioned one of UN Women Moldova's partners, Natalia Codrean, Project Coordinator at Motivatie.**



EU-Moldova

Stronger Together



Participants explored approaches to challenging social norms that place people's needs and rights at the centre of programmes. They highlighted the pivotal roles of politics and institutions in facilitating progress and the influence of social movements in advocating for change. Discussions also focused on how data can help measure the effectiveness of interventions.

Recognising that challenges to shifting gender norms and stereotypes vary by country and region, the participants stressed the importance of adopting a holistic approach across diverse contexts. Building strong partnerships among civil society organisations, stakeholders and communities will be critical to amplifying impact and fostering a collective commitment to gender equality.



*"As we move forward from this conference, it is essential that we focus on actionable recommendations provided by our civil society partners to drive meaningful change,"*

**said Olga Osaulenko, Regional Manager of the EU4Gender Equality programme.**

**Jānis Mažeiks, the EU Ambassador to Moldova, highlighted the importance of ongoing efforts:**

*"We cannot have a harmonious society without placing gender equality at the forefront, as it is*

*one of the fundamental rights and a core value of EU policies. We are pleased that Moldova has key elements to support progress in advancing gender equality."*

This article was produced in the framework of the 'EU4Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence' programme, funded by the European Union and implemented jointly by UN Women and UNFPA.



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# Moldova's religious leaders unite against domestic violence with EU support

Over 90 participants, including religious leaders, gender equality experts, child protection specialists and representatives from central authorities and philanthropic organisations in Moldova and Romania, convened for the "Family Under the Protection of Faith: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue on Domestic Violence" conference. Organised on 12 November by the Social Mission Diaconia and UN Women Moldova, the event was hosted as part of the EU-funded EU4Gender Equality regional programme.

**Opening the event, His Grace Bishop Veniamin of Southern Bessarabia discussed the role of the Orthodox Church in fostering respect within families.**

*"We are honoured to host this pioneering event in Chişinău. Family life faces challenges that can deeply wound its members. Violence has many causes and forms and understanding them is vital for prevention. The Church has a responsibility to support families in creating healthier, more harmonious environments. Both spouses are equal and share the duty to maintain peace at home."*



**The EU's commitment to addressing domestic violence was highlighted by the EU Ambassador to Moldova, Jānis Mažeiks, who noted that Moldova recorded 1,590 cases of violence against women in 2023.**

*"While efforts to combat domestic violence are growing, gaps remain—especially in rural areas where awareness is lower and services are harder to access."*

*Religious leaders, as trusted members of their communities, often hear about family struggles first. Their influence is vital in spreading the message that violence has no place in our families or communities."*



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**Dominika Stojanoska, UN Women Moldova's Country Representative, underscored the severity of domestic violence in Moldova, citing 45 femicides over the past two years**

*"Domestic violence is widespread, affecting countless women and families. Coordination among all actors—authorities, education, civil society, media, and the Church—is crucial to address this issue. UN Women Moldova remains dedicated to empowering women and promoting gender equality by tackling the root causes of gender-based violence."*

*"Diaconia has long provided solutions and assistance for survivors of domestic violence. This conference is a key step in building a systemic response to prevent and combat domestic violence."*

*With our partners, we aim to create a robust support network in every parish and community,"*

**said Igor Belej, Executive Director of the Social Mission Diaconia.**

The conference featured panels and group work on gender roles in Orthodox traditions, spiritual counselling as a prevention tool and community actions to combat domestic violence. Experts, including clergy and specialists in sociology and child protection, shared insights on strengthening families through mutual understanding.

This initiative is part of the EU 4 Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence' programme, funded by the EU and jointly implemented by UN Women and UNFPA. By integrating faith-based approaches and interdisciplinary collaboration, the programme aims to create safer, more equitable communities in Moldova and beyond.



EU-Moldova

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# Empowering women with disabilities to overcome stereotypes and prevent violence

Fifty-five women and girls with disabilities from six regions of Moldova strengthened their abilities to combat stereotypes and gender-based violence through a series of trainings. Organised under the project “Together for a Life Without Violence!” the trainings were developed by the Motivație NGO through the EU-funded programme EU4Gender Equality, jointly implemented by UN Women and UNFPA.

Held between 7 October and 26 November, the trainings gathered participants from Orhei, Ialoveni, Ștefan Vodă, Căușeni, Fălești, and Chișinău. Women shared their experiences, learned strategies to overcome challenges and found a safe space to voice their struggles and support each other.



**Svetlana, a participant from Edineț, shared:**

*“My motivation to join this activity was to stay informed and ensure I do not become a victim of violence. Reflecting on my own experiences of workplace discrimination due to disability and ethnicity, I encourage women facing violence to seek help. If you encounter any form of violence, reach out to someone you trust or call the Women and Girls’ Trustline at 0 8008 8008.”*

**For Oxana, another participant, the training offered a chance to connect with others and learn from their stories of resilience.**

*“I have faced physical and verbal violence within my family. Many women living in violent environments find it difficult to talk about it. I sought specialised services, which helped me secure temporary refuge and break free from the cycle of violence.”*

**Djunara from Chişinău emphasised the importance of timely action:**

*"Don't endure violence. Reaching out to competent authorities can save lives. Through my own example, I want to encourage other women with disabilities to raise their voices and defend their rights in their communities."*

*"It's one thing to know this information theoretically and entirely different to hear personal stories and understand how others overcame obstacles,"*

**said Marina, a participant from Sîngerei.**

The trainings offered a supportive environment where participants could freely express their thoughts and emotions. Through exercises, educational videos, case studies and creative therapeutic activities, the women gained practical tools for preventing violence and advocating for their rights. The initiative provided knowledge and fostered solidarity among women with disabilities, empowering them to challenge discrimination.

By supporting initiatives like "Together for a Life Without Violence!" and working closely with UN Women and UNFPA under the "EU4Gender Equality: Together Against Gender Stereotypes and Gender-Based Violence" programme, the EU continues to make a profound difference in the lives of vulnerable communities, ensuring that no one is left behind.



EU-Moldova

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# There's #NOEXCUSE for Violence Against Women and Girls: 16 Days of Activism Campaign in Moldova

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pressing issue in Moldova, where over 4,600 cases of domestic violence were reported during the few months of 2024 alone and 22 women tragically lost their lives. This stark reality underscores the urgency of addressing GBV at all levels of society.

To commemorate 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, UN Women Moldova launched the impactful awareness

raising campaign "Do You See Me?". Funded by the EU, Sweden and Denmark, it united stakeholders, including Parliament, government, local authorities, the UN agencies, non-governmental organisations, businesses, media and individuals across the country. The campaign was built around the idea that GBV is often perceived as a private issue and met with societal indifference in Moldova.



At the heart of the campaign was a moving art project: 16 life-sized sculptures of women placed in public spaces, each one representing a GBV survivor. Created by Moldovan artist Victoria Peev, each sculpture was dressed in crumpled paper clothes with bright orange shoes, symbolising the isolation and resilience of survivors.

A pre-launch event on 21 November gathered 18 media representatives and

influencers to discuss the campaign's goals. The participants engaged with key stakeholders such as Viorica Țâmbalari, Head of the National Agency for Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, Daniel Vodă, Spokesperson for the Government of the Republic of Moldova and Dominika Stojanoska, UN Women Moldova Country Representative.



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During the official launch on 25 November, the 16 sculptures were unveiled in supermarkets, universities and other public spaces across Chişinău. A landing page, [mavezi.anpcv.gov.md](http://mavezi.anpcv.gov.md), was also launched, featuring survivors' stories and resources for seeking help.

On 9 December, the campaign concluded with an emotional event in Chişinău, where the 16 sculptures were displayed together. For 16 days, they represented women who had conceptually stepped out of their homes, encouraging others to get involved. Participants, including representatives from the Government, local authorities, international organisations, and civil society

discussed violence prevention measures, and several artistic performances underscored the power of community solidarity.

The campaign concluded on 10 December with a screening of the Italian film "There Is Still Tomorrow," directed by Paola Cortellesi. The film's themes of resilience and challenging traditional gender roles resonated deeply with the audience.

The UN Women's "Do You See Me?" campaign reached a total of 1.5 million people and engaged 16 partners from both the private sector and public institutions reaching over 226,470 visitors who interacted with the sculptures.



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## Assisting victims of sexual violence: EU-funded service marks one year of activity

In its first year of operation, the Integrated Regional Service for Victims of Sexual Violence in Moldova assisted 58 victims. Located in Ungheni, the service offers medical, legal, psychological and social support in one place, covering six districts—Ungheni, Făleşti, Sîngerei, Călăraşi, Nisporeni and Teleneşti. The service is funded by the EU and piloted by the International Centre “La Strada” through the EVOLVE4GE project, implemented by UN Women.

Over 50% of victims received critical support within the first four days following abuse, including immediate medical and forensic examinations and access to emergency contraception. Victims have also received psychological and legal counselling, which is essential for their long-term well-being. Notably, more than 80% of victims came from rural areas, highlighting the need to provide geographically accessible services.



### **One beneficiary shared her experience:**

*"I'm grateful to all the people who came to help me when the police took me to this centre. I'm still seeing the psychologist, and I'd like to thank her for the support she's giving me to overcome this difficult time in my life."*

### **Psychologist Tatiana Cheptonar shared another beneficiary's story:**

*"Initially, the victim was very frightened and ashamed of what had happened to her. After the psychological rehabilitation sessions, she is now more confident, has found a job and is happy alongside her children."*



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On 29 November, the service's results were presented at a working group meeting convened by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. Representatives from national- and local-level institutions and civil society discussed ways to improve intersectoral cooperation mechanisms to ensure victim-centred interventions.

In addition to providing direct support, the service also organised activities for both beneficiaries and women living in the region. In November, over 100 women and girls from five communities attended sessions on gynaecological and psycho-emotional health. Staff members also distributed materials about the assistance available to sexual violence survivors.

On 23 November, 10 beneficiaries attended an art therapy workshop to reflect on their journey. Co-facilitated by a psychologist and an art teacher, the workshop offered a creative space for survivors to connect and empower each other. Professionals—police officers, social workers and medical staff—joined in, strengthening trust and solidarity within the community.

The EU-funded project EVOLVE4GE has played a pivotal role in providing this support, helping survivors regain control of their lives. If you or someone you know is at risk, support is available through the Women and Girls Helpline (0 8008 8008) and the Integrated Regional Service for Victims of Sexual Violence at 078 517 327, 078 495 866.





# EU supports stakeholders' dialogue on childcare solutions

On 20 November, 40 representatives from public authorities, the private sector, civil society and development partners gathered to share progress, challenges and opportunities in the area of alternative childcare services. The event, organised by the Economic Council Platform under the Prime Minister, with the support of UN Women within the EU-funded EVOLVE4GE project, emphasised the importance of quality childcare services to support children's development and enable women's equal participation in the labour market.

Currently, only 15% of preschool-aged children (0-3 years) benefit from institutional care due to the insufficient number of public services available. This highlights the urgent need to expand and diversify childcare options. During the dialogue, participants evaluated the implementation of Law No. 367/2022 on alternative childcare services and service providers and development partners shared their experiences.



Held two years after the adoption of Law No. 367/2022 and halfway through the National Programme for Childcare Services (2023-2026), the dialogue allowed participants to identify both operational, financial, and policy-related challenges and solutions to expanding quality childcare services.

Among the participants were representatives from relevant ministries, including the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, the Ministry of Education and Research, and the Ministry of Finance, as well as private service providers, such as

public and private nurseries, professional caregivers, and partners, including the Partnership Center for Development, Street Child, The Entrepreneurship Development Organisation, Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Women Entrepreneurs Association.

Felicia Bechtold, State Secretary at the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, highlighted the Ministry's achievements in childcare, reaffirming its commitment to improving the regulatory framework, encouraging more investment in services and raising awareness about its importance for socio-economic development and gender equality.

*"Today, more than ever, it is vital to expand access to childcare services and ensure they meet both children's needs and parents' requirements and the collaboration between the public, private and development sectors is key to building a functional, quality system."*

*Following the adoption of Government Decision No. 572 on alternative childcare services, 19 family-type nurseries and one employer-provided nursery were piloted. In 2024, including with the support of development partners, 20 localities benefited from the nursery expansion programme, resulting in the creation of 15 new groups and the renovation and preparation of 20 groups for the winter season."*

The session also showcased successful initiatives, including renovated and family-type nurseries, as well as private-sector initiatives from ConTeyor MLD, Orange, Panillino SRL and Moldcell.

The dialogue concluded with the participants discussing best practices and initiatives that can be replicated nationwide. These included the development of an action plan to expand childcare services and stronger collaboration between public, private and international partners.



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## INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

### Law enforcement officers and prosecutors from Moldova - trained on Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) techniques

From March 24 to 28, 2025, law enforcement officers and prosecutors from the Eastern Partnership countries, including Republic of Moldova gathered in Madrid for a regional training on Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) techniques, organized by CEPOL

under the TOPCOP II project. Hosted by the Guardia Civil, this initiative aimed to enhance investigative capabilities by equipping them with advanced tools to collect, analyse, and utilise publicly available intelligence in a professional and ethical manner.



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The five-day training covered a range of critical topics, including social media intelligence (SOCMINT), website and IP analysis, dark web investigations, and cryptocurrency tracking. Experts from EU Member States led interactive workshops, guiding participants through the latest OSINT methodologies, ethical considerations, and applications in combating cybercrime, organized crime, and terrorism.

A highlight of the programme was the "Capture the Flag" (CTF) exercise, where participants applied their newly acquired skills in a simulated investigative challenge.

The training also included visits to key intelligence units, fostering collaboration between European and Eastern Partnership law enforcement agencies.

As a next step, selected participants will continue their development through a "Train-the-Trainers" phase, ensuring the sustainability and further dissemination of OSINT expertise, including to Republic of Moldova. The initiative underscores the EU's commitment to strengthening international cooperation in digital investigations and intelligence-led policing at regional level and cascade it to Moldovan law enforcement services



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## Cyber crime lab inauguration

On 31 January 2025, Minister of Internal Affairs Mrs Daniella Misail-Nichitin and Ambassador Jānis Mažeiks inaugurated the new Cybercrime laboratory developed and equipped by the EU under the EU4Security Moldova project. The laboratory's aim is to facilitate Moldova's law enforcement in conducting advanced digital investigations, thus contributing to the country's efforts to effectively combat cybercrime.



The EU4Security Moldova project established this advanced laboratory to provide Moldova's General Police Inspectorate with the necessary infrastructure, tools, resources, and expertise in the field of digital

investigations. The inauguration of the Cyber lab is a testimony of the strong and long-lasting cooperation between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova in internal security and cybercrime.

# Supporting Cybercrime Investigations: EU4Security Moldova Workshops Focus on Innovation and Integration

As a key follow-up to the inauguration of the Cybercrime Lab, three high-impact workshops were held in Chişinău, focusing on quality assurance and the analysis of training needs. Held in January and February 2025, these workshops addressed three critical areas: resolving integration issues, elucidating new technologies to formulate a training roadmap, and developing

policies for implementing new investigative workflows. The sessions saw active participation which provided clarity on support procedures, warranty protocols and clear guidelines for tailoring future training programs for 2025 and 2026. Additionally, they identified necessary improvements in current policies to seamlessly integrate new forensic solutions into existing investigative workflows.



Looking ahead, the path is well-defined with the implementation of an exhaustive certification roadmap and robust policies to ensure a smooth transition in the integration of the new Cyber Lab. The overarching goal is to expedite cyber-crime investigations, leveraging not only advanced equipment but, most importantly, the invaluable human expertise.



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# Enhancing Investigative Skills: CEPOL's OSINT Training in Chişinău

From March 10 to 14, 2025, the CTCEJ (Centrul Tehnico-Criminologic și Expertiză Judiciară) in Chişinău, Republic of Moldova, hosted the OSINT training. This initiative, part of the EU4Security Moldova project, aimed to bolster the investigative capabilities of Moldovan police officers in Open-Source Intelligence.

The training welcomed 24 participants from regional investigation units, building on the foundation laid by a previous OSINT training session in November 2024, which catered to central units. The EU4Security Moldova project assembled leading experts from

both the private and public sectors to deliver this comprehensive training.

The attendees demonstrated remarkable versatility in embracing CEPOL's innovative learning methodologies, reflecting their dedication to applying new investigative techniques in their daily work.

Encouraged by the positive feedback, EU4Security Moldova plans to continue leveraging cutting-edge learning methods, expert knowledge, and cascading strategies to disseminate OSINT expertise across all police units.



# General Inspectorate for Migration delegation gains insights into EU migration management during study visit to Romania from 16 to 20 March 2025

A Moldovan delegation from the General Inspectorate of Migration participated in a study visit to Romania, engaging with the key institution that plays a central role in migration governance. Hosted by the General Inspectorate for Immigration of the Romanian Ministry of Internal Affairs, the visit focused on policy coordination, procedural alignment, and operational best practices that can guide Moldova's ongoing reforms.

During their time in Bucharest, the delegation met with representatives from the General Inspectorate for Immigration to discuss coordination of the admission process for foreign nationals, prevention and response

to illegal migration, and asylum procedures and temporary protection measures at the territorial level.

Another part of the visit took place in Șomcuta Mare, home to the Regional Center for Procedures and Accommodation for Asylum Seekers. Here, discussions centered on managing asylum procedures at the territorial level and addressing the challenges of increased migration flows due to the ongoing war in Ukraine.

Romania's experience as an EU Member State provided the Moldovan delegation with a firsthand look at European best practices, operational procedures, and regulatory frameworks in migration management.





# Strengthening Emergency Response Training in Moldova: EU4Security Moldova Workshop

The EU4Security Moldova project, in collaboration with the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations organized a workshop on emergency response training from 27 to 28 March 2025 in Răzeni, Ialoveni District, Moldova.

The event brought together key stakeholders involved in the training and development of emergency responders in Moldova, fostering discussions on improving the national training framework and aligning it with EU standards and methodologies.



This workshop served as a strategic platform to present the key findings of the Operational Training Needs Analysis (OTNA) and initiate dialogue on the modernization of emergency response training in Moldova. Participants had the opportunity to evaluate the current training system, explore best practices from EU Member States, and gain insights into the

Union Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM), which supports training initiatives across Europe.

The workshop gathered trainers, policymakers, and operational personnel from GIES, as well as experts from EU Member States specialized in emergency response training.



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# New Strategic Plan of the Superior Council of Magistracy for 2025-2029 presented to international donor community and co-operation partners

The Council of Europe supported the organisation of the donors' co-ordination meeting of the Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM). The meeting, held on 26 february 2025, gathered international development

partners who provide assistance to the SCM in view of strengthening the institutional capacity of the SCM and the judicial system in general in the Republic of Moldova.



The objective of the meeting was to present the newly adopted Strategic Plan of the SCM for the period 2025-2029 and discuss donor support for the implementation of the Strategic Plan in a co-ordinated manner. During the meeting, the strategic objectives of the SCM for 2025-2029 were discussed, which include: strengthening the SCM and its specialised bodies, adopting a coherent human resources policy throughout the judicial system, ensuring the integrity of judges, defending the independence and the status of judges, effective administration of the judiciary system, ensuring the quality of the judicial act, increasing transparency and improving external communication.

The Strategic Plan of the SCM for 2025-2029 was developed with the support of the two projects implemented by the Council of Europe: the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "[Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova](#)" and project "[Action against Corruption in the Republic of Moldova – phase 2](#)" funded by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the US Department of State

The event was organised with the support of the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "[Support to the Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova](#)".

# Inter-Agency Working Groups co-ordinated by the Ministry of Justice undergo training in the EU law

As part of the support provided to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Council of Europe organised a training in the European Union (EU) law for the staff of the MoJ and members of the Inter-Agency Working

Groups co-ordinated by the MoJ in the context of the EU accession negotiations which cover Chapter 23 “Judiciary and Fundamental Rights” as well as “Functioning of Democratic Institutions”.



The training was delivered by Răzvan Horațiu RADU, consultant of the Council of Europe and Natalia SUCEVEANU, national expert. Participants increased their understanding of how EU institutions function as well as deepened their knowledge in the decision-making process within the EU, the rule of law standards and mechanisms, the competencies of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), protection of fundamental rights at the EU level, interconnection between the EU law and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights and generally – Council of Europe standards.

One of the training sessions was also dedicated specifically to the negotiation framework between the EU and the Republic of Moldova, the EU values and their impact on the accession process of the Republic of Moldova.

*„At the current historic juncture, when the Republic of Moldova is on its path towards the EU integration, increasing knowledge of civil servants of key national institutions in the fundamentals of the EU law is very important.*

*As we all know, the process of EU integration moves forward, and it is anticipated that there will be further need to transpose European standards to the national legal system in line with the roadmap and benchmarks that will be set for the Republic of Moldova.*

*Therefore, organising this training in EU law is very timely”,*

**said Head of the Council of Europe Office in Chişinău, Falk Lange.**

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”.





# Working with the Moldova Police to change public attitude toward the most vulnerable in society

As part of the continued effort to fight against discrimination and hate speech in the Republic of Moldova, the Council of Europe joins forces once more, on 28 February 2025, with the General Police Inspectorate. This time, the aim is to develop

an awareness raising campaign aiming at shading light on the most recurrent biases against vulnerable groups, fostering trust of the citizens on reporting acts motivated by prejudice to the relevant authorities and ultimately combating stigmatization.



A series of preparatory focus groups with key institutions, civil society organisations, and media representatives were conducted to converge on key messages to be included in the awareness initiatives, based on emerging needs in terms of public attitudes on discrimination related issues. Meetings also served for ensuring joint engagement in taking a stance against hatred.

As a step further, more advanced discussions engaged representatives of several target groups which are the most exposed to hate speech and acts motivated by prejudice in the Republic of Moldova, according to the monitoring reports and recent studies in this area. The objective of these focus group sessions was to create a space for brainstorming and exchanging ideas with

persons who either experienced or are well aware of cases of discrimination and hate speech, in order to finalise the narratives and roadmap of this initiative.

The preparation of the raise awareness initiative will continue in the coming period. Stay connected with us to follow its public phase, unfolding as of the second half of 2025.

This initiative is part of the 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”.



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# National authorities in the Republic of Moldova discuss the regulatory and supervisory approach to virtual asset service providers

A workshop, organised under the Partnership for Good Governance initiative by the European Union and the Council of Europe, provided a platform for the representatives of national authorities to discuss best

practices, international standards, and the country's strategy for licensing and supervising Virtual Assets Service Providers (VASPs).



The workshop brought together key stakeholders, including representatives from the National Bank of the Republic of Moldova, the Office for Prevention and Fight Against Money Laundering, the National Commission for Financial Market Supervision and the General Prosecutor's Office. Participants discussed several models presented by the Council of Europe international expert to be considered when deciding upon the appropriate legislative and regulatory framework for VASPs that meets both the EU's Markets in Crypto-Assets Regulation and Financial Action Task Force standards, while also analysing the regulatory gaps in the Republic of Moldova.

Over two days of the workshop discussions focused on key challenges, including money laundering and terrorist financing risks, possible licensing models, and strategies

for implementing an effective Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism supervisory system.

The workshop's conclusions and recommendations will serve as a foundation for the Republic of Moldova's upcoming legislative efforts to align with international standards and EU requirements, ensuring compliance with international best practices while fostering responsible financial innovation.

*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".*



Stronger Together



# Moldovan Public authorities trained in State aid

The EU-funded Twinning Project Strengthening the institutional capacities of the Competition Council to enforce the competition and state aid policy in line with the EU best practices is currently in full progress. Started on October 1, in 2024 and scheduled to be implemented for 27 months, the project has 3 main objectives: strengthening the administrative capacity of the Competition Council of the Republic of Moldova, aligning the legislation of the Republic of Moldova in competition and state

aid field to the EU standards and ensuring its effective enforcement. These are essential for fulfilling Moldova's commitments for EU accession and for creating a fair competition on the market.

Within the project, on March 25 and 26, two training sessions dedicated to State aid took place at Europe Café. Guided by Romanian and Polish experts, the participants had the opportunity to improve their knowledge on state aid and the relevant EU jurisprudence.



The training sessions approached the notion of state aid, starting with its fundamental aspects, to ensure an accurate identification of state aid by analysing its constitutive elements. Both the theoretical dimension, as well as the practical aspects of granting state aid were addressed during the session. The experts presented the criteria required to be verified during the preparation of the notification and in aid monitoring process,

including outlining the obligations that need to be respected in case of aid recovery. In this context, the fundamental conditions for granting de minimis state aid were presented.

Furthermore, the criteria and conditions of two state aid schemes, elaborated in 2024 in the Republic of Moldova, were presented: a scheme dedicated to companies operating in Free Economic Zones and a regional state aid scheme.



A deep understanding of this mechanism by the grantors is fundamental to ensure that the implementation of the Moldovan legislation in this field is aligned with EU standards.



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# Moldovan health professionals attend EU-funded infodemic management workshop

From 19-20 February 2025, four Moldovan health professionals joined communication and public health experts from across the EU's Eastern and Southern Neighbourhood in Djerba, Tunisia, to enhance their capacity in infodemic management.

The workshop, organised under the EU Initiative on Health Security by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), aimed to equip participants with practical tools and strategies to combat false information during infectious disease outbreaks.

## Strengthening infodemic preparedness

Overwhelming amounts of true and false information during health emergencies can hinder public trust and decision-making. Effective infodemic management has become a critical component of public

health preparedness in light of recent global challenges - including the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging infectious disease outbreaks such as Mpox.

## Key topics and interactive learning

The workshop covered a range of topics, including:

- ▶ Detecting and monitoring prevalent narratives through social listening and data analysis;
- ▶ Understanding psychological and social drivers of false information;
- ▶ Developing evidence-based response strategies to address false narratives;
- ▶ Building national infodemic management plans to enhance future preparedness.



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Through interactive breakout activities, the Moldovan health professionals, along with their peers, analysed infodemic scenarios, assessed risks, and designed targeted interventions. The event also highlighted the importance of cross-sector collaboration, involving public health authorities, media, and civil society in strengthening resilience against false information.

### **Addressing false information in a digital age**

Given the increasing spread of health-related false information on social media and digital platforms, a key focus of the workshop was leveraging technology and community engagement to improve public health communication. Participants explored strategies to counter false information in real time, using case studies from previous outbreaks to identify effective approaches.

As the workshop concluded, the Moldovan participants shared their insights with peers and discussed the application of learned strategies. Their participation in this EU-funded initiative marks a step forward in strengthening Moldova's public health response to false information, ensuring that accurate and science-based health information reaches communities effectively.

### **Relevant information:**

[EU Initiative on Health Security](#)

[Video: The EU Initiative on Health Security: Teamwork the ECDC way](#)

[E-learning: COVID-19 infodemic management: risk communication and community engagement challenges, by WHO](#)



Stronger Together



# Over 600 people participate in the public consultation on draft law on public procurement organized by EU HLA Mission and the Ministry of Finance

Over 600 persons (off- and online) – financial officials, representatives of public administration and the business environment took part in the public consultation session dedicated to the draft law on public procurement, organized by the European Union High Level Advisers' Mission, the Ministry of Finance and the "Monitorul Fiscal FISC.md" periodical publication, on 25 February.

**In the opening session, Minister of Finance Victoria Belous, emphasized the importance of the reform, stating:**

*"The public procurement reform is an essential step in building up a transparent and efficient governance system, which supports economic development and responsible use of public funds. The new draft law will ensure a modern legislative framework and help align Moldova with international best practices."*

The Minister also emphasized the importance of integrating information systems, noting that this will help streamline the procurement process and enhance data transparency, thereby enabling more efficient monitoring and optimal management of public resources.

**Representative of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, Jan Demidovič-Mekeläinen, highlighted:**

*"As Moldova works towards its European future, a robust and transparent public procurement system is essential. This consultation represents a key milestone in that journey, providing an opportunity to build a system that fosters fair competition, promotes efficiency, and ensures value for taxpayer money. The public sector can use procurement to boost jobs, growth and investment, and to create an economy that is more innovative, resource and energy efficient, and socially-inclusive. High quality public services depend on modern, well-managed and efficient procurement."*



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During the event, participants analyzed the proposed amendments presented by Sergiu Căinăreanu, Head of the Public Procurement Directorate within the Ministry of Finance. The discussions focused on simplifying processes, preventing abuses and increasing transparency in the allocation of public funds.

Ana Luca, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Finance, thanked all those involved in the development of the draft law and stressed the importance of the public consultation process.

*"The consultations were essential to ensure that the interests of all stakeholders – public authorities, civil society and the business environment, are properly reflected in the new regulations,"*

**said Ana Luca.**

The new law will ensure a more efficient use of public funds and a fairer and more transparent procurement system. The national public consultations process started at the beginning of this year and included discussions with local public administrations in Bălți municipality and in Sîngerei, Edineț, Glodeni, Cahul and Hîncești districts, with non-governmental organizations and public associations, representatives of the business environment, trade unions and employers' associations. After the draft is finalized, the document will be submitted to the European Commission for final consultations, being expected to enter into force on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2027.



# EU4LawEnforcement in MOLDOVA (EU4LEM)

The EU4LEM Project Team has been deployed in Moldova since the beginning of February 2025, aiming at supporting Moldovan law enforcement agencies in their reforms, strengthening their operational capacity and promoting cross-border cooperation.

The project's team components already attended a variety of meetings with their

respective counterparts with a constant support from the local EU Delegation, having met most of the Moldovan law enforcement representatives, namely the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs, the General Police Inspectorate and both its National Investigative Inspectorate and Forensic Center for Judicial Expertise, the General Inspectorate of Border Police and the General Inspectorate for Migration.

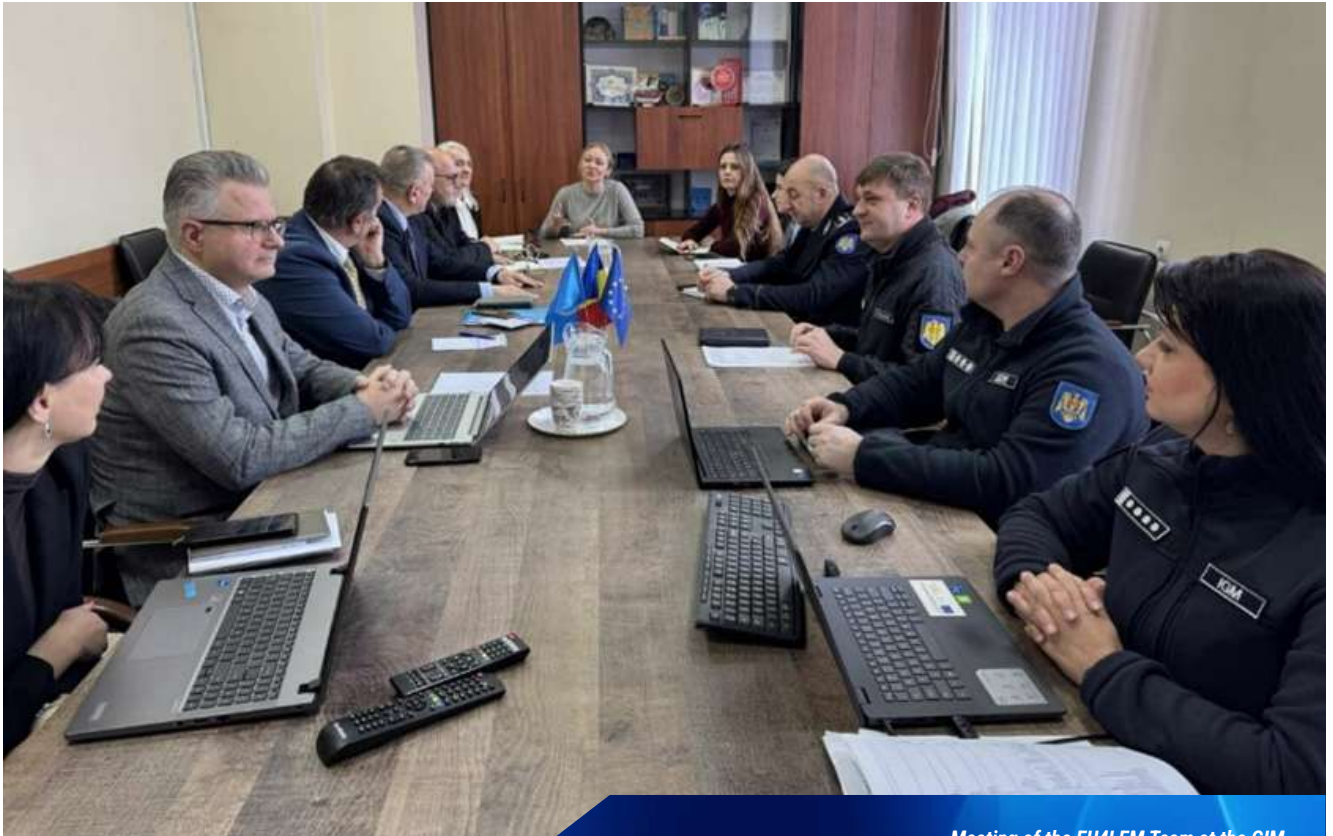


*Meeting of the EU4LEM Team at the GPI Headquarters*

Having met excellent working atmosphere and quite welcoming Moldovan colleagues, the EU4LEM Team that currently implements its project's inception phase, has already planned series of operational field visits (at Chişinău's Airport or at the Ukrainian Border) and technical meetings (Customs Services, GPI coordination Meetings) likely to seriously contribute to the project's needed assessments in its aim to improve the fight against organized crime and all forms of cross-border criminality.

The constant interaction of the Project's Experts with their Moldovan counterparts will aim at planning further activities in the format of Trainings and Operational Workshops or Field Visits likely to constitute a mutually beneficial platform of exchange of information, which will design further EU funded investments in Policing Equipment and technicalities aiming at tackling organized and cross-border crime.





*Meeting of the EU4LEM Team at the GIM*

The EU4LEM's first month of activities has proved to be very fruitful in terms of building bridges with its Moldovan counterparts, through both formal and informal meetings that helped shaping a general overview of local working methodologies and organizational structures within the Law Enforcement Agencies. The excellent and very appreciated working spirit and hospitality of our project's counterparts have already appeared to be an appropriate and efficient ground for further cooperation that will highly likely very positively contribute to the EU4LEM's implementation.

On top of the abovementioned activities, the Project's Team also met its EU partners in Moldova, namely representatives of the following stakeholders: EUDEL Moldova, EUBAM to Moldova and Ukraine, The European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX), as well as various actors among EU funded projects currently being implemented in Moldova (CEPOL, French and German Liaison Officers, etc.).

# EUBAM and OLAF join forces with Moldovan authorities to strengthen EU sanctions enforcement

EUBAM, in partnership with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), hosted a high-level seminar on 22 January focused on combating the circumvention of EU sanctions. Designed as a knowledge-sharing platform, the seminar empowered Moldovan authorities to enhance their anti-fraud capabilities and strengthen operational effectiveness in addressing sanctions violations.

Sanctions circumvention happens when organisations or individuals attempt to bypass international sanctions, often through falsified documentation, rerouted trade, or the exploitation of legal loopholes.

These actions undermine the integrity of the sanction's regime, weaken global stability, and pose significant economic risks. The seminar focused on equipping Moldovan customs officials with the tools and knowledge to detect and prevent such activities. It highlighted the significance of robust networks between customs authorities, law enforcement agencies, and international partners in combating sanctions violations effectively.



Through collaborative efforts, participants explored best practices and effective strategies to detect, prevent, and respond to sanctions circumvention. Practical sessions equipped Moldovan customs officials with essential skills to ensure compliance with international sanctions, which are vital tools for promoting global stability, peace, and economic integrity.

*"At the beginning of 2024, the Mobile Team service existed in only 15 out of 33 districts. We want to bring this service to every district and provide the necessary assistance to all citizens anywhere in the country."*

*"Sanctions work best when as many actors as possible implement them. To ensure the highest effectiveness, the EU seeks to build the broadest coalitions of countries to align with its measures."*

*"The EU coordinates on the adoption of new sanctions with like-minded third states when foreign policy goals are shared,"*

***emphasised Agnieszka Wawrzyk, EUBAM advisor on the Transnistrian issue.***

EUBAM, OLAF, and Moldovan authorities stand united in their commitment to this mission, underlining the importance of a coordinated approach to tackling the challenges of sanctions circumvention.



EU-Moldova

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# IGM and EUBAM strengthen cooperation on migration management

On 17 February, Head of EUBAM met with the Valentin Fiodorov, Head of the Moldovan General Inspectorate for Migration (IGM) to discuss critical issues concerning migration management. The meeting focused on the ongoing challenges posed by illegal migration, and the trends shaping migration flows in the region.

This significant meeting highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperation between IGM and EUBAM to address the evolving migration challenges. Both organizations emphasized the need for

a coordinated and comprehensive response to these pressing issues. The discussion also underscored the continued commitment of both parties to working together to implement more effective measures for migration management, ensuring security and stability in the region.

The meeting marked a step in fostering a collaborative approach, laying the foundation for future initiatives aimed at tackling migration challenges in a coordinated and efficient manner.



# EUBAM and the European Commission collaborate to advocate coordinated border control in the Lower Danube Region

EUBAM has continued collaborating with the European Commission to enhance the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes, focusing on advancing coordinated control in the Lower Danube transport corridor. The partnership also facilitated a field visit by DG Move representatives to the Republic of Moldova-Romania border.

The visit, led by Alain Baron, Team Leader of TEN-T & Solidarity Lanes, and Policy Officer Ina Miškulin from DG Move, aimed to strengthen the Solidarity Lanes framework by extending joint and coordinated controls between the Republic of Moldova-Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova-Romania. This initiative builds on commitments made during the Quint meeting in January, where all involved parties reaffirmed their dedication to the shared objectives.

EUBAM's customs expert, Ciprian Rusu, supported site visits to the Giurgiulesti-Galati

and Giurgiulesti-Reni border crossings along with the EUBAM field team on 12 March and the Albita-Leuseni border crossing on 13 March. The visit to Giurgiulesti-Galati focused on operationalising coordinated controls and identified additional infrastructure and equipment needs for ongoing improvements.

This was followed by a meeting in Chişinău with the Head of EUBAM, Slawomir Pichor, where progress on EU-funded border projects and the results of optimising border crossings through coordinated control were discussed. The Head of EUBAM highlighted that joint and coordinated controls have proven effective in speeding up crossings, reducing overlapping activities, ensuring better integrity at the border, and supporting trade compliance. Both sides agreed to continue advocating for smoother cross-border connections in the region.



Stronger Together

# EUPM Moldova: Supporting Moldova's response to illicit financial flows and election interference

On March 6<sup>th</sup>, EUPM Moldova co-organized the 12th meeting of the EU-Moldova Security Hub, that took place in Chişinău. The event brought together experts, practitioners and representatives from EU Member States and Moldovan national institutions in order to tackle the hybrid threats that Moldova continually faces, with a particular focus on illicit financial flows.

The main objective of the forum was to exchange views and best practices on protecting the integrity of elections from such threats, also in view of the upcoming elections in the Republic of Moldova.

Through the platform offered by the Security Hub, participants from the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Romania, Germany, France and Austria, as well as from other EU Member States, analysed the methods by which criminal groups or foreign state actors could try to influence the electoral processes. The focus of the discussions was on identifying illicit financial flows used for electoral purposes, measures needed to counter them and adopting common prevention, and response strategies.





Furthermore, the event included a practical session on identifying common cooperation mechanisms for detecting and sanctioning those involved in illegalities affecting the electoral process, possible areas of action and methods of disrupting illegal financial flows and strengthening prevention mechanisms.

The discussions underlined that the changing nature of interference operations requires more vigilance and coordination among countries to safeguard security and democratic processes.

The forum was co-organized by EUPM Moldova, the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the European Commission's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME).



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# EUPM Moldova: Bolstering Moldova's crisis management through leadership and coordination

Between 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> of February, EUPM Moldova organized a workshop on Leadership and Crisis Management in action. Directed towards senior leaders heading the Republic of Moldova's public institutions, law enforcement agencies and security decision-makers, this initiative aimed to provide the tools for an ethical, adaptive and strategic governance aligned with the country's National Security Strategy, solidifying this broadened expertise through real-world simulated scenarios in order to improve crisis response capabilities.

Through catalysing the skills, expertise and leadership abilities of Moldova's key security decision-makers, the workshop aimed to strengthen inter-agency coordination, and support the resilience of the country's public institutions against a wide range of vulnerabilities and hybrid threats.

This workshop was organized in cooperation by EUPM Moldova, the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs, the European Gendarmerie Force (EUROGENDFOR), and the Piaget Institute.



EU-Moldova

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# EUPM Moldova: Building capacity: A Training for Trainers in Crisis Preparedness

EUPM Moldova remains dedicated to the Republic of Moldova's efforts in strengthening its resilience and ability to counter hybrid threats. This March, in partnership with the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs, EUPM Moldova organized a Training of Trainers, designed to cultivate a new learning framework within state structures responsible for the country's security and crisis response capabilities.

By empowering specialists within Moldova's security institutions to prepare future generations through innovative methods, such as comprehensive crisis scenario simulations, the workshop aimed to ensure institutional continuity and further inter-institutional coordination, which are essential for maintaining vigilant oversight and effective management of crises.





## More efficient and secure borders for Moldovan citizens thanks to EU support

The citizens of the Republic of Moldova benefit from increased efficiency and security at the border thanks to new equipment provided to the General Inspectorate of Border Police of the Ministry of Internal Affairs by the European Union through the project "Supporting the protection, transit, voluntary and informed return and reintegration of Eastern Partnership and third-country nationals affected by the conflict in Ukraine" implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The mobile technology systems offer rapid relocation, adaptation to different operational conditions and coverage of large areas, overcoming the limitations

of physical barriers and improving detection of attempted irregular crossings in unauthorized areas. This initiative, implemented by IOM, ensures better protection for citizens, more effective border management, guaranteeing national security.

### **Ester Ruiz de Azua, IOM Moldova's Chief of Mission:**

*"IOM continues to provide assistance to national authorities to ensure protection oriented and human rights based, uninterrupted and efficient border management process which is in line with international standards."*



# EU-supported Training on Human Rights and Border Surveillance for Moldova's Border Police

With the generous financial support of the European Union, International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Moldova organized a training course on Human Rights Application and advanced user training in Border Surveillance for 20 Border Police officers.

20 Border Police officers improved their skills in using surveillance equipment, applying Human Rights at the state border, following special procedures in Border Surveillance, and ensuring data protection. The training also included hands-on sessions with cutting-edge border surveillance technology.



# Public Event on Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policy on the Path to the EU

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 a workshop “Macroeconomic and Fiscal Policy on the Path to the EU” on 27 February 2025, with the Ministry of Finance, Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) of the European Commission and the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova. This event discussed Moldova’s progress in preparing Economic Reform Programmes (ERP).

The event brought together 70 representatives from Moldovan government authorities, think tanks, business associations, and the international community, including international financial institutions.

Participants were provided with a comprehensive overview of the ERP process, its significance for Moldova, lessons learnt, and the benefits of broader stakeholder involvement in economic policymaking.

Since receiving EU candidate status in 2022, Moldova has been engaged in the ERP process, a key instrument for supporting Moldova’s integration into EU economic coordination processes. Moldova submitted its first ERP in January 2024, which was discussed with the European Commission and the EU Member States, resulting in policy guidance, and three key economic policy recommendations. With the PPF Project team’s assistance, Moldova submitted its second ERP in January 2025. The ERPs which provide detailed medium-term macroeconomic projections,





Finance Minister Victoria Belous opened the event, followed by Joost Kuhlman, Adviser at DG ECFIN. Mandeep Bains, PPF Project expert, discussed the organisational aspects of ERP preparation, particularly the need to institutionalise the preparation and coordination process within the Ministry of Finance, based on lessons learnt from Moldova's first two ERPs, as well as North Macedonia and Serbia. Lisa Klinger, Economic Analyst at DG ECFIN, presented the main findings of the European Commission's assessment of Moldova's first ERP, and the policy

Representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation, and the National Bank of Moldova provided updates on the progress made in implementing the 2024 Policy Guidance.

Julda Kielyte, Team Leader at the EU Delegation, concluded the event by clarifying the different roles of the ERP and the Growth Plan, and stressing their complementary role in Moldova's accession process. The event was moderated by Ion Gumene, State Secretary of the Ministry of Finance.



# Training for the Ministry of Finance's Treasury Directorate on IPSAS 3 and IPSAS 14

On 28 January 2025, the EU-funded "Support the Moldovan Government in identifying and preparing projects linked to the implementation of the Association Agreement" (PPF) Project held a training course on key aspects of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The course focused on IPSAS 3 – Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors, and IPSAS 14 – Events after the Reporting Date.

The course was attended by the Ministry of Finance's State Secretary, Alina Certan, along with representatives from the Treasury Directorate's Methodology and Reporting Divisions.

This initiative follows the Ministry's efforts to advance the development and implementation of National Public Sector Accounting Standards (NPSAS) in alignment with IPSAS. The PPF Project continues to provide on-the-job technical support, facilitating the adaptation of international standards to Moldova's public sector accounting system and building capacity in the government to implement the new standards.

The course was delivered by project experts Irina Grigoryan and Eugenia Busmachiu.



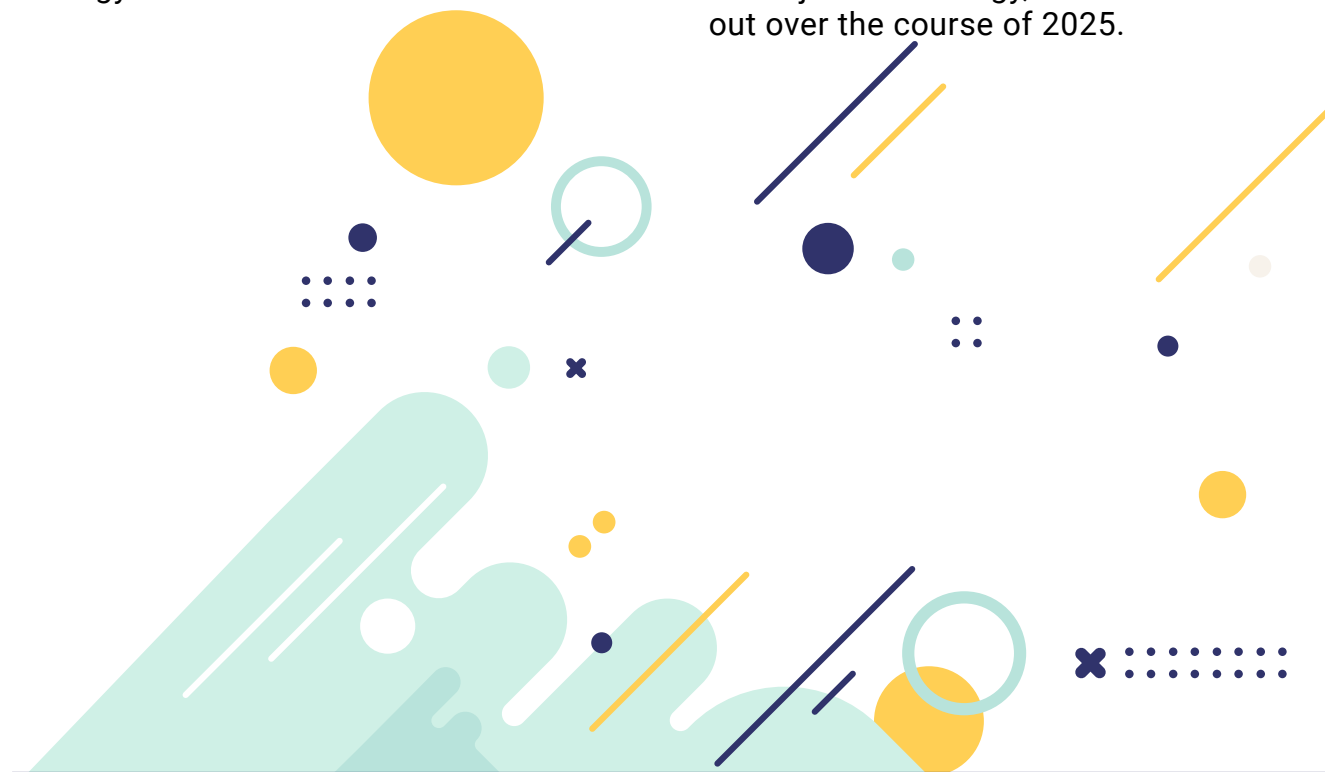
# Supporting the Ministry of Justice and Justice Sector Reforms in the Republic of Moldova – Capacity Building Workshop on the evaluation of the Justice Strategy

In July 2024, the OECD officially launched an EU-funded project aimed at supporting the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova in advancing its justice sector reforms. The project leverages best practices from EU and OECD countries to strengthen Moldova's justice system through analytical support, policy recommendations, and capacity building initiatives.

On 12 March 2025, the OECD organised a capacity building workshop for justice sector stakeholders focused on operationalising the evaluation framework for the evaluation of Moldova's justice sector reform strategy. This workshop gathered over 20 participants from the Ministry of Justice and other justice sector institutions, who engaged in a detailed and lively exchange with OECD experts on the key methodological approaches to evaluate selected measures of the justice strategy.

The first session of the workshop focused on receiving comments from participants on the draft document "Methodological guidance for evaluating justice sector reforms". The second and third sessions were devoted to illustrate the successive steps of the evaluation framework described in the OECD guidance document, with particular emphasis on addressing practical issues such as consideration of the context and challenges of the Strategy's implementation, evaluation questions, sources of information, data collection methods and data triangulation, consultation of stakeholders and communication of evaluation results. Special emphasis was placed on digitalisation and integrity measures as key areas of intervention.

The workshop concluded the first phase of this OECD project component, laying a solid foundation for the actual evaluation of the justice strategy, which will be carried out over the course of 2025.



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# Moldovan civil servants enhance their capacity to align with EU regional development policies

From 6 February to 13 March, more than 50 public sector experts participated in a capacity-building program dedicated to Moldovan authorities responsible for regional and local development.

This initiative aims to adapt the national legislation to European standards and optimizing access to funds available under EU programmes.



The training session was organized in the framework of the project "EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Resilient Communities", funded by the European Union and implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.

*"This initiative demonstrates our commitment to provide public institutions with the necessary tools to make the most of the European funding opportunities,"*

**Tomasz Horbowski, the Director Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova, said.**

Civil servants from key institutions, such as the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Regional Development Agencies, the National Office for Regional

and Local Development, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Ministry of Energy, along with the Court of Accounts, the State Chancellery and the State Financial Inspectorate took part in the programme.

*"The training workshop is a good opportunity to share experiences, deepen knowledge, and identify solutions for balanced and sustainable development of our regions and localities",*

**Angela Țurcanu, Secretary General of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, mentioned.**

Civil servants were trained for eight days by experts from the Institute of Urban and Regional Development in Warsaw, Poland. The trainings were focused on regional development planning, financing public policies, attracting EU funds, and project management.

The main aim of the programme is to adopt effective policies in the field of regional and local development, helping accelerate Moldova's integration into the European Union.

***Marcia Kammitsi, Programme Manager at the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, underlined the essential role of this programme for the country's development:***

*"As Moldova moves forward as an EU candidate country, institutional capacity building will ensure inclusive and sustainable growth for all regions."*



EU-Moldova

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# Local authorities in Moldova learn from Poland's experience with volunteer fire brigades

Mayors of ten localities in the Republic of Moldova where volunteer fire and rescue stations will be built had the opportunity to go to a study visit to Poland on 5-8 February. The objective of the visit was to learn from European best practices on the creation, organization and development of volunteer fire brigades in their communities.

During the trip, representatives of local public authorities visited several Polish localities where volunteer fire brigades operate. The programme included visits to modern intervention stations, demonstrations of fire-fighting equipment and techniques, meetings, and discussions about the involvement of local communities in risk prevention. Moldovan mayors also learned from Poland's experience of involving young people in this activity and training volunteer firefighters.

This visit was organized in the framework of the project *"EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Resilient Communities"*, funded by the European Union and implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.

The municipalities of Valcinet, Radeni, Pepeni, Selemet, Sadaclia, Gura Bicului, Sofia, Izvoare, Mateuti and Calinesti have obtained grants of over 2.8 million lei each for the construction of volunteer fire and rescue stations. This initiative aims to strengthen emergency response capacities and the resilience of local communities.

Three more study visits to several European countries are planned during 2025 to continue the exchange of experience.

It should be noted that there are currently 25 volunteer fire and rescue stations operating in various rural localities in the Republic of Moldova. Around 300 people are actively involved in dealing with emergencies in their communities on a voluntary basis.



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## ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” programme Launch of modernization project of Leova Vocational School

On March 19, 2025, Leova Vocational School celebrated a significant milestone in its modernization process with the event “[Launch of Renovation Works and Equipment Donation](#).” The event brought together key representatives from the Ministry of Education and Research,

the European Union Delegation, the Austrian Embassy, local authorities, and development partners, underscoring the strong commitment to enhancing technical vocational education in the Republic of Moldova.



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The project, part of the EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme, an initiative of Team Europe, represents an investment of approximately EUR 220,000, supported by the European Union (EU) and Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), and implemented by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). The project includes the following key components:

#### Infrastructure Modernization:

- ✦ Renovation of sanitary facilities and water systems
- ✦ Roof repairs to one of the educational buildings
- ✦ Installation of solar panels to improve energy efficiency

#### Equipment Donation:

- ✦ IT equipment: Interactive whiteboards, laptops, projectors, and printers
- ✦ Technical equipment: Wheel alignment machine, car lift, seeder, sewing machine, and fermentation tank for wine production

In addition, as part of the programme, the Vocational School in Leova has benefited from:

#### Capacity-Building Initiatives:

- ✦ Training in effective management for the institution's administration
- ✦ Training in digital pedagogy and innovative teaching methods for educators
- ✦ Student development programs focused on "21st-century" skills

#### Systemic Support for Vocational Education and Training (VET):

- ✦ Development of new textbooks for five qualifications based on Occupational and Qualification Standards
- ✦ Creation of an Electronic Teacher Register and an Electronic Student Agenda on the EMIS platform (Educational Management Information System) for VET.



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Approximately 300 students and teachers will directly benefit from these improvements, which will contribute to the region's economic development by providing the younger generation with an educational environment aligned with labour market demands. The official launch event marks a significant step forward in supporting education and local communities, having a lasting impact on technical vocational education across the country.

This project is part of a broader series of initiatives in technical educational institutions

in Cupcini and Brătușeni, collectively contributing to the transformation and preparation of young people for a prosperous future.

These activities are part of the "[EU4Moldova: Local Communities](#)" programme, a Team Europe initiative funded by the EU, the governments of Germany, Austria, and Poland, and implemented by GIZ, ADA, and SFPL in Moldova. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the partners.



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# “Fabrica de unt din Florești”: a journey of tradition, innovation and resilience

The history of “Fabrica de Unt din Florești”, a dairy producer in northern Moldova, is rich with tradition and resilience. Founded in 1966, the factory had long been a pillar

of the local community, producing high-quality dairy products. However, like many enterprises in post-Soviet countries, the factory faced severe challenges in the 1990s.



## A new chapter

The early 2000s marked the beginning of a new chapter for the company. The current shareholders, including the Grigoras family, embarked on an ambitious plan to modernise and restructure the business.

A key factor in the company's success was its unwavering commitment to tradition.

*"We continue to use special lactic acid bacteria for production, a practice that dates back to the Soviet era,"*

**Andrei explains.**

*"This dedication to traditional methods, combined with the exclusive use of locally sourced Moldovan milk, ensures that our products have a unique and cherished flavour."*

## A game-changing partnership

A turning point came when Andrei and his team partnered with the EBRD and the [European Union](#).

*"In 2019 we completed our first major project within the EBRD's EU4Business Credit Line – a joint initiative of the two institutions,"*

**Andrei says.**

*"The installation of a state-of-the-art milk cleaning and pasteurisation line from Germany was a game-changer. It improved the quality of our products and extended their shelf life, making them more appealing to retailers and reducing waste."*

Inspired by the success of this project, the company undertook a second in 2021.

## Adapting in a turbulent world

*"After the Covid crisis and Russia's aggression against our neighbours from Ukraine, I do not think that anyone in Moldova is ready to make plans for the long term. And therefore some large projects, either strategic, new markets or new developments in some areas, are postponed."*

Nevertheless, we remain committed to producing high-quality dairy products while continuously improving our operations,"

**Andrei says.**

*"Even in uncertain times, our dedication to our craft ensures that our products will continue to grace Moldovan tables for generations to come."*

More: [EBRD and EU help Moldovan milk producer reduce costs and improve automation](#)



# EU and EBRD boost competitiveness of wine producer in Moldova

Founded in 2019, Bavax SRL is a Moldovan company that preserving the wines produced by its partner vineyards.

Quality assurance is at the top of the company's agenda.



With the EU and EBRD support Bavax, one of the biggest [Moldovan](#) wine producers, launched a new production line of sparkling wines. The new equipment allowed the company to maintain high standards,

become greener and ease the work of the wine makers.

More: [EBRD and EU boost competitiveness of wine producer in Moldova](#)



# A Business Development Centre was inaugurated in Crihana Veche with the support of the EU and UNDP Moldova

A modern space for business development and attracting investments was inaugurated on Friday, 21 February in Crihana Veche village in Cahul district. The space, with an area of over 1400 square meters, already hosts two businesses, and other investors will be attracted in the future. The Business Development Centre in Crihana Veche was modernized and renovated with the support of the "EU4Moldova: Focal Regions", funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP and UNICEF, worth €600,000 (including local contribution).

*"The Business Development Centre in Crihana Veche is a modern and functional space, providing valuable opportunities for investors from various sectors and supporting local business growth. We aim to stimulate the business environment and contribute to job creation in Crihana Veche, Cahul region, by identifying optimal solutions for the development of the entrepreneurial community,"*

**said Igor Miclaus, Mayor of Crihana Veche village, Cahul district.**



The construction works included renovation of the building, reparation of the roof, modernization of the water supply and sewage networks, building of a segment of road connecting to the national route R-34,

development of an area for road access and a parking lot, installing lighting systems on the entire site of the unit, landscaping green spaces, etc.



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Currently, the Centre hosts two residents, who have created 10 new jobs for the inhabitants of Crihana Veche, and the activity of these companies will contribute more than 650,000 lei annually to the local budget, representing about 10% of the local budget revenues.

*"For me, as the owner of a small local bakery, being a resident of the Business Development Centre in Crihana Veche is a great advantage. Here I get the right space to grow my business, lower costs and the chance to collaborate with other entrepreneurs. It's the perfect place for those who want to grow their business quickly and safely with support right here at home in Moldova,"*

**said Otilia Vîzdoagă, entrepreneur.**

The modernized infrastructure of the three-stored Centre for Business Development in Crihana Veche could benefit not only Crihana Veche, but also the neighbouring areas, including Cahul municipality.

The programme "EU4Moldova: Focal Regions" will continue to support Crihana Veche in attracting new investors. The objective is to attract at least three additional companies and create 40 new jobs, thus strengthening the economic impact of the Business Center on the region.

The "EU4Moldova: Focal regions" Programme(2019-2025) supports intelligent, inclusive and sustainable social-economic development in the regions of Cahul and Ungheni to ensure better standards of living to the citizens. The programme has a total budget of 23 million euro, is funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).



# EU4Moldova: Local Communities – new support for small producers in Moldova

Small producers in Moldova's regions receive a new boost for business growth! The Organization for Entrepreneurship Development (ODA), in partnership with the EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme, has officially launched a series of information sessions dedicated to local

entrepreneurs in Edinet, Straseneni and Leova. These sessions aim to present available financial support opportunities through the Small Producers Support Programme, a key instrument for fostering the growth and modernization of local businesses.



More than 150 entrepreneurs, local authorities, and financial experts from the Straseneni, Edinet, and Leova districts participated in these events. They learned about eligibility criteria, the application process, and the benefits of the programme, which places a strong emphasis on innovation, sustainable development, and support for women entrepreneurs.

Officially approved in July 2024 by the Government of the Republic of Moldova, the Small Producers Support Programme aims to stimulate regional and local entrepreneurship and enhance the competitiveness of local businesses. This initiative will support at least 100 companies, enabling investments in new technologies, expanding production capacities, and creating jobs in local communities. Non-reimbursable funding of up to 500,000 MDL is provided for small and medium-sized enterprises, with a minimum contribution of 30% from beneficiaries.

In addition to financial support, beneficiaries will have access to training sessions

and consultancy, essential for improving business development strategies. Thus, the programme not only provides financial resources but also strengthens entrepreneurs' skills, increasing their chances of long-term success.

The EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme continues to be a strategic partner in developing the local business environment, creating real opportunities for economic growth, and modernizing communities across the country.

For more information about the Small Producers Support Programme, visit <https://www.oda.md/ro/granturi/mici-producatori-ro> or contact the Consulting Center at 022 22 57 99.

These activities are part of the EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme – a Team Europe initiative financed by the EU, the German, Austrian and Polish governments, and implemented by GIZ, ADA and SFPL in Moldova.



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# Support for local entrepreneurship: 26.3 million lei in grants for 75 companies in the Republic of Moldova

The Government of the Republic of Moldova, together with the European Union, through the Organization for Entrepreneurship Development under the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, has awarded 26.3 million lei in grants to 75 local companies. The total investment generated by these grants in the economy amounts to over 51.3 million lei.

The grants are distributed through various programs managed by ODA. Through the Digital Transformation Program for Small and Medium Enterprises, 46 companies will receive grants totalling 12.3 million lei, with estimated investments of 20.7 million lei in the national economy. These funds will be used for the acquisition and implementation of digital technologies.



Under the Women Entrepreneurship Support Program, 16 companies will benefit from grants totalling 5.7 million lei. The implementation of these investment projects is expected to generate a total investment of 12 million lei in the economy. The funded initiatives focus on business development in sectors such as milling, bakery and pastry production, healthcare, and education.

Through the Small and Medium Enterprises Retooling and Energy Efficiency Program, eight companies from various industries will receive grants totalling 5.8 million lei. These funds will support investments estimated at 13.6 million lei, contributing to the modernization and efficiency of production processes.

Additionally, five companies will develop their businesses through the "PARE 1+2" Remittances Attraction Program, benefiting from non-reimbursable financial support totalling 2.4 million lei. This funding will generate nearly 5 million lei in economic investments.

Of the 75 companies receiving grants, 65 are funded by the Government of the Republic of Moldova with 23 million lei, while 10 companies receive financial support from the European Union, totalling 3.3 million lei.

by the European Union and implemented with support from the International Centre for Migration Policy Development and the Migration Partnership Facility, through ODA, Veneto Lavoro, and BRD, while one company has been funded from World Bank Group resources.



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# European funding for innovation: Mobimed implements digital solutions for growth

Ion Țapeș, founder and administrator of Mobimed, based in Ialoveni, is a visionary entrepreneur determined to bring medical furniture manufactured in the Republic of Moldova to European markets.

Although the company was founded in 2022, during its first year of operation, business management relied on a simple Excel file. Recognizing the need for modernization to expand his business, in 2024, the entrepreneur applied for the SME Digital Transformation Program, managed by ODA and funded by the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, securing a non-reimbursable financial grant of over 300,000 lei.

With the help of this funding, Mobimed will develop an e-commerce platform and a digital inventory management system, enhancing sales efficiency and expanding access to a broader, more competitive market.

*"We are grateful to the European Union for this essential support, which will help us grow our company, create jobs, and improve patient comfort by providing more ergonomic and durable medical furniture,"*

**emphasized Ion Țapeș.**

The total investment in the national economy is estimated at over 400,000 lei, contributing to the development of the medical sector and strengthening the competitiveness of SMEs in the Republic of Moldova.

Since 2022, through the SME Digital Transformation Program, managed by the Organization for Entrepreneurship Development, a total of 259 companies have benefited from grants amounting to nearly 70 million lei, provided by the Government of the Republic of Moldova and the European Union.





# The “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” LEADER action wraps up with good results

The “EU4Moldova: Local Communities” programme's support to the implementation of 'LEADER Moldova', launched in 2021 and completed by 2024, marked a significant milestone in fostering inclusive rural growth in Moldova. This initiative aimed at creating an enabling environment for community-driven development, being pivotal in establishing a nationwide mechanism for rural development, marking Moldova as the first non-EU country to adopt the LEADER approach to community led local development as a public policy tool.

The establishment of the LEADER Program involved a structured process that began with setting up the necessary legal and institutional framework. Local Action Groups (LAGs) achieved legal registration and updated their Local Development Strategies (LDSs) to align with national requirements. Operational documents for the national LEADER Program were developed to ensure clarity in implementation. Institutional conditions for effective program management and monitoring were established within relevant public authorities.



On 13 May 2022, the first edition of the LEADER Program under the National Fund for agriculture and rural development was officially launched, with 37 LAGs selected for grant funding based on their LDSs. A total of 893 local development projects were financed in the 2022-2023. To ensure efficient program management, two significant institutional advancements took place:

1. Creation of the LEADER Unit: In July 2023, the Agency for Intervention and Payments in Agriculture (AIPA) formally established the LEADER Unit, responsible for this program implementation and monitoring.

2. Development of the Moldova LEADER IT Software (MLIS): Between 2022 and 2023, MLIS was developed to digitalize the program. The system was officially launched in 2024, fully digitalizing the second edition of the LEADER Program and streamlining processes such as LAG application submissions, financial tracking, and data monitoring and reporting.

Additionally, 198 projects were implemented with EU4Moldova Local communities project financial resources, engaging 135 localities directly, and 430 localities benefited from their results, reaching 1,443 direct and 119,430 indirect beneficiaries. The LAGs received support in developing operational skills, mobilizing communities, and thematic facilitation to beneficiaries.

However, according to the LEADER Impact Assessment Study, developed by experts from LEADER France in 2024, challenges remain, including limited funding, administrative burdens, and gaps in monitoring, and human resources. Recommendations for future development include increasing financial resources, simplifying administrative procedures, and enhancing communication to ensure long-term sustainability.

In conclusion, significant results in community-driven rural development, sustainable growth, and improved quality of life in rural areas were achieved.

The component 4 was implemented within the [“EU4Moldova: Local Communities”](#) programme - a Team Europe initiative funded by the European Union and the governments of Germany, Austria, and Poland.

# DAY Foială! YardSale pentru Comunități – an event that celebrated rural producers and empowered communities

DAY Foială! YardSale pentru Comunități (a.n. from Romanian - YardSale for Communities) - a special edition of YardSale for the "EU4Moldova: Local Communities" programme took place. The event hosted 40 participants, out of which 18 small producers were from the Local Action Groups (LAG) in the Republic of Moldova, offering the public in the capital city a variety of products,

including freshly picked fruits from rural orchards, beeswax products, honey, souvenirs, and handicrafts. At specially arranged information points, event guests learned more about rural development opportunities, including experiences from LAGs that implemented local projects with the support of international partners' funds and the LEADER Programme.



To ensure the participation of the small producers from the benefited rural areas, the Yard Platform provided a series of online workshops for a better preparation for the fair, as well as for other events. During these workshops, the participants have learned more on how to develop the essential skills in areas such as online marketing, product presentation, e-commerce, branding and brand protection.

Both the event and the trainings helped the producers to experience the benefits of participating in events outside their localities and communities. Additionally, the fair facilitated access and visibility for producers from rural areas, provided a space for connection with other producers and consumers from Chișinău.



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The event attracted over 3000 visitors that got acquainted with rural business from LAGs' regions.

During the event, alongside rural craftsmen, YardSale's loyal partners also participated with a range of products, thematic workshops for children and adults, initiatives to learn about responsible consumption and waste disposal, open-air exhibitions with local photographers. This special edition of YardSale aimed to promote local talents from the cultural sector, featuring performances by the all-women DJs collective Driadele, culminating in a performance of Snails and Tricotaj.

According to the participants and the organising team, this event was described as impactful for the beneficiaries' business and promotion, helping them extend their base of clients. The fair became a platform for communication, demonstrating the power of communities in the country and their contribution to the sustainable development of the local economy.

*The event was facilitated by the EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme – a Team Europe initiative funded by the European Union and the governments of Germany, Austria, and Poland.*



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# Five rural localities in Moldova will become Smart Villages with EU support

For the first time in the Republic of Moldova the concept of Smart Villages - a European initiative to support the sustainable development of rural areas - is being tested. Five localities in different regions of the country will receive grants of around 5 million lei to carry out innovative projects and install photovoltaic parks, which will contribute to their energy independence.

The initiative is part of the project "*EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Resilient Communities*", funded by the European Union and implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.

This pilot project is being piloted in the villages of Larga (r. Briceni), Cosnita (r. Dubasari), Lozova (r. Strasenii), Mereni (r. Anenii Noi) and Sipoteni (r. Calarasi), which were selected following a call for proposals in October 2024.



The funds will be used for public infrastructure development, digitalization, local services, community cooperation and green energy. In addition, each village will benefit from a photovoltaic park, with a capacity of up to 200 kW, helping to reduce electricity costs.

To effectively implement this project, the Smart Local Initiative Groups in the five villages were trained by international and local experts and developed five-year Smart Village Strategies. These documents set the vision and the development direction for each community.

Also in February, representatives from the municipalities went on a study visit to Estonia, where they learned from European best practices on how this concept can improve people's lives in rural areas.

The next step is to consult with local communities and prioritize the projects based on the Smart Villages strategies, to be funded by the EU under the initiative "*EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Resilient Communities*". The actual implementation will start soon, with solar parks and the first smart projects expected to be implemented until August 2025.



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# Moldova's Livestock Industry Receives over 10 million EUR Investment Boost

The livestock industry in Moldova is set for significant growth, with over 10 million EUR in investments [in dairy farms](#) aimed at modernizing farms and improving animal welfare, also thanks to technical support from a United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Project financed by the European Union (EU). This funding will help Moldova's farmers meet

European Union standards, enhance their competitiveness, and boost sustainability in the agriculture sector.

Between October and November 2024, more than 50 cattle farm owners and aspiring dairy entrepreneurs—including students—participated in specialized training on EU environmental regulations and animal welfare standards.



Additionally, over 20 farms received expert assessments from the EU-UNIDO Project "Improving Standards Compliance through Increased National Capacities for Residue Monitoring", identifying opportunities for improvement and investment.

By the end of the year, six agricultural enterprises across Moldova—spanning Ialoveni, Florești, UTA Găgăuzia, Fălești, and Glodeni districts—had signed grant contracts under the World Bank-funded AGGRI Project.



With a combined value of 10 million EUR, these investment projects included circa 5 million EUR in non-reimbursable funding, a significant boost for Moldovan businesses looking to modernize and grow, timely leveraged by the EU-UNIDO Project through accurate assessments and capacity building of potential beneficiaries.

The training sessions proved especially impactful, as they were delivered directly on working farms, offering hands-on learning and fostering collaboration between experienced farm managers and newcomers. Five businesses received one-to-one coaching in dairy farming, with experts from the Project providing tailored advice on a range of topics, including manure management, animal welfare, biosecurity, and milking hygiene. Special emphasis was placed on the integration of new technologies and the rules for the use of antibiotics and other pharmaceutical products in milk production.

With these financial resources now in hand, farmers are poised to make focused, responsible investments in their operations.

*"The quality of the product starts with the health of the animals," says Marian Bîtiu, owner of a cattle farm in northern Moldova and one of the project's beneficiaries. "At Gifis Farm, we currently raise 180 cattle. All resources provided through the AGGRI grant will be reinvested into improving the farm's infrastructure and ensuring optimal conditions for animal welfare. These upgrades include the installation of a state-of-the-art ventilation system and a modern manure management system, featuring new pumps and a scraper. Additionally, we have invested in high-quality animal resting mats and non-slip rubber mats, which have been installed in the walking alleys to minimize the risk of injury and significantly enhance the comfort and safety of the animals",*

**Marian Bîtiu stated.**

Beyond these measures, the investment will also streamline farm operations. New automated systems—including a robotic calf feeder, a robotic feed mixer, and a robotic milking system—will help optimize productivity while ensuring higher standards of animal care. Bîtiu is particularly excited about the high-performance software that integrates with the milking robot: „It is a unique technology in our country; the integration of a high-performance software system that will monitor herd health in real-time, will facilitate disease prevention and improve overall animal well-being”, explains Marian Bîtiu.

These improvements at the small farm in Navirnet village, Făleşti district, will lower production and processing costs using EU-sourced, energy-efficient machinery. Additionally, in a move that underscores Bîtiu's commitment to sustainability, a photovoltaic system will be installed at Gifis Farm, significantly reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

*"Supporting the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises in Moldova—helping them align with European quality standards—requires more than just building capacity. It's also about connecting them with the resources they need to thrive. And we are thrilled to have not only provided tailored training and guidance, but also assisted the authorities in identifying livestock units poised to advance to the next stage of development, with a conscious investment in both animal welfare and environmental health",*

**explains Dona Școla, National Coordinator of the EU-UNIDO Project "Improving the Standards Compliance through Increased National Capacities for Residue Monitoring".**



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The livestock sector grant program, part of the Agriculture Governance, Growth and Resilience Investment Project (AGGRI), financed by the World Bank and implemented by the Agency for Agriculture Intervention and Payments (AIPA), is specifically designed to support farm modernization, with a focus on improving animal welfare and environmental protection. Through this initiative, UNIDO has played a crucial role in assisting small and medium-sized livestock farmers to meet EU standards, ensuring they are well-positioned to benefit from the grants available under the AGGRI Project, which is aimed at promoting governance, growth, and resilience in Moldova's agricultural sector.





## European Commission and Moldova agree on a 2-year Comprehensive Strategy for Energy Independence and Resilience and immediate support with the energy bills

On 4 February 2025, the European Commission and the Republic of Moldova have agreed on a 2-year Comprehensive Strategy for Energy Independence and Resilience of Moldova. It has a two-fold objective of decoupling Moldova from the insecurities of Russian supply of energy and fully integrating it in the EU energy market. Under this strategy, overall support for the

Republic of Moldova would account to €250 million for 2025, of which €100 million will be provided by the EU by mid-April. In addition to this overall support, and as part of the same strategy, an offer of €60 million is made available for the people in the Transnistrian region of Moldova (the Left Bank) subject to conditions.



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In the short term, the overall package **will support Moldovan consumers who are facing steep price increases on the Right Bank**. It will allow to compensate all excess electricity costs for all households for up to 110 kWh every month until 31st of December 2025. It will also include a hardship fund to alleviate the energy bills of the most exposed households and allow to compensate the entire increase of electricity costs for social institutions, including kindergartens, schools and hospitals. Additional funding of €15 million will be provided to support the energy bills of agro-food and manufacturing businesses. Furthermore, through the mobilisation of international financial institutions, additional funding of €50 million will be available for sustainable investments in energy efficiency projects by local public authorities, households and SMEs.

Under this strategy, funding of €60 million, is also available for the more than 350,000 people in the Transnistrian region who have been left in cold in January following Gazprom discontinuing energy supplies. This support is subject to steps being taken on fundamental freedoms and human rights in the Transnistrian region and excludes energy intensive activities.

In the longer term, the EU support will allow Moldova to **improve its energy security through investments and reforms for the energy transition and ensure the full phase out of Russian supply of energy resources**. The package is a continuation of the work done by the European Union and partners to reduce Moldova's energy vulnerability. Today Moldova's energy system is providing electricity and heat without any blackouts.

### **A Comprehensive Strategy to ensure Energy Independence and Resilience**

The Strategy will unfold in three steps to tackle both immediate needs and long-term challenges:

Under the first step, the Commission has already provided €30 million EU emergency support announced on 27 January. €10 million will allow Moldova to purchase electricity on the European markets for the Right Bank, which will help lower consumer prices. €20 million are used for the emergency purchase of gas for meeting the basic needs of the population in the Transnistrian region.

The second step will entail €100 million in further financial support to Moldova until mid-April to alleviate higher energy bills for consumers on the Right Bank. Additional funding is also available to support the people of the Transnistrian region subject to steps being taken on fundamental freedoms and human rights.

Under the third step, the Commission and international partners will finance actions and investments in Moldova's energy resilience and independence as well as support to lower energy costs for all Moldovans. The actions will be included in the Reform Agenda under the Moldova Growth Plan and implemented until the end of 2026.

The Comprehensive Energy Support Package is another demonstration of the EU's strong support to Moldova. When adopted by the co-legislators, the Moldova Growth Plan should provide before the summer a first tranche to boost the country's economy and to support its EU accession.



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More information: [EU and Moldova agree comprehensive energy strategy to decouple from Russian supply and integrate with EU market - EU for Moldova](#)



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## 13 families from Briceni and Sîngerei will benefit from support for energy renovation of their homes through the Residential Energy Efficiency Fund

Another 13 families from the districts of Briceni and Sîngerei will benefit from financial support for the energy renovation of their homes through the financing programs of the Residential Energy Efficiency Fund (REEF). The support is granted in the context of the initiative to increase the energy efficiency of individual households in rural areas with extreme energy vulnerability, financially supported by the **European Union**.

Under the pilot project, the European Union will finance 50% of the eligible expenditure for the energy rehabilitation of 180 vulnerable households in rural areas. **The European Union allocated € 1 million for about 180 households included in the pilot project.**

The REEF will cover up to 45% of the eligible costs of energy efficiency works, while the beneficiaries' contribution will be only 5%.



With the help of these financial sources, beneficiaries will be able to take concrete steps towards more energy efficient and comfortable homes. The support provided will allow them to implement a number of essential measures, such as insulating external walls and foundations, rehabilitating the roof, replacing external doors and windows or upgrading heating systems. The installation of a solid biofuel heating plant will also be possible - a sustainable and affordable solution for thermal comfort.

All these interventions help to reduce energy consumption, lower monthly costs and improve quality of life.

The FEERM program is developed by the Government of the Republic of Moldova with the financial support of the European Union, implemented by the National Center for Sustainable Energy and the Ministry of Energy, financially supported through the project "Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy for Moldova" (E4M).



E4M is initiated by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), implemented by

the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and co-financed by the European Union, Germany, Norway and Denmark.



The project reflects the commitment of authorities and international partners to support Moldova's transition to sustainable

energy and better living conditions for all its citizens.



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# Sunshine in every home: a solar collector becomes number 1 ally for lower bills

A home-grown innovation developed and tested with support from the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme implemented by UNDP could significantly reduce the burden of bills.

Vladimir Ursu of the Renaştere Rurală (Rural Renaissance) Public Association is passionate about innovation. Thus, he has developed a new heating system. It collects light and heat from the sun and converts it into a heating agent.



*"This collector consists of hermetically sealed vacuum glass tubes that were primarily used to heat domestic hot water, and we've modified them to heat the air. The air is propelled through these evacuated tubes, air that we take out of the room, heat them up and put back into the room. On sunny winter days this is possible".*

The solar collector significantly improves energy efficiency and is recommended for heating homes, public buildings, and industrial facilities. It helps reduce energy costs and promotes the use of green energy.

Although the initial installation cost is approximately MDL 24,000, the daily electricity consumption is only MDL 2.

While the solar collector is efficient during the daytime, an additional heat source is required during the night period. Vitalie Boico is one of the beneficiaries of the solar collector. Although he was sceptical at first, he agreed to have his house turned into an experimental field.

Vitalie has been trying for several years to cut down on maintenance costs and bills and to implement several solutions that can help make his home more energy efficient.





A similar installation was also connected in Ribnița. The construction and testing of the two solar collectors were made possible with the support of the EU Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.

In the cold season, the solar collector generates hot air, which can be used as a thermal agent for space heating during the day. In summer, the hot air produced can be used to dry fruits and vegetables, providing valuable opportunities for local entrepreneurship development.

By using the solar collector, public institutions and businesses can become best-practice examples in transitioning to renewable energy sources, reducing heating costs and dependence on natural gas for heating.

In 2024, the Rural Renaissance Public Association received a grant of EUR 15 thousand through the sectoral environmental platform supported by the EU under the Confidence Building Measures Programme, implemented by UNDP.

More: [Sunshine in every home: a solar collector becomes number 1 ally for lower bills | United Nations Development Programme](#)



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# Support for the Development of Local Climate and Energy Action Plans

Over 20 new signatories of the Covenant of Mayors gathered in Chişinău to participate in a training dedicated to the development of Local Climate and Energy Action Plans (SECAP), an essential step for new signatories of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in the Republic of Moldova.

At the opening of the training, Marina Lungu, representative of the Ministry of Environment, emphasized the importance of integrating climate adaptation measures into local strategies. She also highlighted that the Ministry of Environment, as the National Coordinator of the Covenant (CNC), supports these efforts through financing mechanisms dedicated to local climate adaptation.

Irina Plis, national expert for the Covenant of Mayors – East project, underlined the synergy between the government's policies and CoM-East activities in developing Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans.

The experience, knowledge, and capacities built over the three phases of the project can contribute significantly to this process

## The main topics discussed included:

- Introduction to the Covenant of Mayors and the structure of SECAP.
- Organizing the process of developing the SECAP (establishing a working group, data collection).
- Hands-on work on the CoM-East platform and practical exercises on mitigation measures.
- Case study: The experience of Sireţi in implementing the SECAP and reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Presentation of the NRGCOM Project: Creating the first energy communities in the Republic of Moldova – opportunities for Covenant of Mayors signatories.



The second day of training, dedicated to new signatories of the Covenant of Mayors, took place at the Faculty of Energy and Electrical Engineering of the Technical University of Moldova. It focused on integrating climate adaptation measures into Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAP).



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# Renewable Energy Communities – A Key Step Towards a Sustainable Local Future

Ungheni, Sireți, Cantemir, Vișniovca, and Anenii Noi are among the few localities already addressing the creation of energy communities. This is because experts from the European NRGCOM project, funded through the Interreg Program for the Danube Region, have initiated the first discussions and presentations on the benefits of developing renewable energy communities. The Alliance for Energy Efficiency and Renewables (AEER), one of the 12 project partners in the Danube Region, plays a central role in this initiative, leading a key activity that includes logistical support and mentorship for establishing the first energy communities in Moldova.

During visits to various localities, the NRGCOM team is promoting the concept of energy communities and is preparing to launch the registration process for the first energy communities by the fall of this year.

In the regional context, it is important to note that the registration and operation of energy communities are at different stages of development across countries. Germany and Austria are among the most advanced in this field, having already gained significant experience.

Starting in 2024, the concept of renewable energy communities has been incorporated into Moldovan legislation through amendments to Law No. 10/2016 on the promotion of renewable energy use. These communities allow individuals, legal entities, or homeowners' associations to produce, consume, and distribute renewable energy, thus contributing to both reducing energy costs and increasing the energy independence of local communities.







## ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE



### Strengthening environmental and air quality management: progress in the EU-funded Twinning project

Being in its 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of implementation, the Twinning project "Air Quality and Environment", financed by the European Union, continues the series of commenced activities, completing them with new ones and involving more and more public institutions in hands-on trainings.

The project has started the first training cycle within the Component 4 „Environmentally sound management of chemicals strengthened” aimed at strengthening the institutional capacities of the Ministry of Environment, the Environment Agency and the Environment Protection Inspectorate. On March 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, about 20 representatives of the abovementioned beneficiary institutions participated in an introductory training on REACH and CLP, delivered by experts from the Swedish Chemicals Agency, KemI, together with representatives of the Ministry of Environment.

The training aimed to provide participants with a clear understanding of the alignment of national legislation with the European Union regulations on the Evaluation, Registration, Authorization and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), as well as the Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Chemicals and Mixtures (CLP).



The EU experts focused on describing the requirements for environmentally sound management of chemicals (such as the basic elements of the regulations, alignment, implementation, responsibilities, measures for the correct application of the legislation,



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sanctions, etc.), including presentations, case studies and interactive discussions. At the end of the training, participants were awarded with certificates of participation.

Specific hands-on trainings started as well within the Component 1 “Air quality management, control and enforcement strengthened”. The most recent one took place at the Air Quality Laboratory of the Environment Agency. The Laboratory staff from the Republic of Moldova together with the expert from Finnish Meteorological Institute, FMI carried out a joint assessment aimed at improving the use of existing instruments, optimizing the analysis process and performing various calculations based on the results obtained from laboratory analyses with a focus on ion chromatography.

This cooperation has an important role in strengthening the analytical capacity of the Laboratory with the perspective of expanding the scope of accreditation according to the requirements of the ISO 17025 standard. It will also include the review of separate analysis methods for anions and cations, investigated from the PM2.5 filter, calculation of statistical parameters of the methods, data accuracy and quality control, assessment of the reliability of sampling methods, reporting of the obtained data and harmonization of measurement techniques.

Thus, the EU expert had the opportunity to assess the current measurement capabilities and the performance of the ion chromatography system which will lead to identifying aspects that require improvement to increase the efficiency of monitoring air quality parameters according to the requirements of EU legislation.



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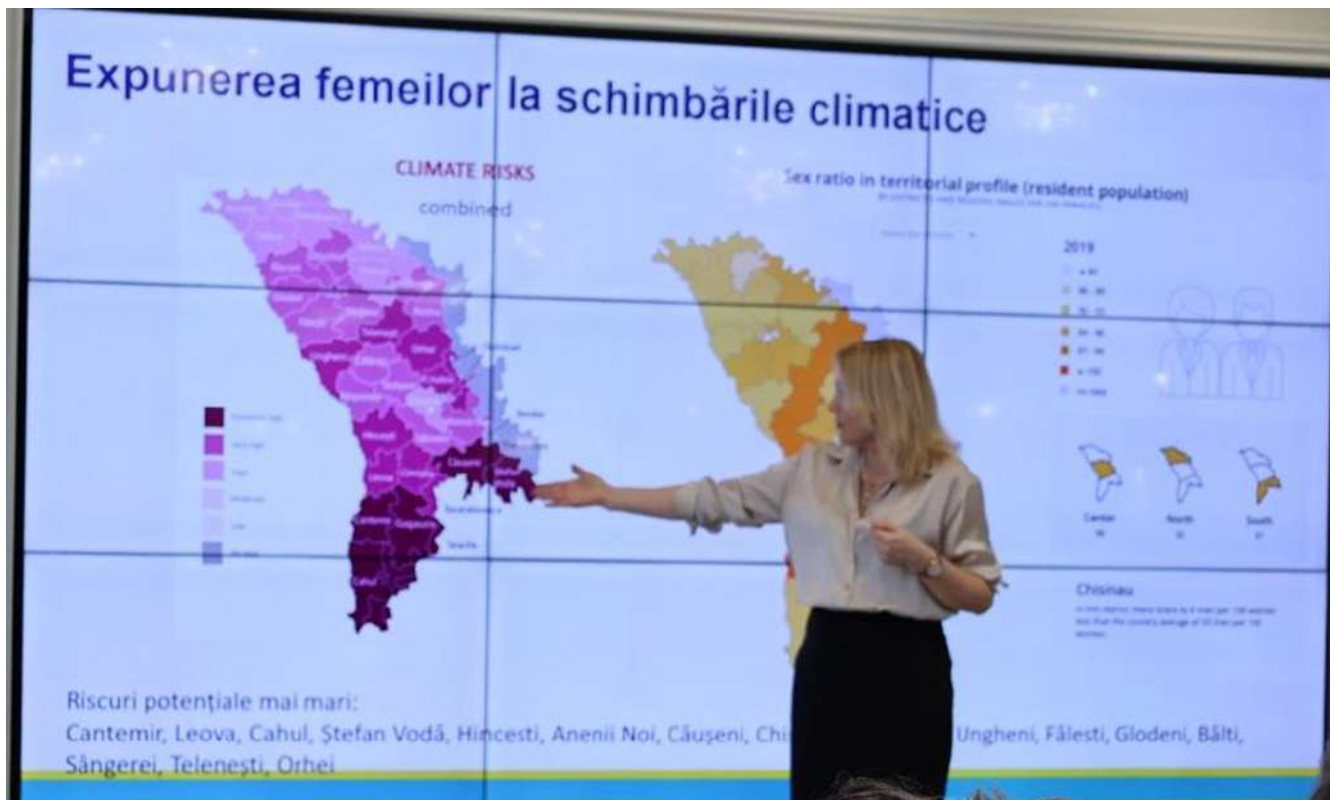
# Women and climate change – two thematic days for women from Covenant of Mayors Signatory Communities

In the face of climate challenges, women play a key role in promoting sustainable solutions. This was emphasized by over 30 women from local public administrations, civil society, and other local organizations from villages and cities that are signatories of the Covenant of Mayors. On March 12-13, the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in Moldova organized the training "Women and Climate Change," with the support of the European Union.

During the two-day training, participants from different regions of the Republic of Moldova

discussed the impact of climate risks on vulnerable groups, including women, and ways to adapt to climate change. Additionally, they identified collaboration opportunities for developing and implementing local climate adaptation projects, thus contributing to the achievement of Local Energy and Climate Action Plans (LECAP).

While the first day focused more on theoretical aspects, the second day was dedicated to group work and sharing local experiences, including discussions on citizen engagement and the importance of their involvement in local actions.





*"During these two training days, we learned how to identify climate hazards and suitable solutions. One consequence we are facing is the rapid spread of ragweed, an invasive plant that affects public health."*

*We will integrate control methods into our local action plan,"*

***shared Eugenia Gobjilă from the village of Volintiri, a member of the "Simion Ciapchii for Volintiri" Charity Foundation.***



# The EU collaborates with Moldova towards a greener, more resilient and competitive economy

## Moldova Kicks Off the EU4Green Recovery East Programme

On 21 February 2025, the European Union and Moldova launched the EU4Green Recovery East programme, reinforcing their commitment towards EU integration, green economy and better water management.

With an EU contribution of €21.3 million over four years (2025-2028) for the entire Eastern Partnership region, this programme builds on a decade of EU support, advancing efforts in circular economy, sustainable water management, and environmental data management.

Circular economy provides new opportunities for Moldova's government and businesses, particularly SMEs, to enhance resource

efficiency while boosting their productivity and creating jobs.

In light of climate change water becomes a critical natural resource, essential to Moldova's economic stability, public health, and environmental resilience. The EU4Green Recovery East programme will implement measures to reduce pollution, address economic aspects of water, and improve cross-border cooperation on shared water resources.

Through the EU4Green Recovery East programme, the EU will also promote legal alignment with EU environmental legislation (Chapter 27) and the EU Green Deal. This will be done in support of Moldova's preparations for EU integration.



## A Strong Partnership for a Greener Future

The online kick-off meeting on Friday, 21 February, brings together Moldova's Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, related government agencies, business representatives, civil society, and international partners, including the European Commission and other donors. This meeting is the first step in defining national priorities, engaging stakeholders, and shaping technical consultations to tailor the programme's activities to Moldova's specific needs.

The EU4Green Recovery East is a regional programme supporting the entire Eastern

Partnership region. With an EU contribution of €21.3 million (2025-2028), it focuses on five key components: (1) promoting a circular economy, (2) ensuring water is managed as a critical resource, (3) advancing legal approximation with EU environmental legislation, (4) strengthening integration into EU-wide environmental cooperation and data exchange, and (5) fostering cross-border environmental cooperation.

The programme is implemented by five partners: Expertise France with the French International Office for Water (OiEau), OECD, UNECE, UNIDO, and the Environment Agency Austria (UBA), as the consortium coordinator.



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## The schools in Cahul and Ungheni are becoming eco-friendly thanks to the Eco-School initiative

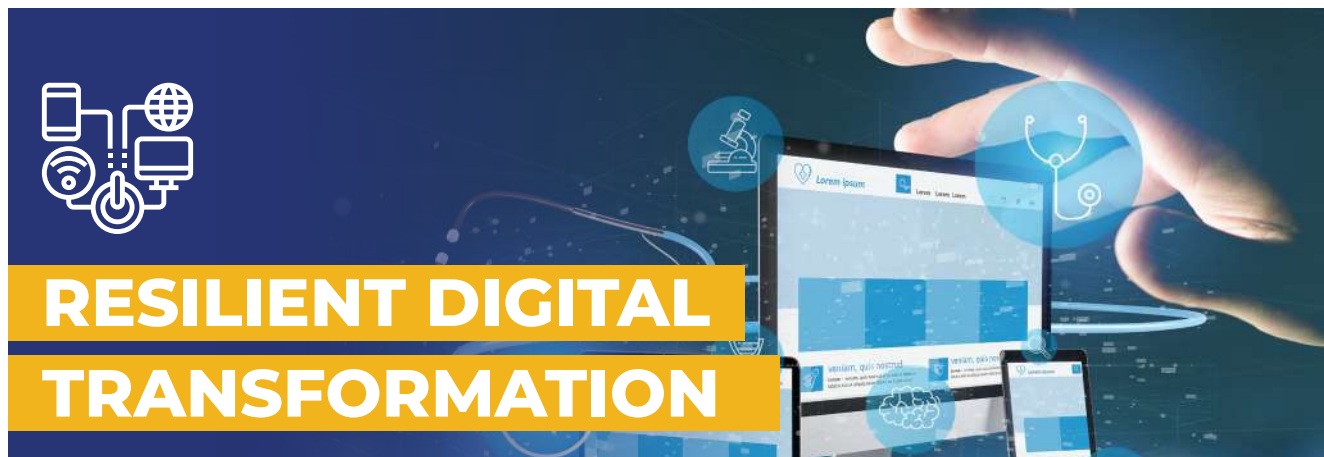
Around 1,000 teachers and students from Cahul and Ungheni had the opportunity to implement solutions that promote responsible behaviour towards the environment and ecological balance within their institutions. This was made possible thanks to the European Union's support of 10,000 euros provided to the beneficiaries of the initiative "Eco-School: A Healthy Environment in Cahul and Ungheni", carried out under the "EU4Moldova: Key Regions" Program, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP Moldova and UNICEF. With this funding, project beneficiaries implemented eco-projects in their schools. From installing water filters and creating green spaces to promoting recycling and

organic farming, the youth have shown that they have the power to become agents of change starting with their communities. A "Healthy Environment in Cahul and Ungheni" initiative involved 11 educational institutions from Cahul district and nine from Ungheni district. The initiative was part of the UNICEF project "Improving the Knowledge and Skills of Youth in Water, Sanitation, Hygiene, and Environment in the Key Regions of Cahul and Ungheni", implemented by the National Environment Center.

Read more: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/articole/%C3%AEn-regiunile-cheie-cahul-%C8%99i-ungheni-tinerii-contribuie-la-construirea-unui-viitor-mai>



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## UMAEF Fund Joins Efforts to Create the Largest Innovation Hub in Southern Moldova

The Moldovan Association of ICT Companies (ATIC) and the UMAEF Fund announce a strategic partnership dedicated to expanding the Inotek Center in Cahul. This collaboration marks a significant step toward the economic and social development of the southern region of the Republic of Moldova.

Through this agreement, UMAEF commits to providing financial support for the renovation of the building that will host the new Inotek Center, particularly for the completion of the third floor. This level will feature a spacious coworking area, modern meeting rooms, well-equipped offices, a dedicated children's area, and specialized laboratories for educational activities.



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The renovation works for the creation of the new Inotek Center began in October 2024 and are being carried out with the support of the European Union in partnership with Sweden, within the framework of the “EU4Moldova: Startup City Cahul” project, implemented by ATIC. The initiative is being developed as part of a broad public-private partnership, with the participation of “Bogdan Petriceicu Hașdeu” State University and the Cahul Municipality. The inauguration of the new spaces is planned for this May.

The support provided by UMAEF complements the investments made by the European Union in partnership with Sweden and contributes to expanding the resources available to the local community upon the center’s inauguration. With its modern infrastructure and coworking spaces, Inotek will add significant value to the educational and entrepreneurial ecosystem, fostering collaboration, innovation, and regional development.

*“Cahul aspires to become an economic and innovation hub, and Inotek plays a key role in this mission. We want this center to become a benchmark for STEM education, entrepreneurship, and collaboration, attracting thousands of young people, children, and companies from the region. Through our strategic partnership with UMAEF and the joint efforts of all involved, we are making steady progress toward this vision, contributing to the sustainable development of the region and enhancing Moldova’s economic competitiveness,”*

**said Ana Chirița,  
Strategic Projects Director, ATIC.**

Inotek – EU Innovation Centre Cahul will become a landmark for innovation in southern Moldova, providing the local community with access to the largest innovation and excellence hub in the region.

With a total area of over 1,600 square meters, the renovated building will offer a modern space for education, coworking, conferences, and entrepreneurial development.

*“Inotek is more than just a center—it is a place where opportunities grow, and innovation thrives. Built on the remarkable efforts of numerous partners, with critical investment from the European Union and strengthened by the dedication of the Inotek team, the Cahul Municipality, and the State University of Cahul, Inotek is shaping a brighter future for southern Moldova. Sweden is proud to contribute to the development of this inclusive space, where girls and boys, women and men from all social backgrounds can embrace technology as a key driver of prosperity and opportunity,”*

**stated Her Excellency, Katarina Fried,  
Ambassador of Sweden to Moldova.**

Inotek will serve as a reference center for the development of digital and entrepreneurial skills. Children and young people will have access to innovative STEM programs focused on robotics, programming, artificial intelligence, and entrepreneurship, equipping them with essential skills and guiding them toward future careers.

Adults in the southern region will benefit from courses tailored to labor market demands, facilitating professional integration, economic advancement, and community



development. Local entrepreneurs will receive support in adopting modern technologies, optimizing their businesses, and increasing competitiveness, thereby contributing to the creation of new businesses and jobs.

By integrating resources, diversifying opportunities, and fostering relevant

connections, Inotek will evolve into a dynamic platform tailored to the needs of every resident in the southern region. Here, everyone will find the support and resources they need to develop their skills, pursue their aspirations, and contribute to the growth of their community.



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NEWSLETTER OF THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA | JANUARY - MARCH 2025



## Stronger Together

## Hands-On Training to Combat Cyber Threats

The digital security experts evaluated the participating newsrooms beforehand to provide them with recommendations to mitigate security issues identified during the training. It was valuable for every media house to learn how to avoid information loss, protect their websites and databases, and deal with other current online challenges. Additionally, participants learned how to increase account privacy when using computers and mobile phones, implement data backup practices, use authentication and encryption technologies, as well as adopt measures to prevent identity theft through phishing attacks and other fraudulent activities. Following the training and needs assessments, the newsrooms stand to receive tailor-made security packages including licensed computer software, power stations and other critical tools along with assistance with expert support for setup.

## Journalists Feel More Secure

A total of 59 newsroom representatives participated in the trainings and their feedback highlighted the program's impact: "After completing this program, I feel more prepared to manage the risks related to journalistic work, especially in terms of data protection and digital security. The program has helped me to better understand the importance of encryption and how to use security applications, such as encrypted messages and VPN connections, to protect both the sources and the information I collect." Another participant highlighted the practical applications: "I have gained a better understanding of how to protect data and secure online communications, enabling me to more effectively identify and avoid phishing attempts and other cyber threats."

The Digital Security Training is part of the 3D (Dimensions) Media Safety Program within the TRIMEDIA project, consisting of three stages: 1. HEAT (Hostile Awareness Environment Training) with a mental health component, 2. digital security in-house trainings for media outlets, and 3. providing security packages for the newsrooms.



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# CyberEast+: Moldovan country team discussed cybercrime legislation reforms and strategic priorities in line with the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime

The newly launched CyberEast+ (2024-2027), a joint project of the European Union and of the Council of Europe, held on 27 May 2024 a meeting on cybercrime legislation reforms

in view of implementation of the Second Additional Protocol, followed by a project coordination meeting with key stakeholders from the Republic of Moldova.



Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Prosecutor General's Office, the Personal Data Protection Commissioner, the National Communications Regulator and members of local telecommunication providers discussed the state of play of cybercrime legislation, with a focus on co-operation with service providers, data protection and other cross-cutting matters. Practitioners and stakeholders focused on the benefits of the [Second Additional Protocol to this treaty, on enhanced cooperation and disclosure of electronic evidence](#), including the main provisions and requirements.

The meeting provided insight into the necessary legal reforms in view of the successful implementation of the Second Protocol in the Republic of Moldova.

The project coordination meeting, held on 28 May 2024, provided a detailed account of the [CyberEast+](#) objectives and [strategic priorities](#) in the Republic of Moldova, ensuring that appropriate support will be given to the project counterparts, in line with the [Convention on Cybercrime](#) (Budapest Convention) and its Protocols.

More: [CyberEast+: Moldovan country team discussed cybercrime legislation reforms and strategic priorities in line with the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime - Cybercrime](#)



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# CyberEast+: Judges and Prosecutors from the Republic of Moldova attend Advanced Cybercrime and Electronic Evidence Training

Over 20 judges, prosecutors, investigators and judicial trainers from several regions of the Republic of Moldova participated in the Advanced Cybercrime and Electronic Evidence Training, facilitated by [CyberEast+](#), a joint project of the European Union and of the Council of Europe, in partnership with the [National Institute of Justice of Moldova](#).

During the four-day course, participants engaged in discussions on cybercrime legislation and electronic evidence challenges, including handling cases concerning virtual currencies. The instruments for international co-operation required for the successful investigation, prosecution and adjudication of cybercrime cases were also analysed, in line

with the [Convention on Cybercrime \(Budapest Convention\)](#) and its [First](#) and [Second](#) additional protocols.

On the last day of the training, the Moldovan counterparts showcased their knowledge of legal practices and procedures in a practical case scenario. This followed all the judicial steps from the initiation of the case to the trial and included sufficient legal grounds and evidence for successful adjudication.

The [CyberEast+](#) project is committed to strengthening the capacities of judges, magistrates and prosecutors in the Republic of Moldova by delivering sustainable judicial training programmes on cybercrime and electronic evidence.



More: [CyberEast+: Judges and Prosecutors from the Republic of Moldova attend Advanced Cybercrime and Electronic Evidence Training - Cybercrime](#)



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# CyberEast+: Training on application of cooperation provisions of the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) and its Second Additional Protocol

Successful international co-operation in criminal cases involving electronic evidence relies on thorough understanding and use of the tools and channels offered by the [Convention on Cybercrime](#) (Budapest Convention) and its [Second Additional Protocol on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence](#). These were the topics addressed by the training on the application of co-operation provisions under the Second Protocol, which took place on 11-12 November 2024 in Chişinău, Moldova.

The exercise was organised by the [Prosecutor's Office](#), the [Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova](#) and supported by the [CyberEast+](#) project, a joint venture of the Council of Europe and of the European Union.

This course brought together the representatives of the criminal justice system working on cybercrime and e-evidence investigations as well as of the National Institute of Justice and the Stefan cel Mare Police Academy.

During the final day of the training, the Moldovan counterparts tackled a practical case scenario following step by step the acquisition of digital evidence through international co-operation mechanisms.

The [CyberEast+](#) project is committed to enhance co-operation on the basis of the Second Protocol to the Budapest Convention in the region by supporting the criminal justice authorities and 24/7 Points of Contact of the Republic of Moldova with sustainable training programmes on legislative international standards.



More: [CyberEast+: Training on application of cooperation provisions of the Convention on Cybercrime \(Budapest Convention\) and its Second Additional Protocol - Cybercrime](#)



# CyberEast+: Moldovan investigators increase their knowledge on financial investigations, virtual currencies and Darknet

Parallel financial investigations and intelligence, online crime proceeds, as well as financial fraud and money laundering remain high priorities for the authorities of the Republic of Moldova. In this context, the [Stefan cel Mare Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of](#)

[Moldova](#), in collaboration with [CyberEast+](#), a joint venture of the Council of Europe and of the European Union, organised a training on financial investigations, virtual currencies and Darknet, between 4 and 6 February 2025.



The Moldovan counterparts, including cybercrime and financial crime investigators, forensic experts, detectives, prosecutors and trainers, were introduced to key aspects regarding financial intelligence units (FIU) and money laundering offences, as well as social engineering, BEC/CEO fraud, virtual currencies, Darkweb, encryption and anonymity. BEC/CEO fraud occurs when an employee authorised to make payments is tricked into paying a fake invoice or making an unauthorised transfer out of the business account. Participants increased their knowledge on modus operandi of money laundering offences, red flag indicators, blockchain analysis and legal instruments for seizing cryptocurrencies, through both guidance and a practical exercise/case study.

The internationally recognised instruments and standards, including the [Convention on Cybercrime](#) (Budapest Convention), its [Second Additional Protocol on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence](#), the Warsaw Convention and the EU Anti-Money Laundering Directives – are key guidance for these cooperation activities.

[CyberEast+](#) will continue to support the Moldovan authorities in strengthening their response to various types of cybercrime, including financial crime and money laundering offences.

More: [CyberEast+: Moldovan investigators increase their knowledge on financial investigations, virtual currencies and Darknet - Cybercrime](#)

# CyberSEE, CyberEast+, Octopus Project: Regional cybercrime exercise boosts interagency cooperation across East, South-East Europe and Türkiye



From 2 to 6 December 2024, the joint projects of the European Union and of the Council of Europe [CyberSEE](#) and [CyberEast+](#), alongside [Octopus Project](#) and the Albanian State Police under [EMPACT](#) framework, successfully organised a Regional Cybercrime Cooperation Exercise in Tirana, Albania.

This landmark event brought together over 50 law enforcement officers, prosecutors and cybersecurity experts from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Eastern Partnership countries and Kazakhstan, to tackle realistic cybercrime scenarios that required them to detect, mitigate and investigate complex cyber threats, focusing on hands-on learning in OSINT, malware analysis, digital forensics, and data recovery.

Moreover, the simulation of a real-world technical exercise carried out during the event in partnership with the [Albanian National Cyber Security Authority - NCSA](#), contributed to fostering closer cooperation between the cybersecurity experts (primarily [CSIRTs](#)), cybercrime investigators, digital forensics experts and prosecutors.

The Council of Europe through its [Cybercrime Programme Office](#), remains committed to promote the international cooperation through the tools provided by the [Convention on Cybercrime](#) (Budapest Convention) and its [Second Additional Protocol](#), to combat cybercrime and strengthen cybersecurity resilience across the region.

More: [CyberSEE, CyberEast+, Octopus Project: Regional cybercrime exercise boosts interagency cooperation across East, South-East Europe and Türkiye - Cybercrime](#)



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# Empowering Women in the Digital Era

Cybersecurity has become a global priority as digital transformation accelerates and threats continue to grow. Once seen as a narrow technical field, it has become a core part of national security. But solving today's complex challenges takes more than technology as it requires a wider range of voices and experiences. Women remain underrepresented in the field, and their inclusion is essential to building smarter, more resilient digital systems.

This challenge is especially clear in Eastern Partnership countries like Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, and Ukraine. The demand for cybersecurity professionals keeps growing, but the talent pool remains unbalanced. This gap doesn't just reflect inequality, but it also limits the strength and depth of our digital defences.



One reason for this gap is that cybersecurity is still often treated as an afterthought in digital development. Many governments focus on launching digital services but forget to build strong cyber protection from the start. True resilience means making cybersecurity a core part of everything—from public platforms to everyday digital skills.

Initiatives like the Women in Cyber mentorship program are helping to change this.

Supported by the EU-funded Moldova Cybersecurity Rapid Assistance 2.0 project and implemented by the e-Governance

Academy, the program offers technical training, workshops, and mentorship. It helps women build skills and confidence while creating a supportive community that pushes back against gender barriers in cybersecurity.

What makes the program stand out is its holistic approach. It doesn't stop at technical skills, it also covers topics like social engineering and tackles the deeper issues that have kept many women out of the field. By boosting confidence, offering role models, and building networks, the program supports a new generation of women in cybersecurity.



Building on these efforts, the **Eastern Partnership Women in Cyber Forum**, held in Chişinău this March, brought together industry leaders, policymakers, and practitioners to share knowledge and strengthen cross-border connections. Beyond talent development, such initiatives foster inclusive workplace cultures and create educational pathways for women and girls in cybersecurity.

As the EU celebrated International Women's Day, Moldova's growing commitment to empowering women in cybersecurity stood out.

Their voices and contributions are shaping the future of digital resilience.

The forum was organised with support from the European Union through the **Moldova Cybersecurity Rapid Assistance 2.0** and **Improving Cyber Resilience in Eastern Partnership Countries 2.0** projects, implemented by the e-Governance Academy (eGA).

*Elsa Neeme, Senior Cybersecurity Expert,  
e-Governance Academy*



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# Strengthening Trust Through Data Protection

With cyberattacks growing in both scale and sophistication, financial losses are rising too. The average cost of a data breach in 2024 has reached €4.4 million, a sharp 10% increase in

just one year. But the real damage goes beyond money as cyberattacks weaken public trust, slow innovation, and threaten the stability of our digital world.



*"A single data breach can undermine people's confidence in institutions, companies, and even governments,"*

***noted Elsa Neeme, Senior Cybersecurity Expert at the e-Governance Academy, during her opening remarks.***

*"It's not just about the money, it's about trust and the broader impact on society."*

**Funded by the European Union**, the "New Legal Provisions in the Field of Personal Data Protection" conference took place on 28 January 2025 in Chișinău, Moldova.

The event was part of the **Moldova Cybersecurity Rapid Assistance 2.0 project** and marked **European Data Protection Day**. It was organised in partnership with the e-Governance Academy and the National Center for Personal Data Protection ([Centrul Național pentru Protecția Datelor cu Caracter Personal al Republicii Moldova](#)), bringing key stakeholders together to explore Moldova's alignment with EU data protection standards and the wider challenges of safeguarding privacy in a digital world.

As Moldova works to align its legal framework with European Union data protection standards, the conference offered a timely platform to

reflect on emerging privacy challenges, share insights, and exchange practical approaches. The agenda brought together local and international experts to explore:

- ◆ How Moldova's data protection laws are evolving to meet EU standards
- ◆ The growing impact of technologies like artificial intelligence
- ◆ Data breach response, enforcement, and accountability
- ◆ The critical connection between cybersecurity and privacy

A clear takeaway from the event: protecting personal data is not just about legal compliance—it is a strategic investment in trust.

Strong privacy protections help ensure that individuals, institutions, and governments can operate confidently in an increasingly digital environment.

The conference also underscored the importance of collaboration across sectors. Whether through legal reform, better security practices, or increased public awareness, building a culture of privacy requires shared responsibility.

By bringing these discussions to the forefront, Moldova continues demonstrating its commitment to modern data protection and digital resilience. Supported by the European Union and implemented by the e-Governance Academy, the event reflected a broader push toward a secure and trustworthy digital future for all.





# Moldova adopts new electronic communications law, to modernise digital infrastructure

On 5 March 2025, [the Government of Moldova adopted Law on Electronic Communications](#) that was co-developed with EU4Digital Facility experts. The new law transposes the European Electronic Communications Code (Directive (EU) 2018/1972) and EU legislation related to roaming regulatory framework providing

the basis for the Republic of Moldova to enter the EU's Roam Like At Home area. The new legislation paves the way for creating a modern and competitive legal framework for the development of e-communications networks and services that will benefit citizens and businesses in Moldova.



EU4Digital worked with Moldova's [Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization](#) and the National Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Information Technology ([ANRCETI](#)) in 2024 to support the drafting process for the new Law on Electronic Communications. The project included the transposition of 12 EU directives and regulations, most notably the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC). Approximating the EECC to its national legislation is part of Moldova's commitment to digital transformation and wider alignment with the EU's legislative framework on its path towards European integration.

By aligning with the EECC and other EU legislation, the new law will establish a legal framework that enhances efficiency, transparency and competitiveness, while reflecting Moldova's national specifics, revolutionising the country's electronic communications networks and services sector.

Additionally, the new law sets the stage for transposition and implementation of the EU regulatory framework necessary for the Republic of Moldova to be included in the EU's '[roam like at home](#)' zone. This will build upon the success of earlier agreements between the Moldovan government, the European Commission and EU telecoms operators, which have already resulted in significant roaming tariff reductions for Moldovan citizens travelling abroad.

It is expected that the project will contribute to Moldova's digital integration and the development of the digital economy, with a significant increase in broadband internet connectivity, reduced digital divide between rural and urban areas, and improved quality of electronic communications services.

Further information: [Moldova adopts new electronic communications law, to modernise digital infrastructure - EU4Digital](#)

# More for Moldovans: digital development with EU4Digital

Improved healthcare; economic boosts from innovation; better cross-border services and trade; improved government services; increased skills and technology adoption—these are just some of the ways in which digital developments can influence everyday life for Moldovan businesses, citizens, services and public authorities.

Representatives of Moldova's Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation and other high-level stakeholders reviewed the achievements of the EU-funded EU4Digital Facility, which is helping Moldova to advance digital transformation to support its economy and society and, ultimately, accession to the EU.



Among the benefits and priorities of EU4Digital are intensified online sales in the European Union for Moldovan entrepreneurs, easier international trade with cross-border electronic customs processes, a national eHealth strategy, greater collaboration and visibility for innovative companies, and support for public authorities and regulators in aligning legal frameworks and digital systems with EU best practices, standards and laws in areas such as cybersecurity, telecommunications, as well as digital identity, markets and services.

During the December [2024 EU4Digital Steering Committee meeting](#), Andrei Cusca, head of the IT and Digital Economy Policies Directorate in the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalisation of the Republic of Moldova explained that Moldova's digital transformation strategy is in line with European policies and standards in the digital field, which is "an important pillar of accession to the Digital Europe Programme, through

which we hope to support digital innovation and digital transformation of enterprises and public administration". He emphasised the key role of Moldova's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector in the country's transition to the digital economy and the value of collaborative programmes and partners, such as EU4Digital, in supporting this development.

EU4Digital's [eTrust and Cross-Border Digital Services](#) stream is also [supporting updating national legislation, in the area of electronic identity](#) (eID) in line with amended European Digital Identity (EUDI) Regulation, which entered into force in 2024. This underpins trust in digital systems and digital identities, which is essential for citizens, entrepreneurs and public authorities to be able to securely sign into and smoothly use online services.

More: [More for Moldovans: digital development with EU4Digital - EU4Digital](#)



EU-Moldova

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# EU4Digital launches capacity-building support for Invest Moldova Agency

EU4Digital Facility has started a new 'Investment Attractiveness' activity to enhance the capacity of the [Invest Moldova Agency](#) (IMA). This support to Moldova's national investment promotion agency will focus on

areas identified by the leadership of IMA as priorities, including organising roadshows to EU countries, designing IMA's strategy for 2025–2030, and refining the organisation's due diligence processes.



IMA, together with EU4Digital, aims to make Moldova more visible as a destination for investing. As a small yet strategically located country in Europe, Moldova has been improving its investment climate and offers a skilled workforce, openness from governmental authorities and other competitive advantages. Its diverse economy focuses on various sectors: information and communications technology (ICT), business process outsourcing (BPO) and business services, automotive, electronics, agri-food processing, construction materials, pharmaceuticals and chemicals, renewable energy and infrastructure, and textile, apparel, footwear and leather (TAFL) goods. Outstanding fiscal incentives for foreign investment include a 7% flat tax rate on turnover for ICT and BPO industries that are virtual residents of Moldova Innovation Technology Park, which encompasses and simplifies multiple tax categories including corporate income, personal income, social

security, medical insurance, local, real estate and road taxes. There is also up to 60% return on investment over 10 years with a 25% return in the first year for major industries such as automotive, electronics, agri-food, construction, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and TAFL.

This new initiative underscores Moldova's commitment to strengthening its investment promotion capabilities and to aligning with European standards, thereby aiming to drive economic growth and foster innovation.

EU4Digital remains dedicated to advancing Moldova's investment landscape, with a continued focus on promoting best practices, enhancing institutional capabilities, and supporting the country's broader economic and digital transformation.

Further information: [EU4Digital launches capacity-building support for Invest Moldova Agency - EU4Digital](#)



# EU4Digital report and recommendations on cross-border electronic identity solutions

A new EU4Digital Facility report provides recommendations to guide future cross-border mutual recognition with electronic identification (eID) solutions for citizens, businesses and governments in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region.

The '[Cross-border eID pilot report](#)' also shares an overview of and concludes EU4Digital's successful testing of eID interoperability between Armenia, Georgia and Moldova.



Unlocking digital opportunities depends on trustworthy and secure eID solutions. Responding to these needs, EU4Digital conducted its cross-border eID piloting from March 2023 to November 2024. The pilot aimed to enable citizens of one country to authenticate their identity and access electronic services in another country using just their national means of electronic identification.

The EU4Digital eID pilot used the European Union's [eIDAS Node infrastructure](#), the software that supports eID interoperability between EU Member States, to ensure cross-border compatibility. The EU (Electronic Identification, Authentication and Trust Services) [eIDAS Regulation](#) and (European Digital Identity) [EUDI Regulation](#) provide a common legal framework for eID and trust services in the EU and worldwide.

The new report, developed as part of EU4Digital's [eTrust and Cross-border Digital Services](#) stream of activities, describes the objectives and results of the cross-border eID pilot and lays out a set of general and key recommendations to guide next steps in this area of digital development in Eastern partner countries.

## **eID pilot testing and outcomes**

During the pilot, the participating countries' pilot teams tested the technical uniformity and interoperability of foreign eIDs and electronic services. The pilot was conducted in two technical releases: Release 1.0 tested authentication in a testing environment and Release 2.0 involved real electronic services with additional attributes and novel forms of eID means.

Further information: [EU4Digital report and recommendations on cross-border electronic identity solutions - EU4Digital](#)



EU-Moldova

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## About 400 students and 100 teachers from Cahul and Ungheni created STEAM projects using generative artificial intelligence

Approximately 400 students and 100 teachers from Cahul and Ungheni districts collaborated to develop innovative STEAM projects using generative artificial intelligence. These initiatives aimed to address real issues in their communities, such as showcasing women's contributions to science, promoting agritourism, and enhancing air quality by planting trees.

A new digital course designed for Moldovan teachers has also been launched. [The course, entitled "Generative Artificial Intelligence in STEAM Education and Student-Centred Learning"](#), aims to train teachers in adopting innovative teaching and learning methods through digital technologies, including Generative Artificial Intelligence, to enhance students' engagement in learning.



Details: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/comunicate-de-pres%C4%83/circa-400-de-elevi-%C8%99i-100-de-profesori-din-cahul-%C8%99i-ungheni-au-creat-proiecte>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ae59LW0tcKg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvKaajOPRIU>

The compendium of the 12 developed and implemented STEAM project.: [Book STEAM.pdf - Google Drive](#)



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## Eighty children from "Tereza Sobolevschi" kindergarten in Ungheni program robots

Although they have only 5-7 years old, they already know how to build and program robots that dance or move other play pieces. Guided by educators trained by Robot X Academy trainers, with the support of UNICEF Moldova, almost 80 children from the "Tereza Sobolevschi" kindergarten in Ungheni participate in robotics activities as part of the early education program. The kindergarten received LEGO® Education SPIKE™ Essential robotics sets and other digital educational devices, such as interactive tablets and projectors, which are also used in digital education classes.

Thanks to the EU4Moldova Focal Regions Programme, funded by the European Union

and implemented by UNDP Moldova and UNICEF Moldova, the educators organized robotics activities, and the kindergartens were equipped with the necessary materials. Another 50 LEGO sets, worth about \$28,000, were purchased by UNICEF Moldova, with the support of the European Union, to ensure the number of sets needed for the proper implementation of robotics activities in all kindergartens in Cahul and Ungheni municipalities. Thus, more preschool children in the two key regions can participate in robotics activities to help them develop their skills and reach their full potential.



Details: <https://www.unicef.org/moldova/articole/80-de-copii-de-la-gr%C4%83dini%C8%9Ba-%E2%80%99Etereza-sobolevschi-din-ungheni-programeaz%C4%83-robo%C8%9Bei>



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# An integrated digital platform will enhance public services to ensure the safety and protection of citizens

The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) is enhancing its operational response and management capabilities through a unified digital platform. This innovative project, funded by the European Union, will ensure a rapid and coordinated response in crisis situations, with a direct impact on the safety and protection of citizens. On 17 February, a funding contract for almost 12 million lei was signed, which will enable the development of advanced software solutions in five key MIA institutions.

This initiative will transform the way the Police, Carabinieri, Border Police, General Inspectorate for Migration, General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations and the Operational Management Inspectorate manage data and make decisions in real time.

The new Integrated Information System will provide all these institutions with access to a unified digital platform, optimizing the collection, analysis, and exchange of operational data. This will ensure the efficient management of human and material resources, the integration of all data in a single platform, and a faster response to various crisis situations.


The main objectives include streamlining operational activities, creating an interoperable system between MIA subdivisions, improving risk analysis, and strengthening response capacity.

The project will bring multiple benefits, including increased safety for citizens, standardization and streamlining of processes, reduction of human errors, elimination of operational fragmentation and increased level of cooperation between the MIA institutions. Implementation is set to be completed by the end of November 2025, marking a crucial step in modernizing public administration and aligning it with EU standards for operational management and public safety.

This digital transformation is an innovation in the service of the community and is realized thanks to the project *"EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Resilient Communities"*, funded by the European Union and implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.



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