STRONGER TOGETHER

NEWSLETTER OF THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

TO THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA



EU – MOLDOVA:

COOPERATION NEWS

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2025

CONTENTS

01 MOBILITY AND PEOPLE

Commissioner Kos during Enlargement Report presented in Chișinău: "Moldova has made the greatest annual progress among all candidate states" 10

Roberta Metsola and Maia Sandu in dialogue with young people about the importance of involvement in the European integration process 12

Over 100 young people discussed Moldova's European path at a new edition of "EU Talks" 14

EU4Moldova Resilience: kindergarten No. 1 in Hîncești was fully renovated and energy-efficient with support from the European Union 15

EU4Moldova Resilience: Six towns in Moldova have received equipment for rapid emergency response with EU support 17

When utility bills rise: experts and regulators discuss consumer protection 18

European Consumer Centre Moldova – one year of meaningful activity in support of consumers 20

The media literacy series "Home Alone" reaches seven districts across the country: young people discuss manipulation, stereotypes and informed decision-making 22

Over 250 students from across the country gathered in the national final of the "Sub Cușma lui Guguță" championship to promote intercultural dialogue 24

Promoting European values and intercultural dialogue in communities in the Republic of Moldova 27

EU-funded media initiatives strengthen social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in Moldova 30

Safe and violence-free working environment – from international standards to national actions 32

Erasmus+ Seminar on the internationalisation of Moldovan Universities: advancing the Bologna process 34

EU4Youth: celebrating youth impact with the Moldovan Youth Councils 35

Engage, Connect, Empower! Regional youth exchange in Armenia 37

Health and safety at work: who is responsible and what to do when your rights are not respected 38

Exhibition dedicated to the “16 Days of Activism” campaign opens at Europe Café 40

The first official meeting of the President of the European Commission’s Youth Advisory Board took place in Brussels 42

The French Perischool model: inspiration for afterschool activities in Moldova 44

“The smile that taught me what it means to be a father” – the story of Vladimir Vohmeanin, a dad who chose to be actively involved 46

Radu Albot and Doina Chiorescu: family is the greatest victory, built through involvement and equality 49

#EU4GenderEquality: facilitators gathered for the “Facilitation Practices within the Fathers’ Club” training of trainers 52

Motivational Book “The Price of the Smile”: addressing societal pressures and gender-based violence through women’s empowerment 54

Assistive equipment worth 17 million MDL to support inclusive education in Moldova 56

Women in art breaking patriarchal barriers: voices, creativity and solidarity 57

Bringing support closer: mobile inclusion teams strengthen education in rural communities 58

A place to learn, dream, and feel safe: Egor’s story 59

Supporting refugee children to feel safe and thrive: a family’s story from Nisporeni 60

The courage to become a teacher grows with the support of a mentor 61

Developing leaders of learning: investing in mentorship for better schools 62

02 STRONGER SOCIETY

Volunteer Firefighters Festival 2025 – solidarity for safer communities 63

EU4Moldova Resilience: nine firefighter stations renovated with European Union support 67

MEDIA FORUM 2025: mapping the challenges and identifying solutions 69

Empowering communities and civic participation – dialogue with the civil society organisations across Moldova 71

Building skills on and for crisis communication: second CCC networking round 74

Key results of the “Civil Society for European Integration” project – lessons learned, priorities, local and central impact 76

16th meeting of the EU–Moldova Civil Society Platform: commitments for accession, social reforms, and economic growth 79

15 Moldovan CSOs on a study visit to Brussels: dialogue with EU institutions and recommendations to accelerate reforms 81

INSPIRED Moldova: civic engagement, democratic education, and active youth 83

Supporting local organisations in monitoring transparency 85

EU-backed initiative boosts civil society role in Moldova’s home affairs reforms 86

IOM Cash assistance for protection supported by the EU 87

Information sessions support vulnerable Ukrainians and migrants in Moldova 88

Supporting safe returns for people fleeing the war in Ukraine 89

With the financial support of the European Union, 16 modern social laundries have been developed in the Republic of Moldova 90

The Multifunctional Social Services Center in Copceac, renovated with EU support, is now open 94

Civic Cafés in Strășeni – where ideas grow into local development priorities 97

A renovated roof for a safer home: EU support brings dignity and comfort to the Centre in Micleușeni 98

Just a call away: psychosocial support for Ukrainians in Moldova 100

CU SENS builds Moldova’s next generation of investigative journalists through a mentorship program funded by the EU through a joint project with ERIM 102

Strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to support parents in vulnerable situations 104

Strategic and Crisis Communication – essential skills for CSO communicators 106

The “Media Liberă = Democrație Puternică!” Campaign brought EU media standards closer to over half a million Moldovans 108

EU-Funded Project Advances Media Literacy, Information Integrity, and Democratic Resilience in Moldova 111

Change begins with us: Ludmila Iachim’s fight for equality in Moldova 114

Religious leaders, better prepared to contribute to promoting gender equality and preventing domestic violence, thanks to EU support 116

National Conference “Inclusion, Equity and Protection in Education” 117

EU-supported training strengthens capacities to combat violence against women in Moldova 119

Training for civil society fosters climate-resilient, gender-responsive communities in Moldova 121

03 INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

Strengthening resilience against hybrid threats 124

Moldova–Spain exchange: boosting action against migrant smuggling 125

Building sustainable skills through Train-the-Trainers activities 127

Hands-on simulation boosts financial investigation skills 129

Empowering Moldovan officers to fight crypto crime 130

Advancing cybercrime expertise through Romania–Moldova mentoring 131

CEPOL hands over national LEEd e-learning platform to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova 132

EU4Security Moldova project implemented by CEPOL delivers the Intervention Commander Course dedicated to the General Emergency Situations Inspectorate 133

EU4Security Moldova project implemented by CEPOL organises workshop on Cooperation Protocol for the National Firearms Focal Point 135

EU4Security Moldova project implemented by CEPOL organises a study visit in Spain 136

EU4Security Moldova project implements comprehensive leadership course in Chișinău 137

Frontex- CEPOL Industry Days 138

Moldovan legal professionals discuss ways to enable access to justice for women 139

Closing the gender gap by addressing judicial data challenges 140

The Republic of Moldova is strengthening its border security, aligning with the Schengen acquis standards 141

EU4Borders Security – Moldova: Secure borders through integrity and transparency 142

EU4LawEnforcement: enhancing integrated border management 143

EU4LawEnforcement in Moldova: enhancing operational capacities through a study visit to France 145

EU4LEM workshops on Schengen IT interoperability readiness 147

EU4LEM: Moldova's readiness for PRÜM regulation alignment (fingerprint data) 148

EU4LEM: introduction to Schengen Information System (SIS) datasets and interoperability readiness 149

Lithuanian experts support Moldova in advancing digital tools for rapid response 151

Moldovan delegation learns from Lithuania's integrated emergency response model 152

EUBAM donates modern engineering equipment to strengthen Ukraine's border security and infrastructure resilience 154

EUBAM supports capacity development to strengthen modern border management along the Moldova–Ukraine state border 155

EUBAM celebrates two decades of partnership and progress at its closing ceremony in Chișinău 157

EUPM Moldova: supporting Moldova's democracy through cyber and hybrid threat prevention 159

EUPM Moldova: embracing gender equality for comprehensive national security 161

European Committee of the Regions' Second Working Group Convenes in Chișinău to Advance Moldova's European Integration at the Local Level 163

Civil servants in charge of legal approximation take over best practices from Slovenia and Croatia 165

25 anticorruption specialists enhanced their knowledge in project management and external funding acquisition 167

Strengthen the capacities of the General Inspectorate for Migration for the implementation of migration management and asylum legislation in line with the EU acquis 168

National Procurement Platform discussed the amendments to the Law on Sectoral Procurement 170

Joint procurements and e-forms in focus at National Public Procurement Platform 172

EU-funded training strengthens Moldova's document fraud detection 173

Training boosts K9 officers' skills in detecting smuggling 174

Strengthening efforts to combat human trafficking in Moldova 175

OECD-NIJ autumn school on Competition Law and Anti-Corruption 176

OECD Investment Policy review of the Republic of Moldova 177

Strengthening the capacities of public servants for more effective integration of refugees and migrants in Moldova 178

Training on optimising Social Media communication for public institutions 180

Workshop on national public sector accounting standards, organised in Chișinău 181

Training on IPSAS 2: cash flow statements 183

Enhancing Moldova's anti-corruption capacity: equipment handover 184

Gender-sensitive checklist developed for Moldova's Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry with EU support 185

Online consultations strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts across public institutions in Moldova 187

EU support for gender mainstreaming in policy documents advances equality in Moldova 189

EU supports inclusive local governance with a 10-step tool for mainstreaming gender into local policies 191

EU-supported training advances gender-responsive public finance management in Moldova 193

Training strengthens gender-responsive migration management in Moldova with EU support 195

The 2024 census, a national success: Quality data and a sure step towards the European future of the Republic of Moldova 197

04 ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Connecting Moldova to European infrastructure 200

EU and Austrian Government support the modernization of Moldova's vocational education system 203

Moldova at the Global Innovation Summit in Rio de Janeiro 205

EU4Moldova: Local Communities comes to a close – European support brings clean water, jobs, and better living conditions across communities in Moldova 206

European support empowers women entrepreneurs in Strășeni, Edineț, and Leova 209

Capital market specialists consolidated their capacities in the field of prudential framework applicable to investment firms 211

Common Transit Convention: easier trade with the EU market, cheaper costs for doing business 213

Developing a competitive and climate-resilient horticulture sector: the main focus of the “Fruit Business in the Republic of Moldova” Conference, organized with the EU support 214

New series of trainings for startup entrepreneurs launched in Ialoveni with EU support 216

From passion to business: a young mother tailors her future at home with EU support 218

Workshop on private sector participation in infrastructure and financial market development 219

EU support for better transport connections in Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Moldova 220

Closer to Europe by rail: Moldova and Ukraine move forward on EU rail integration 222

Solidarity Lanes: Faster border crossings between Moldova and Romania 223

05 ENERGY RESILIENCE

Mayors from Moldova join European leaders at the European Parliament in Brussels 224

From Bălți and Sireți to Rio de Janeiro. Shared concerns of signatories of the European Covenant of Mayors initiative worldwide 226

EUSEW 2025: winners awarded 228

Covenant of Mayors Signatories inspired by the experience of the Municipality of Botoșani 230

Opening of the MEIR project office in Chișinău: a new step toward Moldova’s energy independence 231

A step forward towards more energy efficient social services 232

06 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

From Vilnius to Chișinău: shared solutions toward waste management 234

Progress for cleaner air in Moldova - the first stage of the Twinning project is completed 236

Moldova frees its rivers: dam removals mark important step for water resilience 237

Moldova strengthens water management and advances circular economy reforms 240

Future journalists will develop their professional skills in the optional course "Environmental Journalism", conducted with the financial support of the European Union 241

07 RESILIENT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Moldova Cyber Summit 2025: Stronger Together 243

Moldova fights online fraud with strategic awareness and training 245

'Digitalisation of Business' course now available from EU4Digital Academy 247

Towards competitive broadband: new EU4Digital access monitoring reports and recommendations 248

Supporting fair competition: new EU4Digital Eastern Partnership broadband market report 250

First Eastern Partnership regional analysis reports voice-call market barriers 252

Leaving nobody behind: EU4Digital showcases achievements at EU4Youth Days 2025 253

Moldova in Motion: highlights from how to Web 2025 254

Moldova showcased its innovation strength at Web Summit Lisbon 255

EU4Innovation East Supports Moldova's Tech Talent at MITP Awards 2025 257

Capital market specialists consolidate capacities in Digital Operational Resilience 258

EU supports gender-responsive public service digitalisation in Moldova 259



MOBILITY AND PEOPLE

Commissioner Kos during Enlargement Report presented in Chișinău: “Moldova has made the greatest annual progress among all candidate states”

The conclusions of the 2025 Enlargement Report, published by the European Commission, were presented to the Moldovan public in a large-scale conference held on 11 November 2025 in Chișinău, in the presence of Commissioner for Enlargement, Moldovan Prime Minister and members of the Government and the Parliament.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

In the opening of the event, Prime Minister Alexandru Munteanu spoke about the Government's determination to continue the necessary reforms to accelerate the Republic of Moldova's accession to the European Union.

The official noted that,

"In just one year, the Republic of Moldova has registered four times greater progress, despite all the difficulties, thanks to the people who did not stop working and, in recent years, have worked tenfold. We know we have a lot of work to do, but our path is sure – our home is Europe."

The special invitee of the event, European Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos, congratulated the Republic of Moldova for the progress made:

"The Republic of Moldova has made the greatest annual progress among all candidate states, and I am very proud of you. You are truly determined to become a member state of the European Union. The progress you have made is significant and consistent. Your ambitions are very high, but they are also realistic."

The event included presentations by ministers and experts from the civil society on all of the negotiation clusters, mentioning also the challenges in the reforms implementation.

According to the Report conclusions, the Republic of Moldova has significantly advanced on its accession path, successfully completing the screening process. The Commission's assessment is that Moldova has met the conditions required to open clusters: one (fundamentals), six (external relations), and two (internal market).

The full event can be watched here.

The 2025 Enlargement Report can be consulted here.

The Conference was organized by the Bureau for European Integration, with the support of the EU-funded project 'Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration', as well as the regional project "Public Administration Reform in the Eastern Partnership Countries", implemented by GIZ with the financial support of the German Government. It brough together over 200 participants from public administration, business associations, academia and media.



Roberta Metsola and Maia Sandu in dialogue with young people about the importance of involvement in the European integration process

European integration, youth participation in political life, and the role of women in decision-making were the main topics discussed during the meeting between the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, and the President of the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu, with students from "Spiru Haret" Theoretical Lyceum in Chișinău on 7 November.



President Metsola spoke about the importance of taking part in elections and the risks posed by disinformation among young people in Moldova. She also addressed the topic of national identity in an era of globalisation.

Roberta Metsola and Maia Sandu answered students' questions about the educational and development opportunities that the European Union offers to the new generation of future professionals.

Encouraged by the trust placed in them, the young members of the "Spiru Haret" Euro Club engaged in discussions and learned first-hand what EU accession means, what European values stand for — freedom, solidarity, democracy — and what Moldova itself can contribute to the European family.

At the end of the dialogue session, President Maia Sandu emphasized that the new generation will directly benefit from the changes brought by European integration. The 2028 integration objective represents a concrete opportunity for young people who wish to build their future at home.

This event took place during Roberta Metsola's official visit to Chișinău on 7 November 2025.

The event was organized under the EU Talks format — a dialogue platform between the EU and the citizens of Moldova, aimed at promoting a better understanding of the accession process and the concrete benefits that EU support brings across various sectors, from education and entrepreneurship to reforms and community development.



Over 100 young people discussed Moldova's European path at a new edition of "EU Talks"

"The future begins with us" was the central theme of the latest edition of EU Talks, dedicated to the engagement of young people in the European integration process of the Republic of Moldova. Organized as a satellite event of the EU Enlargement Forum, it took place in Brussels on 18 November 2025, bringing together more than 100 young people from across the country to discuss Moldova's European future.

The event was opened by Iwona Piórko, EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, and Cristina Gherasimov, Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, who spoke about the essential role of youth engagement in the integration process and the positive impact of EU projects and initiatives on the daily lives of Moldovan citizens.

"Moldova has taken important steps towards the European Union — through reforms, open dialogue, and the involvement of young people and civil society. For the European Union, young people like you are not only the future, but also the present. This is why programmes such as Erasmus+, EU4Youth, internships, trainings, and exchanges exist — to help you grow, connect, and become leaders. We are living a historic moment — a time of change and progress. It is a moment of courage, unity, and confidence in Moldova's European future. The European Union stands firmly by the Republic of Moldova on this journey,"

said Iwona Piórko, EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova.



One of the panel speakers, Daniel Cebotari, Master's student and Erasmus+ beneficiary, emphasized how European academic exchanges shaped both his professional path and personal development:

"Erasmus+ gave me the opportunity to meet young people from all over Europe, discover new perspectives, and learn through collaboration. This experience helped me grow both as a professional and as a leader."

The EU Talks event, organized as part of the "Strategic Communication and Media Support in the Republic of Moldova" project funded by the European Union, serves as a platform for dialogue between the EU and the citizens of Moldova.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

EU4Moldova Resilience: kindergarten No. 1 in Hîncești was fully renovated and energy-efficient with support from the European Union

Residents of Hîncești had an additional reason to celebrate their town's holiday this year. On 21 November, the fully renovated and energy-efficient Kindergarten No. 1 "Albinuța" was officially inaugurated, thanks to the support of the European Union.

The event brought together the local community, authorities, and international partners, marking the transformation of the institution into a modern, safe, and energy-efficient space.



The renovation works included thermal insulation of the building, roof rehabilitation, replacement of flooring, complete modernization of the heating system with 67 new radiators, and the landscaping of the surrounding area. According to local authorities, these interventions directly contribute to reducing energy losses, lowering monthly utility costs, and creating a healthy and comfortable environment for the approximately 160 children and 22 staff members of the kindergarten.

The renovation and energy-efficiency measures amounted to nearly 5.6 million MDL, of which approximately 3.9 million MDL represents the grant provided by the European Union under the "*EU4Moldova Resilience – Secure State, Resilient Communities*" project, implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.

The implementation of this urban revitalization project aimed not only at modernizing educational infrastructure, but also at reducing energy dependence, optimizing operational costs, and lowering CO^2 emissions.

The renovation and energy-efficiency upgrade of Kindergarten No. 1 in Hîncești is one of five urban revitalization projects financed by the European Union, with a total budget of over 17 million MDL, under the "EU4Moldova Resilience – Secure State, Resilient Communities" initiative. Similar investments have been carried out in the towns of Rîșcani, Nisporeni, Ceadîr-Lunga, and Cimișlia.



EU4Moldova Resilience: Six towns in Moldova have received equipment for rapid emergency response with EU support

Residents of Drochia, Iargara, Sîngerei, Criuleni, Strășeni and Cantemir will be better prepared in the event of natural disasters. On 25 November, the municipal enterprises in these towns received modern equipment sets to enable faster emergency response, with a total value of almost 2 million lei. The equipment was provided by the European Union through the project "EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Strong Communities", implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.



Each municipal enterprise received an equipment set including tipper trailers, wood-chippers and water pumps. The new machinery will help local teams responsible for municipal services respond quickly in cases of storms, heavy snowfall, floods, water accumulation, fallen trees or damage to infrastructure.

By the end of this year, six more municipal enterprises will receive medium-capacity tractors (50–90 hp), needed for prompt interventions during severe weather in the cold season. In total, the 12 municipal enterprises were selected through a public grant call held in March by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova. The total value of the equipment amounts to almost 6.5 million lei, funded by the European Union through the "EU4Moldova Resilience" project.

When utility bills rise: experts and regulators discuss consumer protection

The Independent Think-Tank "Expert-Grup", in cooperation with the National Energy Regulatory Agency (ANRE), organized a press club dedicated to the protection of consumers of electricity and thermal energy, natural gas, water supply and sanitation services. This event marked the fifth press club in a series of discussions held in partnership with public authorities as part of the project "*Strengthening the Consumer Protection Framework in the Republic of Moldova*".

The event brought together representatives of the regulatory authority, the European Consumer Centre in the Republic of Moldova (ECC Moldova), experts, and journalists to discuss the most common problems faced by consumers and the tools available to address them.



In the opening remarks, Eugen Carpov, Director General of ANRE, spoke about the institution's role in maintaining a balance between consumer protection and the sustainability of market operators:

"Protecting consumers in regulated sectors is not only a legal obligation, but one of ANRE's core missions. Our goal is for every citizen to benefit from safe, high-quality services at fair prices.

When irregularities occur, we act promptly to restore consumers' rights. Through open dialogue with the media and society, we aim to strengthen public trust and ensure that the consumer's voice is better heard."

The ANRE official also highlighted that, within the Agency's Legal Department, there is a dedicated Consumer Relations Unit, responsible for examining complaints, providing consultations, and intervening in the out-of-court settlement of disputes between consumers and service providers.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

One of the most effective tools available to the public is the Single Consumer Call Center at +373 22 51 51 51, which citizens can call free of charge to report irregularities or request information. In the first nine months of 2025 alone, ANRE received over 1,650 consumer calls, confirming the need for a fast and accessible communication mechanism. In addition, throughout 2024, ANRE registered more than 800 written complaints, double the number recorded in 2022.

Mihaela Pascal, Executive Director of the European Consumer Centre in the Republic of Moldova, presented how ECC Moldova provides free assistance to consumers in disputes with providers of regulated services:

"In an increasingly unpredictable economic and energy context, household consumers are becoming more vulnerable in their relationship with essential service providers. ECC Moldova offers free support to ensure that consumer rights are not only acknowledged, but effectively respected. Our assistance includes legal advice, drafting complaints, and facilitating amicable dispute resolution between consumers and service providers.

We rely on constant and constructive dialogue with the competent authorities, contributing to a culture of responsibility and balance between suppliers and beneficiaries of services."

The event, held on 4 November, was organized within the framework of the project "*Strengthening the Consumer Protection Framework in the Republic of Moldova*", implemented by the Independent Think-Tank "Expert-Grup" as consortium leader, in partnership with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), and funded by the European Union and the Soros Moldova Foundation.

This was the fifth press club in a broader series of events conducted in collaboration with authorities responsible for consumer protection, including the National Commission for Financial Markets, the National Regulatory Agency for Electronic Communications and Information Technology, the Civil Aviation Authority, and the National Food Safety Agency.

European Consumer Centre Moldova – one year of meaningful activity in support of consumers

The European Consumer Centre in the Republic of Moldova (ECC Moldova) marked one year since its launch on 5 November 2025. This period was dedicated to protecting, informing, and empowering consumers, as well as to strengthening the legal and institutional framework in the field of consumer protection.

ECC Moldova was established within the framework of the project "*Strengthening the Consumer Protection Framework in the Republic of Moldova*", implemented by the Independent Think-Tank Expert-Grup as consortium leader, in partnership with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), with financial support from the European Union and the Soros Moldova Foundation. The founders of the organization are three reputable civil society organizations: Expert-Grup, IPRE, and the Legal Resources Centre from Moldova.

ECC Moldova is a non-commercial, independent, and apolitical organization that provides free legal support to consumers, particularly those involved in cross-border disputes. At the same time, the Centre promotes consumer rights, contributes to the harmonisation of national legislation with European Union standards, and carries out consumer information and empowerment activities.



Together with the project team, ECC Moldova has managed to:

- reach 1 million consumers through the dissemination of developed informational materials;
- successfully resolve 10 high-impact complaints, including cases that resulted in the cessation of unfair commercial practices;
- secure the reimbursement of MDL 35,000 to consumers and prevent the collection of MDL 1,855,000 from consumers by correcting unfair commercial practices;
- register a record-breaking resolution of a cross-border dispute (in just 13 minutes);
- contribute 10 expert opinions on draft normative acts and public policy documents in the field of consumer protection (including 70 concrete proposals and recommendations submitted to public authorities to improve the regulatory framework);
- sign 10 cooperation agreements with ECC Romania, national authorities, and academic institutions;
- organise 5 press clubs and 5 podcasts and participate in 10 TV programmes and 5 radio talk shows, all dedicated to consumer protection issues.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The media literacy series “Home Alone” reaches seven districts across the country: young people discuss manipulation, stereotypes and informed decision-making

This autumn, the media literacy series Home Alone, produced by the Youth Media Centre in collaboration with the Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR), was presented in seven localities across the Republic of Moldova: Glodeni, Hîncești, Cantemir, Șoldănești, Cimișlia, Cosnița (together with young people from Grigoriopol), and Leova. The film screenings brought together 188 young people - 113 girls and 75 boys - students from educational institutions in different regions of the country.



Among the beneficiaries were also young people from the left bank of the Dniester River - students of the “Ștefan cel Mare” Lyceum in Grigoriopol, who currently attend classes in the village of Cosnița, Dubăsari district. The events created a shared space for dialogue among young people from diverse backgrounds, who discussed disinformation and ways to better understand the media content they consume on a daily basis.

A series about the realities of adolescence

Home Alone is a fictional sitcom that follows a group of teenagers facing situations relevant to young people’s everyday realities, including peer pressure, manipulation, fake news, informed decision-making, the impact of social media, and mobile phone addiction.

The series producer, Diana Rusu, explains that the aim of the project was to create content that reflects the questions and challenges faced by adolescents.

Actors involved in the production attended the screenings, answered questions from the audience, and discussed the themes addressed in the episodes. Gabriel Encev, one of the lead actors, says that the meetings with young people changed his perspective on the series' impact.

Screenings in seven communities

In most locations, the screenings were followed by moderated discussions, during which students analysed the characters' actions and the underlying messages of each episode. Key topics included informed decision-making, online responsibility, stereotypes, and digital detox.

The activities concluded with interactive Kahoot quizzes, where participants answered questions related to the episodes. This format proved to be an effective way to assess understanding of the key messages, while also providing an engaging and energetic conclusion.

At the end of the sessions, several students said that the series and the discussions helped them see situations in their own lives differently:

According to the project manager, Alexandru Ghețan, participants' interest exceeded the team's expectations:

"Young people asked questions and critically analysed the episodes. In many communities, the discussion continued even after the activities ended. The fact that the series can open up such conversations shows that audiovisual tools work well in educational contexts. Young people need spaces where they can freely discuss what they consume online. The series does not provide answers—it initiates dialogue."

The film screenings held in Glodeni, Hîncești, Cantemir, Șoldănești, Cimișlia, Cosnița (with young people from Grigoriopol), and Leova demonstrate that visual tools can serve not only entertainment, but also education. Through the *Home Alone* series, young people explored situations relevant to their lives, identified risks, and practised empathy, argumentation, and critical analysis.

The series of events was implemented with the financial support of the European Union, within the framework of the "Building Resilience in Moldova" (BRIM) project, through a grant provided by the Institute for War & Peace Reporting and the Association of Independent Press.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Over 250 students from across the country gathered in the national final of the "Sub Cușma lui Guguță" championship to promote intercultural dialogue

On 2 December 2025, Chișinău hosted the eighth edition of the "Sub Cușma lui Guguță" intellectual games championship, which brought together 42 teams of young people from all regions of the country. This educational initiative was implemented by the Intellectual Games Association of the Republic of Moldova with the support of the Ministry of Education and Research and the European Union. The event brought together over 250 participants—students, teachers, and coordinators from diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds, highlighting the role of non-formal education in building an inclusive society. This year's edition focused on the European values of diversity, social cohesion, and intercultural dialogue.

Guests included representatives of the Ministry of Education, the European Union, the National Youth Agency, and CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, along with the teachers who guided the young people through all stages of the championship.



In their official messages, the emphasis was placed on the role of young people in strengthening social cohesion.

The European Union's support for projects that encourage the active participation of young people plays an essential role in their educational development and in strengthening ties between communities in the Republic of Moldova.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The final stage is the culmination of a five-month initiative involving over 13,000 young people from across the country. Participants went through school, district, and regional stages, where they developed their collaboration, communication, and diversity understanding skills in an interactive and accessible setting.

Evghenii Poleacov, President of the Intellectual Games Association of the Republic of Moldova, highlighted that such an activity develops not only general knowledge and mental agility but also the ability to handle defeat with dignity: "Only those who know how to lose can get up and move on".



At the end of the championship, the best teams of the edition climbed onto the podium and were awarded for their remarkable results. All participants received diplomas and trophies, and the winning team enjoyed the traditional Guguță hat, offered as a symbol of appreciation for their effort, creativity, and team spirit demonstrated throughout the competition. The festive atmosphere was marked by applause, enthusiasm, and excitement, celebrating performance, perseverance, and the joy of learning together.



"Sub Cușma lui Guguță" is an initiative dedicated to non-formal education for young people. The project is implemented by the Intellectual Games Association of the Republic of Moldova, with the support of the National Youth Agency, through the 2025 Annual Grant Program for Youth Organizations. At the same time, the initiative is co-financed by the European Union within the project "Social Cohesion through Dialogue" and implemented by CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation.

Promoting European values and intercultural dialogue in communities in the Republic of Moldova

Between October and December 2025, ten teams of young people from different communities in the Republic of Moldova, guided by mentors, implemented projects dedicated to promoting European values, intercultural dialogue, and social cohesion. These initiatives were developed during the Ideathon "Lead the change: youth initiatives for intercultural dialogue", which took place from September 17 to 19, with the support of the European Union. The winning teams received €1,500 each in funding, transforming their innovative ideas into concrete actions that inspire positive change at the local level.



The projects included a variety of cultural and educational events designed to bring ethnic groups closer together and promote mutual understanding. The Ethno-Fest festival, held in Congaz, Găgăuzia, on 27 October, brought together over a hundred participants from dance groups across the region and demonstrated, through art and culture, that diversity is a resource for unity and acceptance. Representatives of the Gagauz, Bulgarian, Moldovan, and Ukrainian ethnic groups were part of this celebration of intercultural dialogue.

In turn, the "Bridges of Cultures" festival, held in Tighina on November 22, brought together over forty participants who explored ethnic diversity through food tastings, exhibitions, and interactive games. The event built bridges between Moldovans, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Russians, and Gagauz, demonstrating that intercultural dialogue can be cultivated through simple but meaningful experiences.



In the city of Balti, young people participated in a championship of intellectual games and thematic quizzes inspired by local and European culture, traditions, and characteristics. In Rîșcani, cultural and team-building activities culminated in the "Festival that unites us" festival, aimed at promoting collaboration between diverse ethnic communities.

Another initiative successfully combined digital and cultural elements in a creative way. In Basarabeasca, six ethnic groups promoted culinary traditions by making videos and developing an online cookbook, offering the public an insight into local gastronomic diversity. And in Comrat, training sessions were organized for young people, focusing on the production of content about cultural diversity. These activities also included the creation of podcasts dedicated to intercultural dialogue and social cohesion, providing young people with modern tools to convey messages of unity and mutual understanding.

Human rights were a topical and interesting subject for 20 young Roma people who participated in a thematic training organized in the village of Chetrosu in the Drochia district. The initiative aimed to provide the necessary information for these young people's voices to be heard in the community and included in local decision-making. This was followed by a community event that brought together Moldovan Roma, Ukrainian Roma, and locals, creating bridges for dialogue and strengthening interethnic relations.

Similar activities took place in Chișinău, at the National Library, where artistic groups from various ethnic groups presented performances that demonstrated that cultural diversity is a treasure that deserves to be valued. The cities of Fălești and Rezina also created community spaces dedicated to cultural gatherings and exchanges, strengthening ties between residents and promoting social inclusion.

The projects had a direct impact on over a thousand beneficiaries, encouraging mutual respect, collaboration, and intercultural understanding. They show that involving young people in community actions not only contributes to social unity, but also transforms cultural diversity into a key element of social cohesion and modernization.

Such initiatives contribute to building a more united and inclusive Moldova, oriented towards European values, demonstrating that the energy and creativity of young people can generate sustainable change in communities.

The initiatives were implemented in partnership with the CONTACT Center and CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation, as part of the "Social Cohesion through Dialogue" project, funded by the European Union.



EU-funded media initiatives strengthen social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in Moldova

Between 14 September and 14 December, six regional and national media outlets developed and published 29 videos dedicated to promoting social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in the Republic of Moldova. The activity is part of the "Social Cohesion through Dialogue" project, implemented by CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation and funded by the European Union. The main goal of this action is to support national and local media in producing original content that reflects cultural diversity, ethnic and linguistic inclusion, and builds trust between communities.

The call was aimed at media institutions, independent journalists, and freelancers interested in exploring topics such as multiculturalism, civic participation, and solidarity in mixed communities. Various formats were accepted for the production of materials, ranging from multimedia reports and podcasts to thematic interviews, video series for social media platforms, and narrative photojournalism projects.



Between 14 September and 14 December, six regional and national media outlets developed and published 29 videos dedicated to promoting social cohesion and intercultural dialogue in the Republic of Moldova. The activity is part of the "Social Cohesion through Dialogue" project, implemented by CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation and funded by the European Union. The main goal of this action is to support national and local media in producing original content that reflects cultural diversity, ethnic and linguistic inclusion, and builds trust between communities.

The call was aimed at media institutions, independent journalists, and freelancers interested in exploring topics such as multiculturalism, civic participation, and solidarity in mixed communities. Various formats were accepted for the production of materials, ranging from multimedia reports and podcasts to thematic interviews, video series for social media platforms, and narrative photojournalism projects.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Safe and violence-free working environment – from international standards to national actions

On 20 November 2025 with the support of the European Union and Sweden, the East European Foundation organized a workshop in Chișinău entitled "Safe and violence-free working environment – from international standards to national actions". The purpose of the event was to define measures to ensure that every employee in the Republic of Moldova—regardless of gender, age, or profession—feels protected, respected, and safe at work.

The workshop presented the results of an expert analysis on the correlation between national legislation and international standards, including the provisions of ILO Convention No. 190 and European Union directives. Discussions focused on strengthening the legal framework, the functioning of protection and control institutions, and the role of partnerships between employers, trade unions, and civil society organizations in creating a safe and dignified working environment.

The event program included three different panel discussions:

1. Strengthening the legal and institutional framework: progress, gaps, and responsibilities
2. Protection and control institutions: ensuring effective enforcement of new provisions
3. Partnerships for a safe working environment: the role of employers, trade unions, and civil society

The event brought together representatives of public institutions, social partners, civil society organizations, and UN agencies.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The event brought together representatives of public institutions, social partners, civil society organizations, and UN agencies.

Deputy Angela Munteanu-Pojoga, author of the law against sexual harassment in the workplace and initiator of the ratification process for ILO Convention No. 190, stated: "Today we are talking about a subject that touches on the very essence of human dignity: safety in the workplace and the elimination of all forms of violence, harassment, or abuse. For many years, these issues were considered "invisible" in the Republic of Moldova, tolerated, ignored, or blamed on the victims. Today, however, through our joint efforts, they have become a national priority."

During the workshop, participants held in-depth discussions on the implementation of international standards in national legislation, the identification of gaps and institutional challenges, and good practices for creating a safe and violence-free working environment".

The event was organized as part of the project "Civic Engagement for Youth and Women Empowerment," financed by the European Union and co- financed by Sweden. The initiative is implemented by the East European Foundation together with the Partnership for Development Center, the National Youth Council of Moldova, and the non-governmental organization Regional Development Agency from Tiraspol.

Erasmus+ Seminar on the internationalisation of Moldovan Universities: advancing the Bologna process

On 21 October 2025, the Academy of Music, Theatre and Fine Arts hosted the seminar "Mobility and Internationalisation in Higher Education: Advancing the Bologna Process". The event was organised by the National Erasmus+ Office in Moldova, in cooperation with the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova and the Ministry of Education and Research, bringing together key actors of the university system in the country.

The seminar was held with the support of the Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) in Moldova. HERE experts work within the Erasmus+ Programme, with the support of the international SPHERE consortium, which brings together experts from the European University Association (EUA) – an organisation representing over 800 universities and 33 national rectors' councils in the European Higher Education Area.



at the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (SNSPA), Bucharest and Secretary General of the Romanian National Commission for UNESCO, who provided the participants with a broad vision of European trends in the field of academic mobility and internationalisation.

The seminar aimed to address the main challenges and opportunities in the field of academic mobility, with a particular focus on the Republic of Moldova, as an EU candidate country. The discussions highlighted the need to develop cooperation for attractive, inclusive and sustainable mobility, in accordance with the principles of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Participants also analysed policies that promote the internationalisation of higher education and explored the added value of the potential participation of the Republic of Moldova in the European University Alliances, in particular for strengthening cooperation, quality and integration within the EHEA.

The event brought together over 80 participants: representatives of the academic environment from across the country, managers of higher education institutions, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research and civil society.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

EU4Youth: celebrating youth impact with the Moldovan Youth Councils

End of the year for the Local Youth Councils in Moldova was marked by vibrant energy, innovative ideas, engaging discussions, and meaningful connections.

From November 28 to 30, the **National Conference of District/Municipal Youth Councils in Moldova** brought together 60 delegates from youth councils across the country.

Key achievements over the three days:

- Presentation of the National Network of Local Youth Councils of Moldova's Activity Report for 2025 and the Presidency Report from the District Youth Council Dubăsari.
- Inspirational stories shared during RNCLTMx Talks, alongside discussions on generational continuity and the challenges faced by youth councils.
- Participative development of the 2026 plan for district/municipal youth councils.
- Networking with alumni who shared best practices in community journalism and collaborations with youth centers.
- Training sessions facilitated by the National Team of Trainers.

Election of the new Secretary General of NNLYC for the 2025-2028 mandate.



The conference also featured sessions dedicated to networking, informal discussions, and strengthening youth structures – essential elements for fostering a robust community.

Participants were joined by partners who actively support youth organisations, including representatives from the Ministry of Education and Research of Moldova, the National Youth Agency, and the 'EU4Youth: youth engagement and empowerment' project. Each message underscored the importance of youth engagement and the pivotal role of representative structures in the sustainable development of local communities.

On 6 December, the Local Youth Councils of Moldova community came together to celebrate the remarkable work, passion, and dedication of young people from across the country at the **Local Youth Councils Awards Gala 2025**.

The event was filled with emotions, energy, and inspiration, as each award highlighted stories of genuine involvement and transformative change within local communities. More than 60 young people attended the event, which showcased inspiring examples of perseverance, creativity, community contributions, effective youth participation, and genuine civic spirit that deserve recognition and appreciation.

The events were organized by the National Network of Local Youth Councils within the 'Upgrade YOUth' project, supported by the National Youth Agency through the Annual Grant Program for Youth Organizations 2025, and by the 'EU4Youth: Youth Engagement and Empowerment' project, co-financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and implemented by GIZ.

Engage, Connect, Empower! Regional youth exchange in Armenia

During three inspiring days, over 60 youth leaders and civil society representatives from Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine visited youth centers in Armenia, met with the Parliament Members to discuss Armenia's new Youth Policy Law, and explored at the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies how technology and creativity empower young people.

The exchange highlighted the impact of more than 30 youth projects and strengthened a regional network of active, inspired, and empowered young changemakers. Seven representatives of Moldovan youth organisations also presented their lessons learned and experiences of engaging and empowering rural youth.

'This extensive experience gave me the opportunity to know organizations from Armenia, Georgia, and Ukraine, but also to better know my colleagues from Moldova. I learned a lot from the visited organizations and presented initiatives - we were inspired by ideas for new projects, including regional ones.'

Daniela Răileanu, AO Association for Human Rights Lex XXI from Bălți, Moldova.

The regional exchange in Armenia was organised by the 'EU4Youth: Youth Engagement and Empowerment' project, co-funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by GIZ.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Health and safety at work: who is responsible and what to do when your rights are not respected

In the Republic of Moldova, health and safety at work remain a major issue. Every year, hundreds of people suffer accidents while performing their duties, and many of them lose their lives. In the first nine months of 2025, 515 work incidents were reported, of which 56 resulted in deaths. Most tragedies occur in sectors with intense physical activity and high-risk exposure: construction, transport, agriculture and trade. The State Labour Inspectorate sounds the alarm and urges: *Work carefully! A loved one is waiting for you at home. If safety rules are not followed at work, file a petition on ism.gov.md!*



The campaign "Work carefully! Someone dear to you is waiting for you at home" is carried out within the project "EU Support to Inclusive Labour Market in the Republic of Moldova", funded by the European Union, implemented by the International Labour Organization. The campaign was launched by the State Labour Inspectorate and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, in common with both social partners to raise awareness of the importance of safety rules and health at work.

VIDEO - youtube.com/watch?v=tYMMnfhg88s&feature=youtu.be

Construction – the most dangerous field

Statistics show that the construction sector remains the most vulnerable. In 2024, 28 people were involved in serious accidents, and 17 of them died as a result of falls from

heights. The most frequent irregularities are caused by ignorance of the regulatory framework, lack of training and ignorance of safe work procedures, factors that directly contribute to accidents and the occurrence of occupational diseases. Although around 500 people are injured annually, the degree of knowledge of occupational safety and health (OSH) rules remains low among both employees and employers. Compared to the total number of employees, the Republic of Moldova has a higher incidence of lethal cases than any member state of the European Union: 4.8 fatal accidents per 100,000 employees, compared to 1.76, which is the EU average.

In the context of the accession process to the European Union, the authorities are stepping up efforts to harmonize national legislation with European directives in the field of occupational safety and health. These measures are in line with the objectives of the European Commission's Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2021-2027, which aims to:

- Anticipating and managing change in the context of green, digital and demographic transitions.
- Improving the prevention of work-related accidents and diseases and striving towards a Vision Zero approach to work-related deaths.
- Increasing preparedness to respond to current and future health crises.

In order to respond to these priorities, the authorities of the Republic of Moldova have implemented several measures. The State Labour Inspectorate has published guides and informative materials on risk assessment and accident prevention, and employers are obliged to provide protective equipment, inform and train workers.

At the same time, the Government approved specific regulations, including a regulation on minimum safety and health requirements for workers exposed to artificial optical radiation. These measures aim to create a framework for the prevention, investigation and reporting of incidents, with the aim of reducing the number of accidents and deaths at work.

Shared responsibility: employers and workers

Safety at work is a shared responsibility. Employers are obliged to consult OSH workers, set up safety committees, provide regular staff training (at least every six months) and, if necessary, contract accredited external protection and prevention services. Workers, in turn, must use protective equipment correctly, follow safety instructions, report dangerous situations immediately and work with the employer and labour inspectors to reduce risks.

Occupational safety and health protects employees from accidents and occupational diseases and provides a legal framework for carrying out their work. Through training and training, employees learn to use equipment and follow procedures. They can flag risks and propose solutions to prevent incidents. At the same time, compliance with OSH rules reduces absenteeism and facilitates the correct reporting of dangerous situations. Involving employees in OSH measures allows them to be consulted and help maintain a safe working environment. In this way, daily activity is carried out with more safety and predictability.

Work carefully! A loved one is waiting for you at home.

If safety rules are not respected at work, submit a petition on https://ism.gov.md/

The project *"EU Support to Inclusive Labour Market in the Republic of Moldova"* focuses its activities on improving the legal framework, policies and capacities for increased access to the labour market and better working conditions in Moldova. At the same time, it supports the process of aligning national labour legislation with the EU acquis and the standards of the International Labour Organisation.

Exhibition dedicated to the “16 Days of Activism” campaign opens at Europe Café

Europe Café, the main EU Information Centre in Chișinău, is hosting an exhibition by Natalia Romanciuc from November 28 until the end of December as part of the international “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence” campaign. Through her works, Natalia Romanciuc – though she does not depict violence directly – conveys messages of femininity, resilience, identity, and strength.

“My mission is to show people that the woman is at the center of my paintings. I never say what I do not know or what I am not. Through my art, I try to highlight principles such as God, personality, destiny, character, and others. My works are autobiographical, and this is another reason why the image of the woman is so important in my art,”

Natalia Romanciuc stated in a video message to the audience at the opening of her exhibition at Europe Café.



The exhibition’s opening was attended by Iwona Piórko, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, who emphasized the EU’s commitment to supporting efforts to prevent and combat gender-based violence:

“Culture and art are among the most expressive voices of change. Natalia Romanciuc’s works remind us that art speaks when words fall silent. These portraits of women are profound calls for empathy, solidarity, and action. Exhibitions like this open spaces for dialogue, reflection, and a shared commitment to a future free from violence.”

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The launch event also featured painter Eugen Gorean, who brought a male perspective to the exhibition's theme. Stylistically, his works present a realistic vision of a temporal world where the animal becomes the alter ego of man. His paintings combine figurative expression with elements of mystery, discussing a world in decline in the post-pandemic era, utopian ideas, and subtle satire of social conveniences, all within a traditional artistic language. Gorean's works complement the visual dialogue of the exhibition and highlight how diverse perspectives contribute to a complex understanding of the phenomenon of violence.

Natalia Romanciuc, born in 1996 in the Republic of Moldova, discovered her passion for painting at the age of 17. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Chișinău, graduating in 2019. Since then, she has consistently built her artistic path, defining an expressionist-figurative style with accents of modern symbolism. At the heart of her works is the female body, often portrayed as a symbol of strength, femininity, maternity, and divinity. Technically, the artist explores the distortion of the body to convey mental, emotional, and spiritual states, inviting the viewer to introspection and empathy.

The first official meeting of the President of the European Commission's Youth Advisory Board took place in Brussels

The Republic of Moldova participated in this inaugural meeting, held on 3 December in Brussels. The Board is a newly established structure, announced in the Political Guidelines for the 2024–2029 mandate, designed to provide advice on EU policies affecting young people and to strengthen their involvement in shaping the future of the European Union.

Protecting young people from the negative effects of social media on mental health and identity, creating fair and practical online safety standards, ensuring data privacy, developing digital skills, combating cyberbullying, and encouraging young people to express their opinions safely in the digital environment were among the key topics addressed by the Board during its first official session.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

At the opening session, held in the presence of the President of the European Commission, and following preparatory discussions with Glenn Micallef, European Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport - participants contributed proposals for defining the most effective European measures on online safety.

The Board brought together more than 30 representatives of National Youth Councils from EU Member States, a representative of the European Youth Forum, as well as observers from candidate and potential candidate countries. Moldova was represented by Laura Vition, delegate of the National Youth Council of Moldova and the National Coalition “Life Without Violence”.

In line with President Ursula von der Leyen’s commitment outlined in the Political Guidelines, the Youth Advisory Board was created to provide direct advice to the President on the issues that matter most to young people, to integrate their perspective into European policies, and to place them at the centre of the European Union’s decision-making process.

The French Perischool model: inspiration for afterschool activities in Moldova

In the Republic of Moldova, many children finish classes between 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM, when parents are still at work. The offer of afterschool and extracurricular activities is limited, especially in rural areas. Through the project *BOOST – An Outstanding Afterschool Experience*, funded by the European Union, Terre des hommes Moldova aims to change this situation by creating high-quality, accessible, and inclusive extracurricular educational services.



Thus, from October 7 to 10, 2025, with the support of the Embassy of France in the Republic of Moldova, Tdh Moldova organized a study visit for specialists in the fields of education and child protection. The purpose of the visit was to analyze international best practices and identify models that could be implemented in Moldova.

The visit involved specialists from the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, the Republican Center for Children and Youth ARTICO, independent experts, and the project's implementing partners.

Participants held meetings and discussions with:

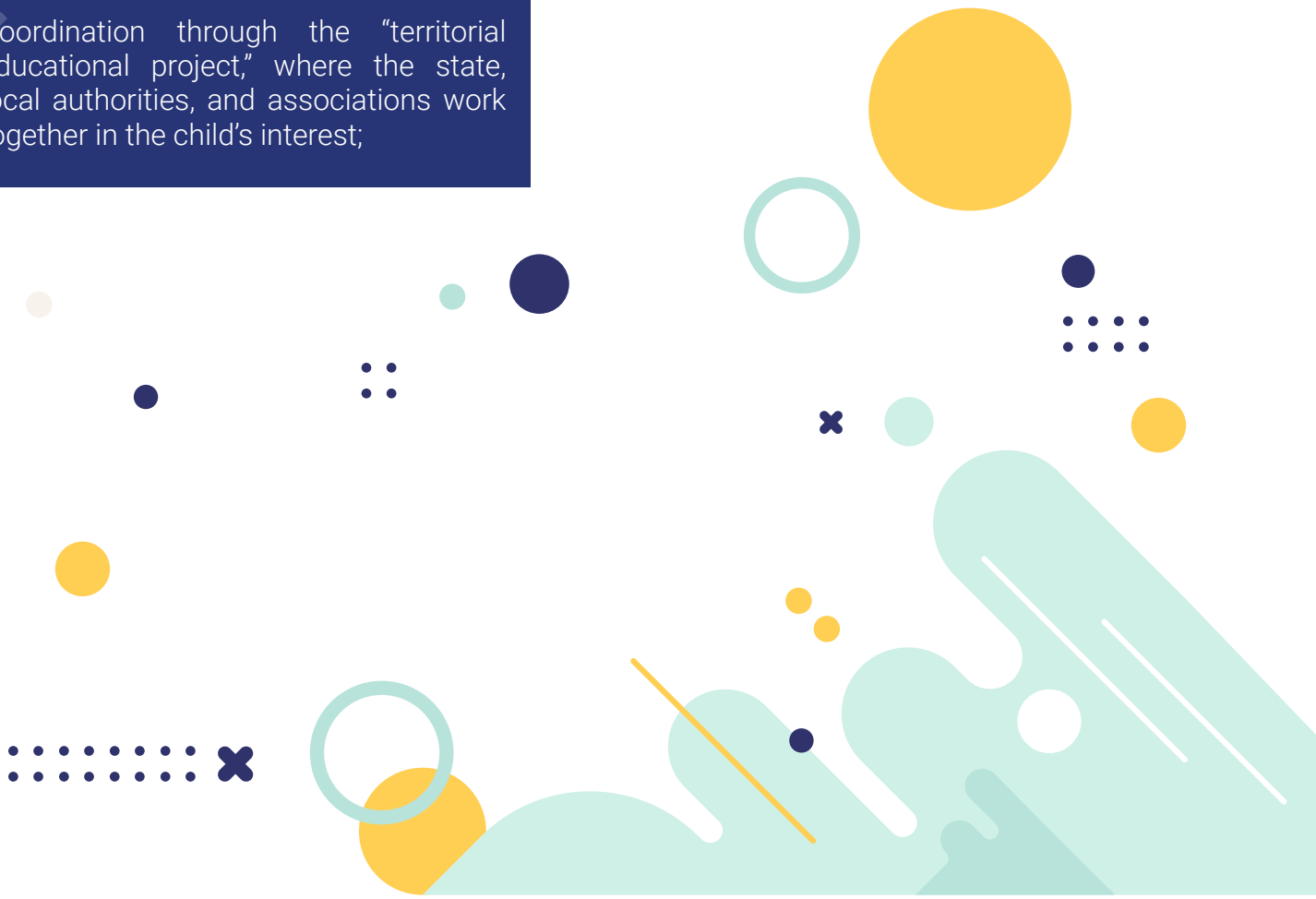
- The Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research of France
- The Ministry of Sports, Youth, and Community Life of France
- The School Affairs Directorate from Paris and local district town halls

They also visited peri- and afterschool/ extracurricular institutions, including associations providing educational, scientific, and sports activities for children and adolescents.

Discussions in France focused on several key topics for the development of afterschool/extracurricular education:

- Inter-institutional cooperation between schools, authorities, and the associative sector;
- Coordination through the "territorial educational project," where the state, local authorities, and associations work together in the child's interest;
- Organization of school and extracurricular time;
- Ensuring equitable access to activities for children from rural areas;
- Training of animators and non-teaching staff involved;
- Sustainable funding mechanisms, including involvement of local communities and parents.

The project *BOOST – An Outstanding Afterschool Experience* is funded by the European Union and implemented from 2025 to 2028 by Terre des hommes Moldova, in partnership with APSCF and Junior Achievement Moldova. The project aims to create an inclusive and modern educational environment adapted to children's needs, with a particular focus on rural communities.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

“The smile that taught me what it means to be a father” – the story of Vladimir Vohmeanin, a dad who chose to be actively involved

It all started with that smile — the beginning of Vladimir’s story in his new role as a father. In addition to being a teacher, he is learning every day the most challenging and at the same time the most beautiful lesson: how to be truly present for his children. He is the father of three – a 13-year-old daughter, an 11-year-old son, and a 3-and-a-half-year-old little girl. Vladimir says that his family has taught him more about patience, balance, and love than any book ever could.

“I’m a pragmatic person, and our children came into our family as part of a plan,” he says with a smile. “But even so, I had no idea what to expect. My wife was the one who started the conversation about having kids. I agreed, without realizing how deeply that choice would change me.”



The first months were, as for any parent, a mix of excitement, fear, and exhaustion.

“I remember how my wife taught me to hold our baby in my arms and how to rock her when she had colic. For her first bath, I watched tutorials on YouTube — but the real thing was completely different. Only her smile gave me the confidence that I was doing everything right, even though I still had a lot to learn”.

Now, 13 years later, there are more smiles — and more responsibility.

“My oldest daughter already jokes to make me laugh and we analyze together what she’s learning in chemistry or physics. My son is passionate about football, and every goal he scores feels like a small victory for the whole family. And my youngest daughter... she speaks Romanian better than all the others”,

he laughs.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Daily life is simple, but meaningful.

"Every morning at 7:30, I prepare breakfast — usually tea and toast. I iron their clothes and sometimes pick up the little one from kindergarten in the evening. My oldest daughter manages on her own now; I just help her occasionally with math exercises. My son is also independent, although after holidays he needs a bit of help to organize his time and get back into 'school mode.' With the little one, I love doing puzzles together".

After school, homework, and chores comes everyone's favorite part of the day — family time.

"We like to go out cycling. When we walk through the park, we try to make sure everyone's interests are covered: someone plays football, someone feeds the ducks, and my oldest prefers deep conversations. It's hard to do it all at once, but we try".

When asked what fatherhood has taught him, Vladimir answers simply:

"I've learned that harmony in a family doesn't come from dividing tasks but from the desire to be together. When we stop counting who washes the dishes or who puts the child to sleep, things come naturally — out of care and respect, considering each other's needs. That's how balance appears, and the family becomes a place of support and peace for everyone".

This change in attitude didn't happen overnight. Vladimir grew up in a traditional family where the father was seen as the main financial provider, regardless of how much the mother worked.

"For a long time, I believed that a father's role was to provide for the family. There was a period when my wife earned more than I did. As a teacher, I tried to find other ways to earn extra income but without much success. Eventually, I accepted it — and honestly, I don't regret it, because that's when my real transformation began".

Vladimir, an active participant in the Fathers' Club, shared:

"For me, a family based on respect, balance, and equality means paying attention to each other and getting involved when needed, without expecting perfection. If my wife is tired and doesn't feel like cooking, I either cook or we eat out. And vice versa. It's not about being the perfect parent, it's about being there — present, attentive, and aware of what's happening with your partner and children. That's how kids learn what care, respect, and partnership mean — not from what we say, but from how we live together".

His involvement in the **#FathersClub** came naturally.

"I don't even remember exactly how I found out — maybe on social media. But I know I joined because I wanted to. I love learning, and I believe that being active in life helps a lot".

The Club gave him a community.

"I talk to mothers and female colleagues every day, but I knew little about other fathers. I used to think there were few involved men. But I was wrong. I discovered amazing, dedicated dads who want to grow and learn. We learn from one another. It's an experience that has changed my perspective." He laughs and adds, "Of course, I can't share too many details... We have a clear rule — what's discussed at the Fathers' Club stays at the Fathers' Club!"

Many of the ideas and discussions from the Fathers' Club made him look at his own family differently. He began observing more closely how his children react, learn, and draw inspiration from what they see at home every day.

"Children don't learn from books — they learn from what they see daily. At our home, every dinner is about our day — we talk, laugh, and listen to one another. When guests come over, the kids are so eager to share that the guests barely get a word in," he laughs. "For me, that's the best sign that our family communicates. I hope my kids will be as caring and considerate — but most of all, I hope they'll respect people, their opinions, and their choices. They learn that from how we, as parents, handle difficult situations — which, by the way, we often discuss at dinner".

What message would he give to fathers who hesitate to get involved in raising their children?

"I don't think involvement can be imposed through messages, no matter how powerful they are. A woman becomes a mother at birth, because her body changes. A man becomes a father over time — through intention, gestures, patience, and love. You just need to start — go out and play, listen, be there. The rest comes naturally".

The #FathersClub offers a space where fathers and future fathers receive resources and support to be actively involved not only in raising and educating their children but also in household responsibilities, promoting equality within the family, and preventing violence. Fathers' Clubs are active in the districts of Fălești, Ștefan Vodă, Ialoveni, Căușeni, and in the municipality of Chișinău.

The Fathers' Club is part of the regional programme "*EU4GenderEquality*: Together Against Gender Stereotypes and Gender-Based Violence", funded by the European Union and implemented by UNFPA Moldova and UN Women Moldova with support from CIDDC.



EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

Radu Albot and Doina Chiorescu: family is the greatest victory, built through involvement and equality

On the court, Moldova's top tennis player, Radu Albot, is known for determination, discipline, and courage. But the most important achievement of his life cannot be found on scoreboards—it lives in the quiet of his home, where, together with his wife, Doina Chiorescu, and their daughter, Adeline, he has learned the meaning of love, patience, and the strength of a team. Today, the couple is preparing to become parents once again—Doina is in her fourth month of pregnancy, and the family awaits this new beginning with gratitude and excitement.



One of the most emotional moments happened in Japan, at 12 weeks of pregnancy.

"We really wanted to find a clinic for the ultrasound. I remember the emotion when the doctor measured the baby's foot—it was only 11 mm. Then the huge emotions when we told our parents they would become grandparents,"

Doina says.

She remembers how present Radu was every step of the way.

According to the 2024 "Men and Gender Equality" (IMAGES) study, the number of men in Moldova who regularly accompany their wife to medical appointments during pregnancy has doubled—from 23% in 2015 to 50% in 2024—showing the growing involvement of fathers.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Yet the pandemic also brought a rare gift: precious time together during Adeline's first months of life.

"For the first time, Radu could stay home for several months because tournaments were cancelled. We did almost everything together. He helped put her to sleep, loved doing skin-to-skin contact, and bath time became a special ritual for all three of us. The same with changing diapers and going for walks."

A detail she will never forget is how Radu would write poems for their daughter and read them to her with a tenderness that melted away all fatigue. That period brought them closer as a couple and taught them patience, strength, and presence. As a husband and father, Radu became increasingly responsible and involved, embracing his new role with enthusiasm.

He speaks openly about the emotion of victory and the vulnerability of seeing his family in the stands:

"Seeing Adeline and my wife in the stands is something special. You play your whole life, and suddenly you have an extra supporter in your team—a little one. From the stands she shouts: 'Come on, daddy!' When she runs into my arms, I melt. My wife and daughter bring me luck. Each match has a new meaning now, and every point won feels twice as joyful knowing I have a strong team beside me: my family."

The IMAGES study also shows that fathers' involvement in raising children is steadily increasing in Moldova: from 55% in 2015 to 68% in 2024. More and more fathers take children to daycare or activities, stay home when the child is sick (an increase from 15% to 33%), and participate in daily care tasks.

Through the regional EU4Gender Equality Programme, implemented with UN Women and supported by the EU, UNFPA strengthens local initiatives that reduce gender-based violence and encourage equal partnerships between women and men. The Fathers' Clubs are one concrete example—safe spaces where men learn how to actively participate in childcare and household responsibilities, helping shift traditional gender roles.

For Radu, family has brought balance and a new perspective on life—one where success is shared. "Being a modern father means supporting, being responsible, and being present. Unfortunately, there are still prejudices that say childcare and housework are 'women's duties'. But I believe what others say doesn't matter. A father's involvement is essential for a family's harmony."

Doina agrees:

"When it comes to raising our child and household tasks, we are completely equal. What one does, the other does too. His care and attention make me feel safe and loved."



Today, their days are full thanks to Adeline, who juggles tennis, acting, swimming, and gymnastics. Her parents are always there, cheering her on. Beyond scheduled activities, the family finds joy in park walks, board games, and simple but precious moments cooking together. Even when tennis keeps Radu away, he finds ways to stay present:

"I talk to them as often as possible, and sometimes we travel together. That's when I feel the strongest support—even on the court."

Looking back, they know that every moment—from the first ultrasound to evening poems—has shaped them into a strong family united by love, patience, and small moments that matter most. And now, with their second child on the way, they look forward to a new adventure:

"Our family is a team. We support each other, we listen, and we grow together. For us, that is love."

#EU4GenderEquality: facilitators gathered for the “Facilitation Practices within the Fathers’ Club” training of trainers

How can we turn stereotypes into questions and tension into dialogue? How can we support men to become more aware, engaged, and present in the lives of their children?

These questions formed the basis of the Training of Trainers within the #FathersClub, held at the Municipal Center for Adult Learning and Education in Chișinău.



Under the guidance of psychologist and national trainer Diana Postu-Blăjinu, participants — local facilitators and fathers — explored ways to create a safe, open, and empathetic space where every father feels heard, understood, and respected.

In the first part of the day, facilitators reflected on their own experiences, identifying successes, challenges, and resources in their work. They then practiced practical techniques for managing difficult situations — participants who dominate discussions, avoid engagement, or make ironic comments — and learned how to turn these moments into learning opportunities for the whole group.

“I realized that a simple question, asked at the right moment, can change the tone of the entire discussion.”

Instead of quick responses, they discovered the power of open-ended questions:

“What do you think?”

How could this affect...?”

“What consequences could this have...?”

Through these exercises, facilitators understood that the art of moderating a group is not about control, but about creating space for listening, respect, and shared learning.

"Sometimes patiently listening is the most powerful way to guide a group."

Discussions went deeper: how do we recognize and address gender stereotypes that may arise in conversations with fathers? How do we collectively build a language of respect and responsibility, without judgment or moralizing?

"Sometimes a simple exercise on how we express emotions can open a sincere conversation about what it means to be a father."

The Fathers' Club continues to demonstrate that father involvement is a norm we build step by step — through dialogue, trust, and partnership between women and men, parents and children, communities and schools. The Fathers' Club is part of the regional program "**EU4Gender Equality: Together Against Gender Stereotypes and Gender-Based Violence**", funded by the European Union and implemented by **UNFPA Moldova** and **UN Women Moldova**, with the support of the **Child Rights Information and Documentation Center**.

Motivational Book “The Price of the Smile”: addressing societal pressures and gender-based violence through women’s empowerment

Around 1,500 copies of Ionela Hadârcă’s motivational book The Price of the Smile, commissioned by UN Women Moldova under the EU-funded EVOLVE4GE project, reached women from all walks of life across Moldova during the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. The launch marked a powerful close to the campaign, sending women across the country a strong message on the importance of emotional and physical wellbeing.



The book was launched during an event that brought together over 700 women, donors, partners, and local communities. Women from diverse backgrounds had the opportunity to meet the author, receive a signed copy, and engage in open dialogue.

The book serves as a practical, motivational guide to help women take charge of their mental, physical, and financial well-being, addressing challenges such as societal pressures, gender-based violence, and limited access to support systems.

Through personal stories and actionable advice, it encourages women to envision a more empowered future.

As part of a broader partnership for this initiative, the National Coalition Life Without Violence helped distribute copies to Roma women, beneficiaries of support services, and professional communities nationwide, including women lawyers and doctors.

Several events have amplified the book's impact. At Europe Café, Ionela Hadârcă met with a group of young women and men for an interactive discussion on personal growth, healthy relationships, and emotional well-being. In Ungheni, she participated in a workshop with beneficiaries of the Integrated Regional Service for Victims of Sexual Violence, leading a motivational session with survivors, supported by psychologists.

Following this session, a larger community event was held to discuss the book and to encourage support and solidarity among women in Ungheni. These events served as a space for reflection and connection, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose.

Reflecting on her work, Ionela Hadârcă shared:

"We are taught from an early age to pay attention to the 'big' decisions: what college to choose, where to work, who to marry, what kind of house to buy, how many children to have. But there are only two truly big decisions: how I decide to feel and what I tell myself every day."

The book and associated activities were supported by the EVOLVE4GE Project, funded by the European Union and implemented by UN Women.



Assistive equipment worth 17 million MDL to support inclusive education in Moldova

Children with special educational needs from 95 schools across the Republic of Moldova will receive assistive equipment worth more than 17 million MDL. The equipment is provided by UNICEF with financial support of the European Union, the Global Partnership for Education, the Government of Japan, and the Government of the United States of America.

The items include Braille typewriters and slates, video magnifiers and optical tools, screen-reading software, augmentative communication applications, and adapted keyboards.

In the districts of Cahul and Ungheni, the support was offered through the EU4Moldova: Key Regions programme, implemented by UNICEF and UNDP, with a total of approximately 500 sets of equipment delivered.

Together with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, UNICEF supports the implementation of the Education 2030 Strategy and the Programme for the Development of Inclusive Education 2024–2027, which aims for 80 percent of schools in the Republic of Moldova to be equipped with assistive technologies by 2027.

More details in the press release:

http://bit.ly/42nfBzH



Women in art breaking patriarchal barriers: voices, creativity and solidarity

In a world where women continue to be underrepresented in artistic fields historically dominated by men, they never stop creating, organizing, and claiming their own spaces.

On the occasion of the International Day of the Girl, we met with several girls and women at a Feminist Club titled Women in Art Breaking Patriarchal Barriers. The event, organized in partnership with Women for Women (A.O. Femei pentru Femei), highlighted women who turn passion into profession and art into a form of activism.



Lalele (Ilona Sergheevna), a DJ and independent cultural worker, promotes the local music scene and creates events that encourage women to express themselves freely and authentically.

Rusanda Curcă (Rusanda Alexandru), a community DJ and cultural and civic activist from Hîrtop, develops cultural projects for young people and brings art closer to rural communities through the Arta Azi Cultural Projects Centre.

Ioana Isac, a poet and artistic director, uses her voice and her poetry to speak about vulnerability, freedom, and the courage to be exactly who you are.

The event offered a safe and open space for dialogue, inspiration, and solidarity among women who make art, activism, and history. Women in art do not only create. They transform narratives, reshape cultural spaces, and inspire future generations of girls to dream without limits.

The Feminist Club is part of the UNICEF project Girls and Women: Solidarity and Autonomy, second edition, implemented by Women for Women with financial support from the European Union (EU Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid).

Bringing support closer: mobile inclusion teams strengthen education in rural communities

Sometimes, inclusion can arrive… on wheels. For many children in rural areas, specialized support isn't always within reach. That's why the mobile inclusion team from Drochia travels directly to village schools, to be present where support is needed most.

The mobile team's services help promote inclusion, support children with learning difficulties, prevent school dropout, and provide crisis interventions in situations of violence or psychological trauma.

At the same time, teachers receive guidance on adapting their lessons, and parents find important answers to support their children day by day.

The model is being piloted in Drochia, Soroca, and Cahul.

This initiative is launched by the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, in partnership with the Republican Center for Psychopedagogical Assistance and UNICEF. It is part of the programme "Promoting quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all," funded by the European Union and implemented by UNICEF and UNDP.



A place to learn, dream, and feel safe: Egor's story

Egor is 11 years old and came from Mykolaiv, Ukraine. Far from home but not from his dreams, he now lives at the Refugee Placement Centre in Bălți, where he has discovered new friends and a passion for robotics.

"When I'm sad, I listen to music or take the little car I built in robotics class and assemble it again."

Egor dreams that one day he will open a business that produces electronic devices and use half of the money he earns to help those in need.

With support from the European Union's Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid, #UNICEF, and the Child and Family Empowerment Association "AVE Copiii," more than 700 refugee children and children from Moldova benefit every day from educational, recreational, and emotional support activities in 25 Ludotheques across the country.

Every child deserves a chance to learn, to dream, and to feel safe.



Supporting refugee children to feel safe and thrive: a family's story from Nisporeni

After months of fear and uncertainty, Irina and Artiom and their nine children finally found in Nisporeni the sense of peace they thought they would never feel again. From the Mykolaiv region in Ukraine to the Refugee Accommodation Centre in Moldova, their journey was long but filled with hope. Today, the children go to school, play at the Ludoteca, and dream of a future without fear.

> *"My children are my strength. When they are home, there is peace,"*
>
> ***Irina says with a smile.***

With support from the European Union's Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid, #UNICEF, the Child and Family Empowerment Association "AVE Copiii," and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova, the Ludoteca in Nisporeni offers refugee children daily educational, recreational, and psychosocial support activities. The story of the Boghiu-Pasenco family reflects the collective effort to provide every refugee child with a safe and stable environment.

In Moldova, thousands of children are rediscovering the joy of growing up without fear. Since the beginning of the war, more than 1.8 million refugees have entered the Republic of Moldova, and almost half of the 135,000 refugees remaining in the country are children.

Read the full story: http://shorturl.at/4bn6G



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The courage to become a teacher grows with the support of a mentor

With financial support from the European Union, UNICEF is helping strengthen the culture of mentorship in schools across the Republic of Moldova.

"I will never forget my first day as a teacher. I walked into the classroom filled with emotions, realizing that everything I had learned at university was so different from the reality in school. The children looked at me with curiosity, and I wondered: Will I manage? Very quickly, I understood how huge the gap between theory and practice really is... without support, I would have felt lost,"

Ecaterina Ciubeică, teacher at "Mihai Viteazul" Gymnasium, Strășeni.

What helped Ecaterina regain her confidence was the mentorship programme — an initiative through which experienced teachers become guides for those at the beginning of their career.

The support, advice, and encouragement she received from her mentor, Aurelia, made all the difference: they turned her initial fears into confidence, courage, and a desire to grow.

With financial support from the European Union — European Union in the Republic of Moldova — UNICEF is helping strengthen the culture of mentorship in schools across the Republic of Moldova through training, experience-sharing, and the development of a national mentor network coordinated by the National Institute for Education and Leadership (INEL).

This initiative is part of the programme "*Promoting quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all*," implemented by UNICEF and UNDP Moldova in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, with financial support from the European Union.

Read the full story of Ecaterina and Aurelia and discover how mentorship is transforming schools from within: http://bit.ly/47t2QGC



EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

Developing leaders of learning: investing in mentorship for better schools

For five days, 30 national mentors and representatives of INEL (the National Institute for Education and Leadership) came together for an intensive training course facilitated by Nicu Crețu, trainer and coach in professional development and leadership.

Through interactive sessions and practical exercises, participants strengthened their professional competencies, exchanged experiences, and explored new ways to embrace their roles as guides and leaders of transformation in schools.

This activity is part of the programme "Promoting Quality Education and Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All," implemented by UNICEF and UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, with financial support from the European Union.

By expanding the national network of mentors, establishing competency standards, and providing dedicated professional development courses, UNICEF and INEL contribute to:

- creating a culture of learning and collaboration in schools;
- supporting teachers in delivering modern and effective instruction;
- improving the quality of education for every child.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together



Volunteer Firefighters Festival 2025 – solidarity for safer communities

Over 150 volunteer firefighters and rescuers from across the Republic of Moldova gathered, on 18 October, for the fourth edition of the Volunteer Firefighters Festival, held in Gura Bîcului village, Anenii Noi district. The event celebrated the heroes who risk their lives for the safety of their communities – a thrilling and energic day filled with educational activities, spectacular competitions, an exhibition of rescue equipment, local product fairs, children's entertainment areas and a festive atmosphere full of joy.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

During the festival, volunteer firefighter teams demonstrated their speed, coordination, and teamwork in two dynamic competitions: "Fire Truck Intervention Drill," which tested their coordination, and the "Obstacle Course," an individual challenge of strength and endurance.

The event was organized by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova, the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the Gura Bîcului Village Hall, within the framework of the "*EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Resilient Communities*" project, funded by the European Union.

"When disaster strikes, every minute counts — and it's often the volunteer firefighters who arrive first. They are neighbours helping neighbours, citizens protecting their communities, people standing together when it matters most. Volunteer firefighters are the heartbeat of resilience. That's why the European Union invests in developing the volunteer firefighting network and strengthening the bond between citizens and civil protection institutions. Through this project, the EU invests in the safety of Moldovan citizens and in building stronger, more resilient local emergency response capacities,"

highlighted Iwona Piórko, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova.



The festival was also a celebration for the entire community. Visitors explored local craft and artisan stands, while children enjoyed a dedicated area with educational activities, workshops for crafting paper fire trucks, an intervention equipment exhibition, a virtual reality experience, and a lively artistic program filled with music and good cheer.

The event also brought together representatives of the State Fire Service of Poland, who shared experiences on training, risk management, and community engagement in prevention activities.

"Solidarity and civic spirit are the values that define volunteer firefighters – both in Poland and in the Republic of Moldova. This festival, organized for the fourth consecutive year by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova, proves that through international cooperation and continuous investment, we can build safer and more united communities,"

stated Tomasz Kobzdej, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Republic of Moldova.



Currently, around 25 volunteer firefighter and rescue stations are operational in the Republic of Moldova, engaging over 300 active volunteers. To achieve an average response time comparable to EU standards – under 15 minutes – the network must expand to at least 114 active stations in rural areas.

The *"EU4Moldova Resilience: Secure State, Resilient Communities"* project, funded by the European Union and implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova, includes the construction of 10 new volunteer firefighter and rescue posts, the renovation of another 10, and the equipment of 35 units with modern tools and gear. The total value of investments amounts to 44 million MDL, provided by the European Union.



EU4Moldova Resilience: nine firefighter stations renovated with European Union support

Nine territorial and volunteer firefighter stations across the Republic of Moldova have been renovated with financial support from the European Union, amounting to over MDL 4.2 million. On 5 December, the volunteer firefighters and rescuers' station in Scoreni, Strășeni district, was officially inaugurated, following significant upgrades to the intervention infrastructure and improved working conditions for the local rescue team.



The renovation works included the construction of a rest room, bathroom, sanitary facilities, and a dedicated washing area for equipment and uniforms. Storage spaces were modernized, and essential facilities were created to support the daily activities of volunteer firefighters.

"Until now, we had a trained team of 12 volunteer firefighters, a donated fire truck, and a garage for it, but we lacked proper conditions for our volunteers. Thanks to this project, the station has significantly increased its efficiency and will serve nearly 9,000 people — not only from Scoreni, but also from Malcoci, Nimoreni, and Condrița,"

said Svetlana Tabacari, Mayor of Scoreni.

In total, nine localities have benefited from similar renovations: Mereni, Sireți, Larga, Răzeni, Cărpineni, Tomai, Lalova, Geamăna, and Scoreni. These were selected within the project "*EU4Moldova Resilience – Secure State, Resilient Communities*", funded by the European Union and implemented by Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.

Through this project, the European Union is supporting the construction of 10 new volunteer firefighter and rescue stations, the renovation of 9 existing ones, and the provision of advanced protective equipment to 35 units. The total investment for these activities exceeds MDL 44 million.

Currently, 25 volunteer firefighter and rescue stations operate in the Republic of Moldova, engaging more than 300 active volunteers. To reach an EU-standard response time of under 15 minutes, the network would need to expand to at least 114 active stations in rural areas.

MEDIA FORUM 2025: mapping the challenges and identifying solutions

The tenth edition of the Media Forum of the Republic of Moldova—the country's most important annual event for the journalistic community—took place on 8–9 December 2025. More than 230 journalists, editors, media managers, national and international experts, as well as representatives of public authorities and development partners, took part in thematic debates, professional development workshops, and special events. The Media Forum is organised by the Press Council, in partnership with the Independent Press Association (API), the Centre for Independent Journalism (CJI), and the Electronic Press Association (APEL).



The first debate, dedicated to legislative priorities in the context of European integration, brought together journalists, media experts, and representatives of public authorities. Participants agreed that aligning national legislation with European standards remains a complex process.

During the second debate, Julia Haas (OSCE) presented a new policy handbook on protecting media freedom in the era of Big Tech platforms and artificial intelligence. Subsequent discussions focused on the challenges posed by digital platforms and AI, as well as concrete solutions, including the implementation of the Digital Services Act, the establishment of a media innovation fund, investments in cybersecurity, and stronger measures to counter hate speech.

Another panel addressed election coverage in the context of foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI). Representatives of state institutions and journalists discussed lessons learned from recent electoral campaigns and the need to strengthen mechanisms for securing the national information space. Journalists spoke about newsroom adaptation to new digital realities and the growing volume of manipulative content.

Economic sustainability of the media sector was the focus of several debates. Representatives of advertising agencies, television broadcasters, and the Competition Council analysed dysfunctions in the advertising market, which is still dominated by television but is experiencing a rapid shift of budgets towards global platforms. Proposed solutions included subsidising audience measurement costs, adjusting the legal framework, and a fairer redistribution of revenues.

Another debate addressed the shortage of professionals in newsrooms. Media managers, representatives of universities, and the Ministry of Education identified low salaries as the main factor driving skilled professionals towards other sectors. Higher education institutions presented measures to adapt curricula to current labour market needs.



International support for independent media was examined from a long-term sustainability perspective. Participants stressed that while external funding remains essential, newsrooms must invest in organisational development, revenue diversification, and adaptation to new media trends.

Two special events were dedicated to local media and the future of investigative journalism. Participants underlined the crucial role of regional media in countering disinformation and the need for dedicated support strategies. Discussions also addressed the adaptation of investigative journalism to new formats and platforms.

During the Forum, the National Award for Journalistic Ethics and Deontology was presented to journalist Viorica Tătaru, and a new edition of The Black Book of Public Funds Waste was launched. The Forum concluded with the adoption of the Media Forum 2025 Resolution, which includes key findings and recommendations addressed to the authorities on improving the media environment.

The Media Forum 2025 was held with the support of the European Union, International Media Support (Denmark), the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Germany), the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Soros Foundation Moldova, and DW Akademie (Germany).

Empowering communities and civic participation – dialogue with the civil society organisations across Moldova

Representatives of civil society organisations from across Moldova came together on 28 November for an interactive training and dialogue session with the EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, Iwona Piórko, focused on strengthening the resilience and operational capacities of civil society organisations. Hosted by the National Center for Assistance and Information of Non-Governmental Organisations 'CONTACT' and part of the EU-funded INSPIRED Moldova project, the training brought together current EU grant beneficiaries to exchange experiences and explore how grassroots action can drive Moldova's European transformation from the ground up.



The Ambassador emphasised the essential role of civil society in promoting transparency, inclusion, and community accountability.

"Grassroots civil society organizations, working every day in communities across all corners of the country, are the ones that can shape our path toward European integration.

They know best the real needs of people and the local challenges,"

stated the Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, Iwona Piórko.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

"For many of these organizations, accessing funding remains a challenge. Although we cannot provide direct support to every organization individually, we can create the necessary conditions for them to receive the assistance they need — to develop their capacities, to be guided, and to be prepared to access available resources. Our role is to facilitate and strengthen this process so that the voices of communities are heard and supported."

Serghei Neivcoven, Executive Director of CONTACT Center, underlined the importance of sustained cooperation and flexible funding mechanisms that reach civil society organisations across the country, including those in remote communities.

The event featured an open exchange where participants discussed how their work aligns with European values and standards, and how it can further integrate the EU accession perspective. Community organisations representatives shared practical examples from their communities: initiatives that rebuild trust between citizens and authorities, implement participatory mechanisms, improve inclusion in decision-making, and strengthen connections among otherwise isolated stakeholders. Even with limited resources, participants highlighted the decisive role of civil society in supporting vulnerable groups and advancing democracy.

Drawing on lessons from EU-supported projects across Moldova, the Ambassador reflected on what has proven effective and where challenges remain, including uneven access to funding, administrative capacity gaps, and the need for more structured engagement of local public authorities in cooperating with civil society at local level.



This session is part of the INSPIRED Lab – CSO helpdesk led by 'CONTACT', which provides consultations, mentoring, training, and resources to support civil society involvement in policy dialogue and strengthen organisational capacity across strategic areas. Find out more here.

The INSPIRED Moldova project aims to increase civil society participation in policy dialogue at all levels, fostering a culture of civic engagement, open dialogue between citizens and authorities, and adherence to democratic values and participatory governance. The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium including the European Partnership for Democracy (EPD), ALDA – European Association for Local Democracy, CONTACT Center, CPR Moldova, Democracy Reporting International (DRI), and People in Need (PIN).



Building skills on and for crisis communication: second CCC networking round

In times of crisis, it is crucial to know where to find reliable information and to sustain trustworthy connections within communities. The Crisis Communication Chapters (CCCs) that were established in Soroca, Căușeni and Ungheni provide just that. But beyond sharing experiences and growing together, the three CCCs met in Chișinău in October for a networking event. The event aimed to showcase results, strengthen the local structures and foster the exchange among CCCs and governmental institutions.

The two- day event combined interactive sessions and practical exercises. Each CCC took turns in the spotlight to present the information packages they had developed. Soroca and Căușeni CCCs focused on natural disasters in the region, while Ungheni CCC contributed on the topic of energy crisis. All the presentations showcased the information packages and highlighted why it's worth addressing the community or even just specific target groups, like in Soroca:

„The CCC was a new experience compared to other projects and proved very useful for our community. The information session for the Roma minority in our district, with about 60 participants, was especially valuable".



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The event had different key elements – all the members had an interactive exchange with the Inspectorate of Emergency Situations and the Audiovisual Council, while the skills lab allowed them to exercise their skills in front of the camera and to formulate spot-on messages for different crises. These activities boosted their confidence and communication skills, ensuring each representative of the CCCs is prepared as voice of their region.

The second day focused on the sustainability and visibility of each CCC. Group work made the members of CCCs think intensively about future steps, local action and on how to increase their visibility on the ground.

This event marked the last activity for CCCs in the TRIMEDIA project, while also creating an opportunity for all chapters to get to know each other, improve connection and lay the foundation for a long-term collaboration on crisis communication.

As one participant noted:

"Today's meeting renewed my motivation to continue in the Crisis Communication Chapter, reaffirming how important these CCCs are".

The Crisis Communication Chapters are part of the TRIMEDIA project, which is funded by the European Union and co-funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The project is implemented by DW Akademie and the Association of Independent Press.

Key results of the “Civil Society for European Integration” project – lessons learned, priorities, local and central impact

On 12 December 2025, in Chișinău, the closing event of the “Civil Society for European Integration” project took place. The project was financed by the European Union and co-financed by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Moldova and was implemented in 2023–2025 by the Independent Think Tank Expert-Grup (lead implementer), in partnership with Institutum Virtutes Civilis (IVC), the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Moldova.

The project pursued two specific objectives.

Objective 1: Strengthen NGOs’ capacity to monitor and participate in budget planning at both local and central level. 15 civil society organisations from 5 development regions each received EUR 20,000 grants, benefited from training and mentoring, and used a practical guide for civic participation in the budget process.

Results: 30 budget-monitoring reports, presented at 30 round tables and over 30 advocacy meetings, leading to 50 recommendations implemented through dialogue with authorities. Adrian Lupușor, Executive Director of Expert-Grup (lead implementer), stressed that the project provided CSOs with practical tools for budget monitoring and planning, and strengthened the capacities of 15 organisations through grants and tailored mentoring.



Objective 2: Support the involvement of three civil society platforms so they can contribute cohesively to the EU accession process: the EU–Moldova Civil Society Platform, the Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) Platform, and the National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum.

Within this framework, 15 position papers and 2 independent monitoring reports were produced on progress regarding the European Commission's recommendations; 10 thematic round tables and 2 annual national conferences were organised; 6 meetings of the EU–Moldova Civil Society Platform and 3 meetings of the DAG Platform were held; and approximately 15 information sessions connected and mobilised local and regional CSOs.



Community-level impact highlighted by three local partners:

- Public Association "Pas cu Pas – South Region" (Cahul / ATU Găgăuzia) — transparency and prioritisation of road investment;
- Public Association "Părinți Solidari" (Chișinău) — improving the procurement process for school textbooks through recommendations and dialogue with the Ministry of Education and Research;
- Public Association "Center for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CDPD)" — budget monitoring to advance accessibility solutions aligned with standards, and public awareness on good practices in university campuses and public spaces.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The project concludes and the results remain public. Reports, recommendations and position papers are available to communities, media and decision-makers at Euromonitor.md: https://www.euromonitor.md

"Civil Society for European Integration" is financed by the European Union and co-financed by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Moldova; lead implementer: the Independent Think Tank Expert-Grup, in partnership with IVC, IPRE and FES Moldova.



16th meeting of the EU–Moldova Civil Society Platform: commitments for accession, social reforms, and economic growth

At the headquarters of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels, the 16th meeting of the European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform took place. The meeting was opened by Cristian Pîrvulescu, Co-Chair of the European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform, and Liliana Palihovici, Co-Chair of the European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform and President of the Association "Institutum Virtutes Civilis" (IVC). They reviewed progress in implementing the Association Agreement, developments in the accession negotiations, and the implications of the 2025 parliamentary election results for priorities through 2028.



Members of the Platform welcomed the election results, which confirm citizens' constant support for the European future of the Republic of Moldova, as enshrined in the Constitution. Representatives of European institutions and of the authorities of the Republic of Moldova reconfirmed the European Union's support for the country's European path, and the Platform welcomed the completion of the bilateral screening, an essential stage in the accession negotiations.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

"It is important to note that civil society is essential for democracy in the Republic of Moldova and an indispensable partner in the European integration process, and independent NGOs have defended European values, explained reforms, and supported transparency and good governance. This is how we will continue." —

Liliana Palihovici, Co-Chair of the European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform; President, Association "Institutum Virtutes Civilis" (IVC).

Participants expressed their commitment to support the opening of Cluster 1 "Fundamentals" and reiterated the need for an inclusive, transparent, and comprehensive consultation process with civil society throughout the legislative adoption process, as well as for promoting the Civil Society Development Programme 2024–2027. The call was renewed to establish an Economic and Social Committee in the Republic of Moldova, with an adequate operating budget.

Discussions also focused on reforming the childcare system and on the rights of persons with disabilities. Platform members called on the Government of the Republic of Moldova to align national legislation with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and with European Union standards, to prioritise full accessibility of public infrastructure, services, and digital platforms for persons with disabilities, to involve representative organisations, and to allocate the necessary resources to remove barriers. The need was underlined for a system of disaggregated disability data, harmonised with EU standards.

The Joint Declaration calls for accelerating the transition to family- and community-based care, an action plan with a dedicated budget, coordination and accountability, predictable financing, strengthened child protection mechanisms, and the full application of the European Child Guarantee.

In the context of the Economic Growth Plan for the Republic of Moldova, the Platform stressed the need to increase the country's capacity to absorb EUR 1.9 billion in EU support by improving governance in the public sector and by transitioning to a growth model based on higher productivity and value added. It also called for accelerating the adoption of the Government Decision on the minimum wage for 2026, in the direction of transposing Directive (EU) 2022/2041 and reaching the target of 50% of the national average wage.

The full Joint Declaration adopted at the meeting is available here: https://www.euromonitor.md/en-joint-declaration-16th-meeting-eu-moldova-civil-society-platform-11-nov-2025/

The European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform remains an essential instrument to ensure genuine civil society participation in monitoring and implementing the Republic of Moldova's European commitments and in strengthening the partnership with the European Union.

***The Platform was created under Article 442** of the Association Agreement and is composed of representatives of civil society from the European Union, including members of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), and from the Republic of Moldova. It serves as a forum for meeting and exchanging views on the implementation of the Association Agreement and on the Republic of Moldova's development challenges.*

The 16th meeting of the Platform took place within the project "Civil Society for European Integration", financed by the European Union and co-financed by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Moldova, implemented by Independent Think-Tank "Expert-Grup" (lead partner), in partnership with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), the Association "Institutum Virtutes Civilis" (IVC), and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Moldova. Project details: euromonitor.md.

15 Moldovan CSOs on a study visit to Brussels: dialogue with EU institutions and recommendations to accelerate reforms

A study visit to Brussels by the 15 local civil society organisations (CSOs) partnering in the project "Civil Society for European Integration" concluded successfully, inspiring continued CSO engagement in promoting European values and budget transparency.

The programme included structured dialogues at the Mission of the Republic of Moldova to the European Union with Ms Angelica Munteanu, Minister-Counsellor, and Ms Zinaida Negară, Officer responsible for the sectoral portfolio, focusing on the Mission's work and the Growth Plan for Moldova, with emphasis on the Reform Agenda. The crucial role of civil society in implementing the Agenda and in ensuring transparent allocation of EU resources was underlined.



The delegation then visited the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) for a meeting with Mr Séamus Boland, President of the Committee, and a working session with Ms Janine Borg, Head of the Unit for Coordination of National Economic and Social Committees. Discussions addressed the EESC's role and mandate, the opportunity to establish a national Economic and Social Committee (ESC) in the Republic of Moldova, the essential role of civil society in the European integration process, and civil society's expectations regarding accession.

At the European Parliament, participants met Ms Janina Sitaru, Head of Cabinet to European Parliament Vice-President Mr Victor Negrescu, to discuss support for civil society and funding opportunities under EU programmes.

The delegation also took part in the 16th meeting of the European Union – Republic of Moldova Civil Society Platform, alongside Co-Chairs Cristian Pîrvulescu and Liliana Palihovici, Mr Siegfried Mureșan, Member of the European Parliament, and representatives of the Mission to the EU, the European Commission, the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, civil society, trade unions, and employers' organisations. A Joint Declaration with reform recommendations addressed to the authorities of the Republic of Moldova and to the EU—aimed at accelerating the country's European path—was adopted. The full text is available on the organisers' websites and on the project page: euromonitor.md/ro.

The participating organisations brought local perspectives into high-level dialogues and promoted constructive engagement between authorities, EU institutions, and civil society, to deliver concrete results and impact in communities across the Republic of Moldova. The visit offered a valuable opportunity to exchange experience and good practices, which participants will apply at home to strengthen advocacy, cooperation with authorities, and services for citizens.

This visit took place within the project "Civil Society for European Integration", financed by the European Union (European Union in the Republic of Moldova) and co-financed by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Moldova, implemented by Independent Think-Tank Expert-Grup (lead partner), in partnership with the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), the Association "Institutum Virtutes Civilis" (IVC), and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Moldova. Project details: https://euromonitor.md/ro

INSPIRED Moldova: civic engagement, democratic education, and active youth

As the project moves forward to the next stages, the results achieved so far clearly highlight the concrete impact of the supported initiatives.

Within the grant program managed by ALDA, one of the most remarkable initiatives is the one implemented by the Moldovan Student Alliance (ASM), which has transformed the university environment into an active space for democratic dialogue. ASM conducted a detailed analysis of the needs and challenges faced by young people in the electoral process, developing the Methodology for Civic and Electoral Engagement, a valuable tool at the national level, which was subsequently taken over by the National Youth Agency to monitor youth electoral participation in future elections.

The project continued with the "Ambassadors of Democracy" training program, in which 16 students from various universities participated in two intensive days of training on elections, leadership, civic participation, and public communication. These young people created an active network of ambassadors of democratic values, ready to take action in their communities. Their experience was reinforced by a study visit to the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, where 25 students explored the legislative process and participated in a simulation of a parliamentary session, adopting five draft laws developed during the exercise.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Another success story comes from the north of the country, where CSO STUDEM, through the project "Youth in Action: Democratic Education and Civic Engagement," demonstrated how powerful the voice of young people can be when they are given support and space to participate. Launched through an event that brought together students, teachers, and local actors, the project quickly turned into a real civic movement: 10 workshops in technical vocational education institutions, 25 follow-up activities, and 6 public events "Conversations for the Future," involving over 860 young people.

The results speak for themselves: concrete ideas for community development, 5 partnership agreements signed with local institutions, and an active online presence that has made civic participation an accessible and inspiring experience.

The progress made by ALDA and its partners shows that young people in Moldova are ready to get actively involved and contribute to democratic change in the country. With the support of the European Union, INSPIRED Moldova continues to harness the energy and creativity of young people, turning ideas into concrete actions and actions into sustainable impact.

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).

Supporting local organisations in monitoring transparency

Seven local civil society organizations active in Șoldănești, Bălți, Cahul, Tohatin, and Chișinău discussed how the transparency of city and town halls can be assessed during a training organized by the Center for Policies and Reforms (CPR) on December 16.

CPR presented its own methodology for institutional audits of public authorities, structured around three pillars: access to information, proactive transparency (open data and websites), and public participation.

The discussions reaffirmed the essential role of NGOs in monitoring the activities of local public authorities, formulating recommendations, and improving processes that bring citizens closer to public decision-making.

In the coming period, CPR will support NGOs in developing monitoring reports, which will include desk research, questionnaires for stakeholders, interviews with public officials, and other analytical tools.

The training was co-funded by the INSPIRED Moldova, which is supported 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).



EU-backed initiative boosts civil society role in Moldova's home affairs reforms

IOM Moldova launched an EU-funded project to enhance collaboration between the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and civil society, supporting Moldova's progress toward EU accession in the area of "Freedom, Security, and Justice" (Chapter 24).

The initiative will award eight grants to Moldovan civil society organizations to foster transparency, accountability, and dialogue with the Government. This project marks a key step in aligning Moldova's home affairs reforms with EU standards and strengthening cooperation between authorities and civil society.



IOM Cash assistance for protection supported by the EU

IOM Moldova, with co-funding from the European Union, has provided essential support to vulnerable refugees arriving from Ukraine.

"I am unable to work as I have to take care of my daughter at all times,"

shares Antonina, who arrived in Moldova with her two children in April 2024. Her daughter Victoria lives with a severe disability.

"We have received essential medicines and baby formula, which has been a lifeline since it is Victoria's sole source of nutrition."



Information sessions support 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 organises information sessions to inform vulnerable Ukrainians and migrants on the Left Bank of the Nistru River about available support through the Multipurpose Cash Assistance and Cash for Rent programs.

Participants learned about eligibility criteria, program updates, required documentation, and guidance for newcomers. The sessions also highlighted additional IOM services, including protection and health support, helping ensure that vulnerable communities are aware of and can access essential assistance.



Supporting safe returns for people fleeing the war in Ukraine

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Moldova continues to assist vulnerable third-country nationals in returning safely to their countries of origin through the EU-funded Voluntary Humanitarian Return (VHR) programme.

Before departure, they received counselling, essential medical care, psychological support, and travel guidance to ensure a safe and dignified journey.

Thanks to generous financial support from the European Union, a total of 1,000 third-country nationals have been assisted in 2025.



With the financial support of the European Union, 16 modern social laundries have been developed in the Republic of Moldova

The European Union continues to invest in inclusive and accessible social services for vulnerable people in the Republic of Moldova. Under the project "Promoting CSOs as Partners in Developing Resilient Social Services", funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium composed of Keystone Moldova, Dorcas-Moldova Foundation, and the Association for Education "Neoumanist", 16 modern social laundries have been established in 16 communities across the country. More than 1,500 people in vulnerable situations benefit from these services free of charge.



A key focus of the project was to fully equip the social laundries, ensuring they operate as modern, functional, and sustainable services. Each facility was renovated and outfitted with professional equipment —washing machines, dryers, boilers, detergents, and consumables — transforming unused spaces into public services tailored to the needs of vulnerable community members. In addition, several laundries include bathing facilities for personal hygiene and social rooms designed for community activities.

To ensure better access for beneficiaries from adjacent localities, the project invested in service mobility by providing four cars and twelve tricycles to social workers and local public authorities. These vehicles allow staff to collect and deliver laundry directly to the homes of people with disabilities, elderly individuals who are bedridden, and residents of geographically isolated areas. As a result, social laundry services have become accessible even to those unable to travel, helping reduce social exclusion.



The project has demonstrated the effectiveness of partnerships between civil society organizations and local public authorities. Town halls provided the necessary premises and contributed to the operation of the services, and after the project ended, they took over full management of the social laundries. This model ensures long-term sustainability and strengthens the capacity of communities to develop resilient social services.

"The European Union remains a reliable partner for communities in the Republic of Moldova. Through this project, we have shown that simple solutions, when well organized, can have a major impact on people's lives. Social laundries turn hygiene into a right, not a luxury,"

stated the EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, Iwona Piórko, during the project's closing event.



Through this support, the European Union contributes to building a social services system that responds to real community needs and reinforces the role of CSOs as key partners in local development and social inclusion.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The Multifunctional Social Services Center in Copceac, renovated with EU support, is now open

The Multifunctional Social Services Center in Copceac, Găgăuzia region, is now ready to open its doors to local beneficiaries. Thanks to the support of the initiative "Mayors for Economic Growth" (M4EG), funded by the European Union and implemented by UNDP, the building has been fully renovated and modernized, with thermal insulation added to the walls and a biomass boiler installed.

Copceac received a grant of over EUR 86,000, which was invested to renovate the social canteen, the social laundry, and the space where donated goods are collected and distributed. The building of the center has undergone a complete transformation and will soon serve beneficiaries, including various activities aimed at the local community.

Vulnerable groups, older people, and individuals with disabilities will have access to high-quality social services. The center has the capacity to serve approximately 100 people daily.



The European Union and UNDP continue to support vulnerable individuals, older people, and other disadvantaged groups through projects aimed at improving living conditions and access to essential services, demonstrating a constant commitment to social inclusion and protection.

"The implementation of this project is our responsibility to the older generation. Helping those who need support and assistance is the most valuable vocation in society,"

stated Anton Anghelcev, Director of the Multifunctional Social Services Center in Copceac.



As part of the "Mayors for Economic Growth" (M4EG) network, in addition to modernizing the infrastructure, local authorities in Copceac have benefited from training to strengthen their capacities in social services and develop skills for effective and sustainable economic planning.

Through another project funded by the Government of Switzerland and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Moldova, the Multifunctional Social Services Center has been equipped with necessary technical equipment and furniture.

"Mayors for Economic Growth" is a joint initiative of the EU and UNDP to support mayors and their teams in the Eastern Partnership region. M4EG provides resources and learning opportunities to explore new growth trajectories, making municipalities and cities more attractive to people and investments.



Civic Cafés in Strășeni – where ideas grow into local development priorities

In Strășeni district, the future of local communities began in a surprisingly simple way: around a round table, with a cup of coffee, a few neighbours, and an honest conversation. The Local Civic Cafés, organised between August and October 2025 by AEFL Moldova in collaboration with PALSC Moldova and People in Need Moldova, became a space where ordinary people turned into agents of change.

In communities such as Românești, Rădeni, Voinova, Scoreni, Zubrești, Negrești, Greblești and Chirianca, these meetings brought together between 30 and 80 participants — young people, women, older adults, persons with disabilities, teachers, entrepreneurs and representatives of local authorities. For many of them, it was the first time someone directly asked, "*How do you imagine your village in five years?*" — and offered the space to genuinely respond.



The discussions were lively and sincere. People spoke about immediate needs — better roads, access to water and sanitation, youth spaces, cultural halls, social services — as well as more ambitious ideas, including local museums, open-air stages, tourist routes or even hippodromes that could turn villages into regional points of attraction.

Beyond dialogue, each Civic Café ended with a concrete outcome: the initial outlines of a Local Participatory Development Plan, a document capturing the community's vision and turning it into priorities that can be formally presented to local councils. All plans will be showcased at the Strășeni Joint Forum, a district-level event.

The process placed a strong emphasis on inclusion. Organisers aimed to involve at least 600 citizens, with a minimum of 30% from vulnerable groups. This was reflected in the room: women affected by violence, persons with disabilities, older adults and young people all had an equal seat at the table and contributed to shaping the collective vision of their communities.

With the support of the European Union, through the "INSPIRED Moldova" project, people's ideas were transformed into concrete tools for local planning. The Civic Cafés showed that democracy comes to life when citizens are truly heard, and their proposals evolve into real directions for the future — a future built together, starting from open and authentic dialogue.

EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

A renovated roof for a safer home: EU support brings dignity and comfort to the Centre in Micleușeni

As the weather outside gets colder, safety and comfort become essential — especially for older people and persons with disabilities, who need additional protection. At the Residential Centre in Micleușeni, these conditions are now a reality thanks to the complete renovation of the roof, an intervention that has fundamentally improved the lives of the centre's 25 residents.

The building, constructed in 1958 and functioning as a social service since 2005, has faced numerous challenges over the years, the most significant being the advanced deterioration of the roof. During rainy seasons or snowy days, both residents and staff had to deal with issues that affected daily comfort and safety.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

"We had problems with the roof especially during periods of rain and snow. This investment is not only about a new roof, but about the wellbeing of the people and older residents living in this centre,"

explains Inga Ciocan, Head of the Directorate for the Protection of Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities, STAS Strășeni.

Today, the centre benefits from a fully modernised roof, thanks to the renovation works carried out by the Agapedia Moldova Foundation within the project "*Moldova ASSIST: improving access to quality public services and social cohesion*", funded by the European Union and implemented by People in Need Moldova. The new roof ensures not only a dry and protected space, but also an environment that offers safety and dignity.

This achievement was made possible through a strong partnership between the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Territorial Social Assistance Agency Centre, the Strășeni District Council, and the Agapedia Foundation. This interinstitutional collaboration — at both local and central levels — demonstrates how essential joint efforts are when aiming to ensure proper living conditions for the most vulnerable members of the community.

Residents are already feeling the difference.

"I have been living in the Centre in Micleușeni for five years. I am grateful to everyone who helps us live in a warm and comfortable place,"

says 72-year-old Vladimir Kuzin.

The roof renovation is not just a technical project — it is an investment in the peace of mind and dignity of the people who live here. A safe and warm space means a better life, a calmer future, and a community that protects its members.

Just a call away: psychosocial support for Ukrainians in Moldova

The war in Ukraine has destroyed not only cities and lives, but also the inner peace of millions. Behind every statistic lies a story of loss, anxiety, and longing—stories of people forced from their homes in order to survive. For many, finding refuge has not marked the end of their suffering, but the beginning of a new struggle: with their trauma.

In this context, the REthink Centre for Counselling and Personal Development, a partner of our team at People in Need Moldova, provides psychological support, a less visible but equally essential form of support.

REthink specialists offer free psychosocial counselling to anyone struggling with the emotional impact of the war—refugees and host community members alike. Services are available across the Republic of Moldova, including in the Transnistrian region.

To overcome distance barriers, REthink provides phone, online, and face-to-face counselling. This ensures that a person living within Chișinău can receive support just as easily as someone without. Under the PLACE II consortium, through the organisation's support helpline the "Green Line", REthink has assisted around 460 people. Approximately 60 have benefited from repeated one-to-one sessions on the online platform. Additionally, 86 participants have taken part in recreational and psychosocial group activities such as board games and art therapy, designed to promote emotional healing, creative expression, relaxation, and community bonding. These sessions are also organised on the left bank of the Nistru River, in cities like Tiraspol and Bender, bringing refugees and host communities closer together.

Since REthink began its collaboration with the PLACE consortium, more than 3,000 people have received psychosocial support through the Green Line, and over 720 people have attended individual counselling sessions: personalised assistance for anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, and other psychosocial challenges. Approximately 80% of all callers are refugees from Ukraine. Every call represents a story of suffering, but also one of resilience. For those who have lost everything, sometimes a calm voice on the other end of the line becomes the first step toward healing.

Although REthink primarily serves local residents and refugees in Moldova, its flexible counselling model allows specialists to support beneficiaries who have moved away, regardless of if they returned to Ukraine or resettled in other countries. Changing one's location does not make emotional struggles disappear. For many refugees, continuity of psychological support is vital, especially when opening up to a new specialist can feel overwhelming.

Sometimes, calls for help come not only from the farthest parts of the country, but from abroad. Such was the case with Natalia, a young mother from Odesa who contacted REthink from Romania.

Natalia's Story: from longing and grief to hope

Natalia left Ukraine in the spring of 2022, at the beginning of the full-scale invasion. After spending time in Moldova, she moved on to Bucharest, trying to build a new life.

Isolation, a lack of support, and the language barrier became increasingly overwhelming. A few months ago, Natalia gave birth to her child. What should have been a time of joy was overshadowed by postnatal depression and, later, by the sudden death of her mother, who had travelled from Ukraine and passed away shortly after.

The specialists from the Romanian Midwives Association, who were assisting her, quickly realised she needed psychosocial support. They began searching for a psychologist who spoke Ukrainian or Russian, but after several unsuccessful attempts, they found help... in Moldova.

Her case was taken over by Laura Marta, a psychologist from REthink. Their first session took place over the phone, but a fortunate coincidence brought them even closer: Laura happened to be in Bucharest for professional training.

"From the very beginning, we formed a strong connection. Natalia was experiencing postnatal depression, complicated by grief. It wasn't just psychotherapy; it was psychosocial support. She needed to feel that someone was there to listen and stand with her,"

says Laura Marta.

Natalia confirms:

"From my first conversation with Laura, I felt not only formal support, but genuine human empathy. I needed communication. And there is a huge difference between talking to a friend and speaking with a specialist who knows how to listen and guide you."

After Laura returned to Chișinău, her connection with Natalia continued, and long-distance sessions remained a constant source of support.

"Talking to Laura helps me enormously. She told me I could call anytime, and this gives me a sense of safety. This is my first experience with a psychologist, and it's very positive,"

says the young mother.



Laura highlights the importance of flexible counselling formats:

"This is the strength of the REthink model: support doesn't stop at our office door, nor outside the capital, nor at the border. No matter where the person is, help is always just a call away."

If you need psychosocial support, you can contact **REthink's 24/7 Green Line at 0 800 700 85**. More information about REthink is available at www.rethink.center, where you can also schedule an online counselling session.

REthink's work is part of PLACE II, a consortium funded by the European Union. PLACE II comprises People in Need, Acted, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), INTERSOS, and REACH (IMPACT Initiatives), and aims to provide protection and multisectoral assistance to Ukrainian refugees and vulnerable communities in the Republic of Moldova.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

CU SENS builds Moldova's next generation of investigative journalists through a mentorship program funded by the EU through a joint project with ERIM

CU SENS, one of Moldova's leading investigative outlets, strengthened independent journalism through a mentorship expanding the investigative capacity of other media outlets in Moldova. Over two years, it partnered with 10 local outlets and 11 journalists, guiding data-driven, fact-based reporting on corruption, rights abuses, and misuse of power. Using a "training by doing" model, CU SENS reporters co-worked with other teams on research, fact-checking, and multimedia production, delivering 10+ high-impact stories.



A few collaborations stood out. Notably, two materials prepared by Dorin Rusu, TV Nord's reporter based in Bălți, resulted in noteworthy revelations. The first story, Landowner Mayors, exposed how several mayors amassed hundreds of hectares of arable land at below-market prices—work that earned 2nd in the API's Investigations of the Year category. Furthermore, an investigation titled "Under Investigation for Corruption, revealed alleged bribery among State Tax Service officials. This material was later awarded by the Centre for Investigative Journalism.

Describing the collaboration, Rusu stated

"Collaborating with the media project "CU SENS" gave me valuable professional experience and the chance to work alongside colleagues from the respective editorial team on topics of public interest. This collaboration demonstrated that regional investigative journalism can bring change and responsibility when there is support, trust, and a common vision."

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Another standout collaboration paired CU SENS with Ziarul de Gardă reporter and European Press Prize laureate Măriuța Nistor. This uncovered how the "Merișor" mobile-shop network, linked to Ilan Șor, skirted regulations for years with the tacit help of public officials.

As Nistor recalls:

"I had the theme, the 'Merișor' company tied to Ilan Șor, but no concrete subject. I was ready to drop it when CU SENS editor Olga Ceaglei told me: 'The solution is never to give up.' That push helped me identify the story almost on the fly. Working with professionals who insist and don't give up is always a win for the reporter and for the audience."

The project deepened a fact-checking culture across partner newsrooms. During editing, many young reporters saw how easily unchecked claims slip into daily news, turning every verification step into a practical lesson that raised accuracy and professionalism.

By combining national expertise with regional engagement and reporting from diverse places and contexts in Moldova, this project has proven that mentorship-based cooperation is one of the most effective ways to transfer knowledge, strengthen editorial integrity, and sustain Moldova's network of independent journalists committed to transparency and accountability.



Strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to support parents in vulnerable situations

In the framework of the "Increased local employment opportunities and access to nurseries for parents in vulnerable situations" project, four workshops were organised for the purpose of strengthening of the capacity of civil society organizations and local actors in the development and argumentation of high-quality project proposals intended for the creation, development and sustainability of Early Education and Care services for children up to 3 years of age, particularly in supporting the social and economic inclusion of parents in vulnerable situations.



The overall objective of the workshops was to provide the participants with practical and theoretical tools for the development of effective projects, well anchored in local realities and oriented towards sustainable impact. The workshops addressed the following topics, among others:

- community needs analysis and problem formulation;
- setting goals and activities;
- progress indicators and monitoring strategies;
- developing local partnerships;
- budget-setting;
- planning of communication and visibility activities.

Feodosia Bivol, Project Coordinator, AO "Obiectiv" from Țipala, Ialoveni, told us that:

"The workshop was very useful for the process of project proposals' finalization. The facilitators answered the participants' questions and provided information and well-argumented solutions to the problems addressed. I personally received answers to the questions I had related to the establishment of nurseries. Thank you."

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Thus, the representatives of the associative and public sector, who had submitted their concepts within the grant program and who wish to support parents in vulnerable situations in accessing jobs and early care services for children aged 4 months to 3 years, increased their capacities in submitting viable and qualitative project proposals.

These training activities were part of the larger effort of preparing CSOs for the second stage of the grant competition that followed the initial selection of project concepts. 32 project proposals were received in the second stage.

Following the selection process, at least 24 grants will be awarded, each worth up to EUR 60,000, to support local initiatives that will create childcare services and facilitate the employment of parents from vulnerable groups. The signing of grant contracts is planned to start in January 2026.

The "Increased local employment opportunities and access to nurseries for parents in vulnerable situations" project is funded by the European Union, co-financed and implemented by the Soros Foundation Moldova, in partnership with I. P. Keystone Moldova and AO Expert-Grup. The initiative implementation term is 36 months, starting in February 2024.



Strategic and Crisis Communication – essential skills for CSO communicators

Chișinău, 23 October 2025 – Two intensive days of learning, analysis, and exchange of experience marked the conclusion of the training program for communicators of civil society organizations, organized by the CONTACT Center on 21–22 October 2025.

The program, facilitated by trainer Steluța Andreeva, a national expert in strategic and crisis communication, brought together 20 communication specialists from NGOs across the country who were eager to strengthen their skills in strategic communication and crisis management.

"In a time when information travels at extraordinary speed and public perceptions can shift in an instant, strategic communication becomes a tool for the survival of civil society organizations. Through this program, we aim to strengthen the capacity of NGOs to make their voice heard in a professional, authentic, and responsible manner,"

said Serghei Neicovcen, Executive Director of the CONTACT Center.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Lina Botnaru, Communication and Visibility Programme Manager at the European Union Delegation, emphasized: "The European Union supports civil society organizations not only through funding, but also by helping them develop the skills that make them more effective and closer to the people. Communication is the bridge through which European values are transformed into local actions and real stories of change."

During the two-day training, participants explored:

The principles of neuroscience and neurolinguistic programming applied in communication;

The algorithm of strategic communication based on objectives and target-audience understanding;

Building and positioning an organizational brand;

Profiling and adapting messages across channels;

Communicating under pressure and crisis-communication methodology.

The second day was dedicated to drafting and presenting individual communication strategies—an exercise that allowed participants to apply the tools discussed in a practical context. Each team presented its communication plan and received constructive feedback from the trainer and peers.

"It was an experience that made us look at communication differently—not just as a daily task, but as a strategic component with a direct impact on our organization's mission,"

said Corina Cernat, communicator at The Moldova Project.

Following the training, CSO communicators will have the opportunity to participate in a grant competition aimed at implementing visibility campaigns for their organizations. The five most creative and relevant campaigns will receive financial support of 2,230 euros each, helping turn ideas into concrete actions that bring the public closer to the mission of civil society.

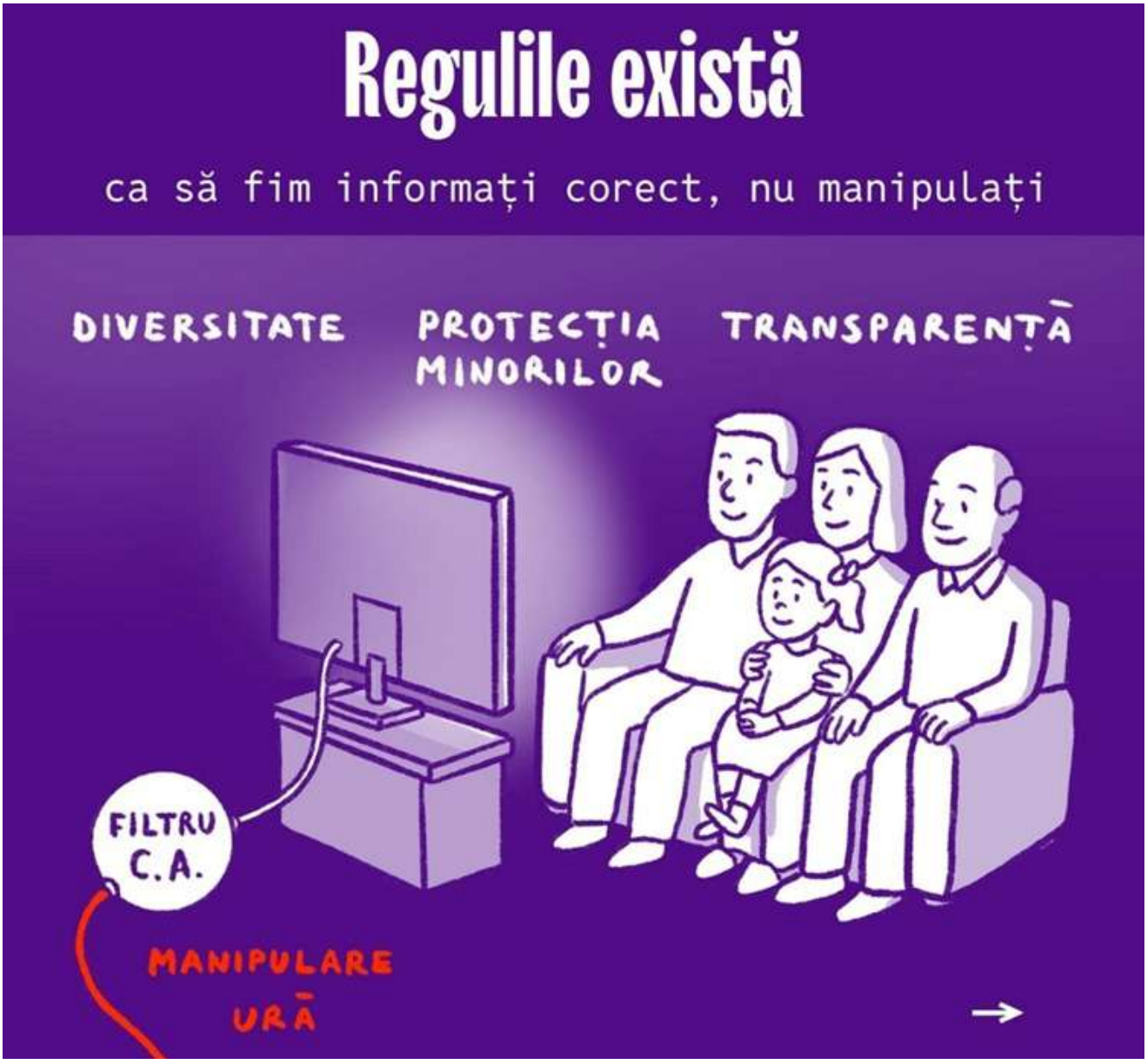
The training program was organized by the CONTACT Center within the project "Support for the Resilience of Civil Society," funded by the European Union.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The “Media Liberă = Democrație Puternică!” Campaign brought EU media standards closer to over half a million Moldovans

More than half a million people across Moldova learned in an engaging and accessible way how European media standards protect citizens and strengthen democracy. Between May and September 2025, the Audiovisual Council of the Republic of Moldova (AC) ran the information and media literacy campaign “Media liberă = democrație puternică!”, with the support of EU within the project “Strategic Communication and Support to Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova” (EU StratCom project). The campaign turned complex EU-aligned regulations into clear, relatable messages that helped Moldovans better understand how media works and why media transparency, pluralism, regulation and responsibility matter.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Over these four months, the campaign reached communities nationwide through a mix of creative products – from humorous caricatures and animation-style infographics to short video testimonies and public discussions. These materials explained, in simple terms, what changes Moldova is making as it aligns with the EU's Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) and other European media standards, including rules on media ownership transparency, regulation, concentration, public advertising, minors' protection, hate speech, and countering disinformation.

People of all ages – students, journalists, experts, content creators, and everyday media consumers – discovered how democratic rules ensure access to trustworthy information. The campaign's friendly tone and visual style helped break down myths and stereotypes about regulation. Visuals and videos generated lively conversations online, while subtle humour played a key role in making citizens more receptive to topics often perceived as technical or complicated.

"The content disseminated within the campaign was designed to make a clear distinction between regulation and censorship; to explain the importance of complying with EU standards and norms in the media sector; to draw public attention on why media ownership matters, and to equip media consumers with some basic knowledge on how to safely navigate an audiovisual space affected by foreign/domestic malign interferences,"

mentioned Liliana Vițu, chair of AC.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The campaign recorded impressive results: over 536,000 people reached, more than 867,000 impressions, and close to 1 million views of its visual products. The most popular piece, a humorous animation about hate speech, resonated widely with young audiences, showing the effectiveness of combining education with entertainment.

Conducted by the Audiovisual Council, with financial and conceptual support from the EU StratCom project, the initiative aimed to make EU media standards understandable to the wider public. Under the message “Media liberă = democrație puternică!”, the campaign aimed to help Moldovan citizens see how transparent and responsible media regulations contribute to a safer information space and a stronger democracy.

EU-Funded Project Advances Media Literacy, Information Integrity, and Democratic Resilience in Moldova

Under the EU-funded "**Top-down and Bottom-up Resilience-Building in Moldova**" project, implemented by GLOBSEC in partnership with the Media Guard Association (Ziarul de Gardă), a series of key resilience-building activities were carried out between October and December 2025. These actions aimed to strengthen media literacy, information integrity, and institutional and societal resilience in the Republic of Moldova.

1. Youth Resilience Camp: Empowering a New Generation of Counter-Disinformation Advocates

The first edition of the **Youth Resilience Camp**, organised by the Media Guard Association, brought together 19 young Moldovans aged 16–24 for an intensive programme on media literacy and disinformation awareness.

The training was delivered by 10 experienced journalists and fact-checkers.

From October onwards, with preparatory activities starting in mid-September and continuing through November, 14 programme graduates went on to conduct 16 peer-learning activities across eight regions of the country, reaching an additional 364 young people. Other participants produced short social media videos explaining how to identify and debunk AI-generated disinformation.

A notable success story is **Vlad Galușcă**, whose article "*The 'Patriots' are left without the 'Heart of Moldova', pro-Kremlin priests, Șor supports the 'reds'?*" was published by *Ziarul de Gardă*. Following the programme, he completed a three-month internship and subsequently joined the newsroom as a full-time journalist.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

2. National Roundtable on Resilience and Information Integrity

On 16 October 2025, the Media Guard Association hosted the first of four planned national roundtables promoting a whole-of-society approach to resilience and information integrity. The event was opened by **Máté Csicsai, Chargé d'Affaires of the EU Delegation**, who reaffirmed the European Union's strong support for independent media in Moldova.

More than 45 representatives from public institutions, media organisations, civil society, and international partners exchanged lessons learned from the electoral period and discussed responses to key challenges related to information manipulation.

Key discussion panels focused on:

- investigative journalism during elections, journalist safety, and the sustainability of independent media;
- monitoring disinformation, the role of civil society, youth engagement, and inter-institutional cooperation.



3. International Exchange on Countering Foreign Information Manipulation

On 19 November 2025, in London, the roundtable "Defend, Enforce, Audit? Lessons on Disrupting FIMI from the Czech and Moldovan Elections" brought Moldovan perspectives into a broader European dialogue on countering disinformation. The event was organised by Alliance4Europe and Chatham House, with support from GLOBSEC.

Moldovan speakers, including Liliana Vitu, Chair of the Audiovisual Council, and Ana Revenco, Head of the Moldovan Centre for Strategic Communication and Countering Disinformation, shared insights on information manipulation campaigns, regulatory reforms, and platform accountability.

4. Ziarul de Gardă Exhibition: "The Digital War and Information Peace"

On 9 December 2025, *Ziarul de Gardă* inaugurated the fifth edition of its annual exhibition, dedicated to exposing corruption mechanisms and strengthening information integrity. The event brought together journalists, readers, and public officials, including EU Ambassador Iwona Piórko, who emphasised the essential role of investigative journalism in defending democratic values.



During the inauguration, the 2025 “Excellence in Investigating Corruption – Impact” awards were presented to Cu Sens, *NordNews*, and *Ziarul de Gardă* for investigations with significant public impact.



EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

Change begins with us: Ludmila Iachim's fight for equality in Moldova

"My fulfilled life motivates me to inspire other women and girls with disabilities to aspire to more, to invest in themselves, and to contribute to transforming our society into a safer, more accessible, and more inclusive place for everyone,"

said Ludmila Iachim, Executive Director of the MOTIVAȚIE Association from Moldova, an NGO that, for over 20 years, has had the mission of improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities.

UN Women Moldova collaborates with the MOTIVAȚIE Association, including within the project "Together for a life without violence!", implemented as part of the "EU 4 Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence" programme (phase 2), funded by the European Union, and implemented jointly by UN Women and UNFPA.



Approximately 160,000 persons with disabilities live in the Republic of Moldova, and 47.8% of them are women, according to data recently published by the National Bureau of Statistics. At the same time, women with disabilities make up 6% of the total number of women in the country and face multiple forms of both gender-based and disability discrimination and/or violence.

Defending the rights of women and girls with disabilities is a deeply personal mission for Ludmila Iachim. Living with a disability since the age of 13, she has turned her life experience into a mission: to fight for the rights, dignity, and opportunities of persons with disabilities.

"My personal experience was the driving force," she said. "It taught me to defend my rights and those of others, and it became a source of inspiration for many persons with disabilities who need support and guidance. Disability itself is not a challenge, but the lack of awareness in society regarding our rights and needs."

Through the "EU 4 Gender Equality" programme, MOTIVAȚIE Association, in partnership with UN Women, have reached dozens of women and girls with disabilities from six regions of Moldova, who participated in training sessions meant to raise awareness about their rights and prevent gender-based violence.

Ludmila Iachim is an active promoter of the rights of persons with disabilities, fighting for a society in which women and girls with disabilities live in dignity, have access to quality services, medical assistance, and equal opportunities in all areas of life.

"The fight for the rights of persons with disabilities continues,"

she stated.

"Authorities must recognize that inclusion is not a luxury or a favour, but a fundamental right."

Religious leaders, better prepared to contribute to promoting gender equality and preventing domestic violence, thanks to EU support

Ten religious leaders are now better prepared to contribute to the prevention and combatting domestic violence. This became possible thanks to the project “Love for One’s Neighbour: Empowering the Religious Community to Prevent Domestic Violence in Rural Communities,” implemented by the Social Mission “Diaconia” in the framework of the “EU 4 Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence" programme (phase 2), funded by the European Union, and implemented jointly by UN Women and UNFPA.

Key activities and the results achieved were discussed on 15 October 2025, at the project’s closing event. The event brought together religious leaders, central authorities', international and philanthropic organizations’ representatives, providing a framework for reflection and discussion on the impact of the activities carried out and on future directions for intervention.

Over the course of a year, the priests involved in the project participated in trainings and conferences dedicated to promoting gender equality and eliminating and combatting domestic violence, and later organized discussions with parishioners in ten localities. The community events, held under the theme “Family – Fortress of Love,” took place in Ștefan Vodă, Răuțel, Căușeni, Cahul, Palanca, Stăuceni, Puhoi, Strășeni, Bălți and Chișinău. The meetings also conveyed a strong message that violence has no justification and that those affected can seek help by calling specialized hotlines or 112 in case of danger.

The project strengthened a network of priests who can contribute to promoting gender equality and preventing domestic violence, given that the Church is the institution enjoying the highest level of public trust and reaches even the most remote communities.



National Conference “Inclusion, Equity and Protection in Education”

More than 225 participants, including inclusion specialists, teachers and school managers, experts, children, parents, and representatives of central and local public authorities gathered today at the 5th edition of the National Conference “*Inclusion, Equity and Protection in Education*”. The event aimed to strengthen national and local commitment to building an inclusive education system aligned with European standards.

Throughout the day, the conference explored the priorities of an inclusive and equitable education system: Moldova’s European education pathway, key reforms, universal accessibility, integrated support services, equal opportunities in technical vocational education, and the importance of communication and community engagement in expanding inclusive educational partnerships.

The event marks the closing of the national “Inclusion Month” and reaffirms the Republic of Moldova’s commitment to advancing a modern, accessible, and European-aligned education system, one in which every child can learn and grow without barriers.



The commitment to inclusion is embedded in the National Development Plan 2025–2027 and represents a key pillar in the country’s EU accession process.

Speaking on behalf of the European Union, H.E. Iwona Piórko, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, reaffirmed the EU’s strong support for improving accessibility, strengthening support services, and modernizing Moldova’s schools. Through the programme “Advancing Quality Education and Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All”, implemented by UNICEF and UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research and funded by the European

Union, mobile inclusion teams are being piloted in rural communities, model schools are being equipped with STEAM resources, and concrete accessibility measures are being put in place.

For more than 30 years, UNICEF has supported national authorities in developing an education system that leaves no child behind.

A particularly impactful moment was the speech of **Maxim Grădinari**, student and young advocate for inclusion, who shared his personal story and recommendations for supporting children with special educational needs:

"My story is just one of the thousands of stories of children who need access, support and trust to succeed. I was fortunate to meet people who believed in me. In the first grade, my teacher came to my home to teach Romanian, mathematics, moral-spiritual education and music. I could attend extracurricular activities only if I was accompanied. All this nurtured in me a deep desire to learn, to integrate and to belong to a community."



The conference was organized by the Ministry of Education and Research, UNICEF, the Republican Centre for Psychopedagogical Assistance, the Alliance of Active NGOs in the Field of Social Protection of Children and Families (APSCF) and the Austrian Agency for Education and Internationalisation, with financial support from the **European Union**, the **Global Partnership for Education (GPE)** and **Education Out Loud**.

EU-supported training strengthens capacities to combat violence against women in Moldova

Women across Moldova will benefit from a strengthened national system and improved services for survivors of violence, following a training course that strengthened the capacities of the National Agency for the Prevention and Combatting of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Delivered by the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by NIRAS, the face-to-face training in Chișinău (17 December 2025) honed the skills of 16 participants – 10 from the National Agency and 6 from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. All of the participants are specialists committed to enhancing the gender-responsiveness and effectiveness of national efforts to prevent and combat violence against women (VAW).

The training, entitled "**General principles, gender analysis methodologies, examples of good practices**", strengthened participants' knowledge of gender equality, non-discrimination and gender-based violence. It also enhanced their professional skills and institutional capacities for integrating gender perspectives into policies, services and data systems. The vast majority of participants (95%) reported that the training directly improved their knowledge and skills. By enhancing staff capacities, the training bolstered the National Agency's ability to fulfil its mandate in line with national and EU standards, as well as gender-responsive public administration principles.





The training included three interactive, practice-oriented sessions.

Session 1 focused on the fundamental principles of gender equality and their relevance for preventing and combatting violence against women. A group reflection exercise helped identify how gender stereotypes influence daily work – from service provision to data collection. Participants also examined the difference between the concepts of sex and gender and learned about institutional responsibilities related to applying a gender perspective.

Session 2 introduced participants to key gender analysis methodologies, including the 4R method, gender mainstreaming checklists and stakeholder mapping. They learned practical ways to integrate gender analysis into the National Agency's policies and institutional practices, including using sex-disaggregated data for informed decision-making. Through group exercises, participants applied analytical tools to a case scenario on service provision for survivors of violence against women, followed by presentations and feedback.

Session 3 showcased international and regional good practices of gender analysis within services to prevent and combat violence against women. Examples from across Moldova, EU Member States and the Eastern Neighbourhood region illustrated effective approaches that can be adapted to the National Agency's context. Through guided reflection, participants identified concrete practices that can realistically be integrated into their work within the next 6–12 months.

Welcoming the training's practical value, relevance and clarity, participants intend to continue integrating a gender perspective into their work to ensure a more coordinated, evidence-based and gender-responsive approach to combatting violence against women, including domestic violence.

"The training strengthened the capacities of the National Agency's employees to understand the structural link between gender inequalities, gender stereotypes and manifestations of violence against women and domestic violence,"

said Viorica Țîmbalari,

General Director of the National Agency for the Prevention and Combatting of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

"By using gender analysis, sex-disaggregated data and national and international good practices, the training has supported the improvement of the National Agency's policies, services and decision-making processes. Thus, it directly contributes to preventing and combatting violence against women through more effective interventions, adapted to the different needs of victims, and by reducing the risks of inadequate or discriminatory institutional responses."

Training for civil society fosters climate-resilient, gender-responsive communities in Moldova

Communities across the Republic of Moldova will enjoy a more climate-resilient future as a pioneering training in Chișinău (9 December 2025) equipped local civil society organisations (CSOs) with the skills to make this future a reality. The in-person training on a "Gender-transformative approach in the context of climate resilience" strengthened the capacity of CSOs to promote gender equality within climate resilience efforts and thereby contribute to more inclusive and sustainable local development nationwide. Jointly delivered by the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by NIRAS, in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project "Resilient Communities through Women Empowerment (Phase II)", the training engaged 21 participants (19 women and 2 men). They include representatives of women's rights organisations and other CSOs from across Moldova – activists and practitioners committed to boosting equality and community resilience in the face of climate change.



The training enhanced participants' understanding of how climate change affects women, men, and vulnerable groups differently, and how gender-transformative strategies can help address structural inequalities that hinder effective climate action. 95% of participants trained by the UNDP and Helpdesk improved their knowledge/skills. 81% of trainees were "completely satisfied" with the training and 19% – "satisfied". The programme was specially designed to equip CSOs with practical skills to advocate for, design, and monitor gender-responsive and transformative climate initiatives within their communities. It did so through four interconnected modules.

Module 1 introduced key concepts and provided an analytical overview of the gender-climate nexus. Participants explored definitions of gender, climate resilience and intersectionality, and discussed the implications of "gender-blind", "gender-sensitive" and "gender-transformative" approaches in climate policies and programming.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Through group exercises, participants mapped climate vulnerabilities in their communities and identified how impacts differ for people depending on their gender.

Module 2 focused on developing transformative gender strategies and planning climate actions that challenge underlying social norms and inequalities. Participants examined real examples of community-level climate interventions and practiced integrating gender-transformative elements into project design.

Module 3 presented a model of a transformative project concept, illustrating how gender equality objectives can be embedded in climate adaptation and resilience programming. Participants worked in teams to outline their own intervention ideas and reflect on structural barriers affecting women's and men's adaptive capacities.

Module 4 emphasised the importance of involving women in local development processes, particularly in the creation of climate adaptation strategies. Case studies showcased successful initiatives where women have played leading roles in building climate-resilient communities.



Throughout the training, participants engaged in discussions, case study analysis, practical exercises and group work. By the end of the day, each participant developed a **mini-action plan** containing two to three transformative interventions, gender-sensitive indicators, and monitoring steps tailored to their community context.

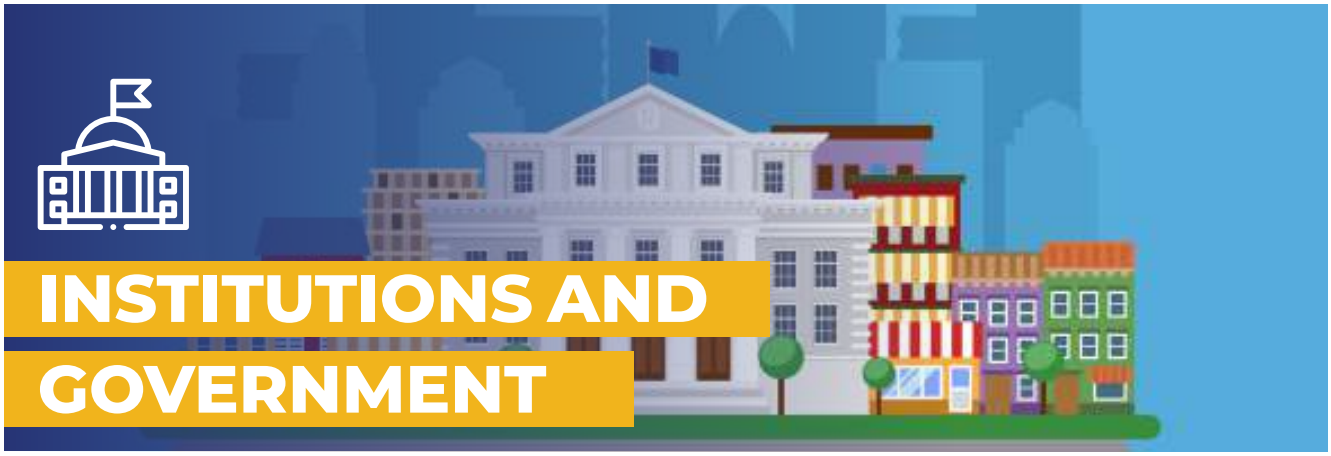
Participants welcomed the training's relevance, practical tools and collaborative environment, commending it as a strong example of empowering civil society to drive transformative change towards climate resilience and gender equality across Moldova.

"Participants developed concrete skills to identify structural barriers, formulate climate issues from a gender-transformative perspective and integrate gender-sensitive indicators in the planning, implementation and monitoring of local climate policies,"

said Ioana Bobînă of the Women's Association for Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development.

"This training supports a shift from gender-blind approaches to climate solutions that transform power relations and promote women's real participation in climate resilience decision-making processes."





INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNMENT

Strengthening resilience against hybrid threats

In November, Moldovan and Ukrainian officers joined a workshop in Chișinău to tackle hybrid threats, where organised crime, disinformation, and destabilisation intersect.

Through a series of focused, practice-oriented sessions, Moldovan participants explored how hybrid tactics can undermine democratic processes and public trust and worked with Ukrainian counterparts to identify practical ways to respond more effectively. Experts from EU Member States and international organisations provided concrete guidance on countering information manipulation and protecting state institutions from emerging security risks.

The workshop concluded with joint recommendations to improve early detection of hybrid activities.

The activity was developed by the Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime (TOPCOP) project. More details about the TOPCOP: TOPCOP | CEPOL.



Photo: Overview participants from Moldova and Ukraine discuss strategies to counter hybrid threats in Chișinău.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Moldova–Spain exchange: boosting action against migrant smuggling

As part of the TOPCOP Exchange Programme, a Moldovan officer completed a placement with the Spanish National Police in Málaga, gaining first-hand experience in combating migrant smuggling.

The exchange strengthened operational links, built trust, and created a communication channel for joint operations.



Photo: Moldovan officer with Spanish colleague onboarding the National Police helicopter for a simulation.

Observing Malaga Airport's integrated coordination platform provided insights into risk profiling, document verification, and real-time data sharing.

Exposure to OSINT tools, online investigation techniques, and data analysis systems enabled innovative approaches for tracing criminal networks.

Lessons learned are now being integrated into national training modules, enhancing Moldova's investigative and analytical capabilities.



Photo: Moldovan officer observing migrant smuggling operational procedures at Malaga Airport during TOPCOP exchange programme.

Building sustainable skills through Train-the-Trainers activities

TOPCOP's Train-the-Trainers (TtT) model develops "training multipliers" — officers who return home equipped to transfer knowledge to colleagues in a structured way.

In October and November, Moldovan officers participated in accredited TtT courses on migrant smuggling and open-source intelligence (OSINT) in Budapest, delivered in partnership with Ludovika University of Public Service. These courses focused on strengthening participants' pedagogical skills, enabling them to design structured modules, develop training materials, and modernise instructional approaches at home. Training priorities were jointly identified with partner countries to align with **operational needs** and EU crime-fighting priorities, including EMPACT and the regional threat assessment. This collaborative approach fosters shared curricula and practical tools across the Eastern Neighbourhood.



Photo: Participants during the Train-the-Trainers course on migrant smuggling, Budapest.

By empowering national trainers to cascade their expertise, TOPCOP is helping Moldovan institutions **build self-sufficient expertise, modernise their training ecosystems, and contribute to a more coordinated and capable regional security community.**

The long-term impact is clear: every new trainer strengthens Moldova's capacity to tackle cross-border crime and deepens cooperation with EU partners in building a safer region for all.



Photo: Visit to the Ludovika University of Public Service.

Hands-on simulation boosts financial investigation skills

From 29 November to 2 December, prosecutors and law enforcement officers from **Armenia, Moldova, and Ukraine** met in Yerevan for an intensive, practice-oriented simulation on financial crime investigations, hosted by the Prosecutor General's Office of Armenia.

The exercise reinforced **judicial–law enforcement cooperation**, improved international information sharing, and deepened understanding of complex cross-border crime patterns affecting the Eastern Neighbourhood.



Photo: Room overview - Financial crime investigation training, Yerevan.

The activity was developed by the Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime (TOPCOP) project. More details about the TOPCOP: TOPCOP | CEPOL.

Empowering Moldovan officers to fight crypto crime

As cryptocurrencies play an increasing role in organised crime, Moldovan officers need new tools to track illicit digital financial flows. In late October, two Moldovan representatives joined four peers from the Eastern Neighbourhood region at the 9th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptoassets in Vienna.

Over 250 experts from law enforcement, regulatory authorities, academia, and the private sector discussed emerging investigative techniques and cross-border cooperation. For Moldovan officers, the conference provided exposure to **advanced blockchain-analysis tools**, insights into **international investigation practices**, and a clear view of regional priorities: establishing **common standards, stronger collaboration, and sustained capacity-building**.



Photo: Full room at the 9th Global Conference on Criminal Finances and Cryptoassets, Vienna.

The activity was developed by the Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime (TOPCOP) project. More details about the TOPCOP: TOPCOP | CEPOL.

Advancing cybercrime expertise through Romania–Moldova mentoring

In early October, a Moldovan officer visited **Bacău, Romania**, as part of a cross-border mentoring programme on cybercrime. The exchange deepened understanding of digital forensics, financial analysis techniques, and investigative workflows.

By aligning approaches to tackling financial cybercrime, the visit helped Moldovan and Romanian authorities strengthen **joint digital investigation capabilities** and set the stage for ongoing operational collaboration.

The activity was developed by the Training and Operational Partnership against Organised Crime (TOPCOP) project. More details about the TOPCOP: TOPCOP | CEPOL.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

CEPOL hands over national LEEd e-learning platform to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova

CEPOL has handed over the tenancy of its Law Enforcement Education Platform (LEEd) to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova. The event took place at the Academy "Ștefan cel Mare" in Chișinău on 17 October 2025, marking an important step towards strengthening Moldova's national law enforcement training system.

The LEEd platform provides a modern digital environment for training and professional development. It offers access to online courses, interactive modules, and webinars tailored to Moldova's operational and institutional needs.

With the handover completed, the Ministry of Internal Affairs now manages its own LEEd tenancy. Three national administrators will oversee its maintenance and future development, while CEPOL will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance to ensure the platform's long-term sustainability and integration into the national training system.



EU4Security Moldova project implemented by CEPOL delivers the Intervention Commander Course dedicated to the General Emergency Situations Inspectorate

The Intervention Commander Course was delivered on 20 - 24 October 2025 at the Fire Protection and Training Centre in Brno, Czech Republic. The activity was organised in close cooperation with the Brno centre, whose representative had previously participated in the Chișinău workshop and contributed to the design of the course. The training aimed to develop a pool of qualified GIES trainers capable of delivering instructions on the roles and responsibilities of an Incident Commander, combining operational expertise with effective pedagogical methods.



The programme included both theoretical and practical components, focusing on decision-making processes, incident control, health and safety, coordination during road traffic accidents, hazardous materials management, and cooperation with crisis management authorities.

Participants also engaged in hands-on exercises using the XVR simulation system, practising real-life emergency scenarios such as traffic collisions, hazardous materials incidents, and large-scale fires in residential, industrial, and high-rise buildings.

This approach created an interactive learning environment that mirrored operational realities and supported the development of advanced command and leadership skills.



EU4Security Moldova project implemented by CEPOL organises workshop on Cooperation Protocol for the National Firearms Focal Point

The workshop on the Cooperation Protocol for the National Firearms Focal Point took place on 4–6 November 2025 in Chișinău. The activity strengthened the institutional and operational capacity of the Moldovan Police in countering firearms trafficking and deepened cooperation between the NFFP and other national authorities. Participants reviewed received updates on the EU legal framework and worked on a draft national procedure for managing illegal firearms data and tracing. The workshop supported stronger coordination within the Ministry of Internal Affairs and across relevant institutions involved in combating illegal firearms, ammunition, and explosives.



EU4Security Moldova project implemented by CEPOL organises a study visit in Spain

The visit took place from 10 - 14 November 2025 in Madrid and focused on data analysis and investigative technologies, presenting current tools and methods used in modern investigations.

Focus on Modern Investigative Intelligence

The programme was specifically designed to address the evolving landscape of transnational crime. The primary focus remained on **advanced data analysis** and **investigative technologies**, providing the Moldovan delegates with a deep dive into the digital tools and forensic methodologies currently utilized by Spanish authorities to dismantle complex criminal networks.

The Moldovan delegation visited central units of the Guardia Civil, the Policía Nacional, and the Intelligence Center against Terrorism and Organized Crime (CITCO). The active participation of the delegates highlighted a clear demand for these technologies within the Moldovan context. Participants provided positive feedback, noting that the exposure to Spanish "best practices" offers a blueprint for enhancing their daily operational work, particularly in processing digital evidence and streamlining inter-agency communication.



EU4Security Moldova project implements comprehensive leadership course in Chișinău

The project EU4Security Moldova implemented the Policing the Future: Leadership as a Core Metacompetence course in Chișinău, Moldova, from 24 - 28 November 2025. This training targeted the personnel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, focusing on those in managerial and leadership positions.

The aim was to enhance participants' professional growth while providing an overview of modern leadership trends and understanding strategic thinking and management within law enforcement agencies.

Participants examined the inner drivers of leadership, gaining clearer awareness of how fear, duty, discipline, and trust shape their decisions. They then explored links between leadership and time management, focusing on delegation, priority-setting, and effective communication. The programme moved into the relational aspects of leadership, using role-plays to unpack communication breakdowns and trust issues. The course closed with leadership as a metacompetence and with participants formulating personal leadership visions.

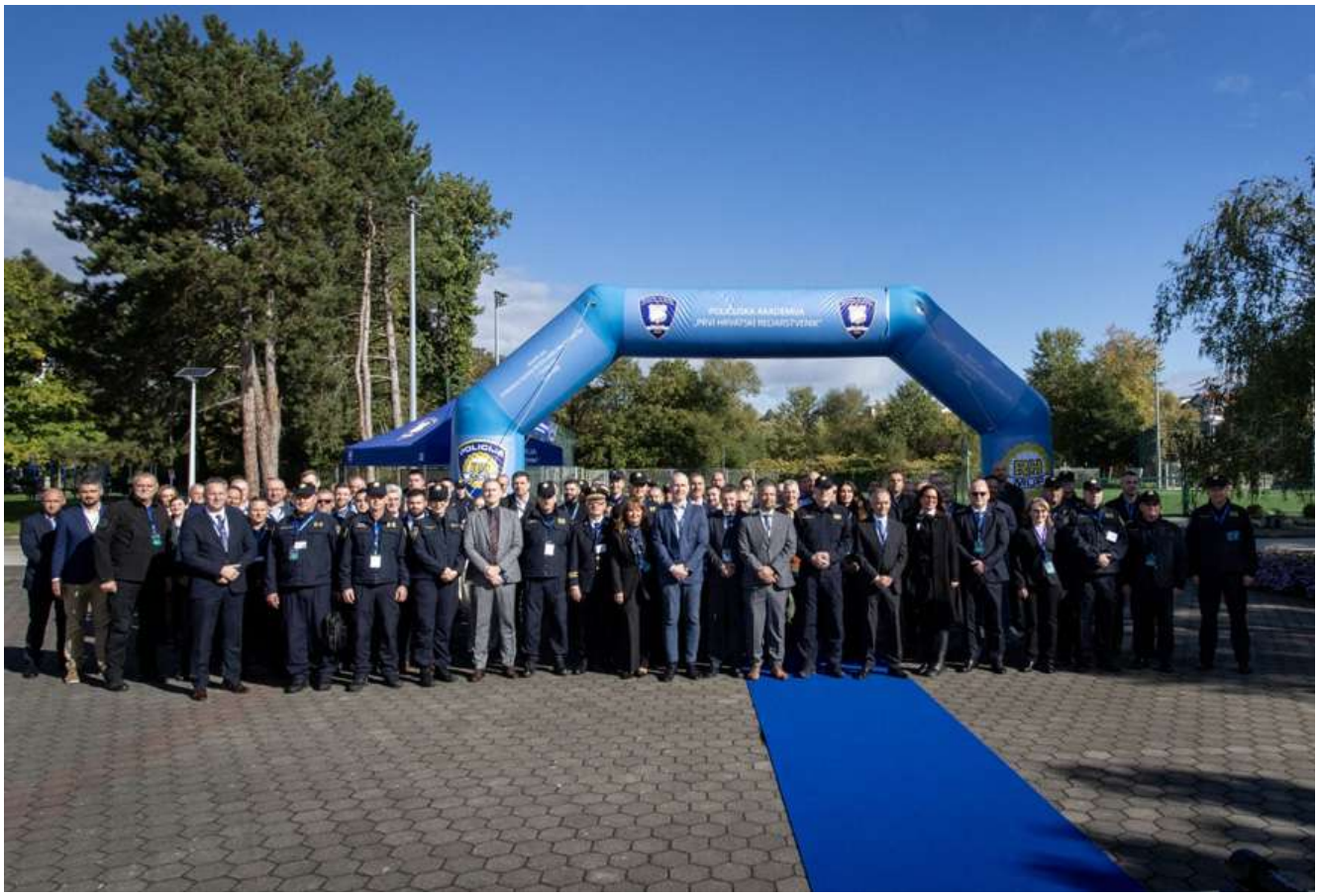


Frontex- CEPOL Industry Days

The project EU4Security Moldova supported the participation of a Moldovan delegation in the Industry Days on Technological Solutions against Cross-Border Crime, held on 7 - 9 October 2025 at the Croatian Police Academy in Zagreb. Organised by Frontex in cooperation with CEPOL and EMPACT Firearms, the event brought together law enforcement agencies, industry representatives, and international partners to explore innovative technologies supporting border control and the fight against organised cross-border crime.



The Moldovan delegation attended plenary sessions, technical demonstrations, and bilateral meetings, gaining exposure to modern tools for detecting firearms, combating drug trafficking, and countering migrant smuggling.



Moldovan legal professionals discuss ways to enable access to justice for women

Judges and prosecutors from across the Republic of Moldova met to discuss ways to further improve women's access to justice, following the implementation of the mentoring programme for legal professionals in the Eastern Partnership region.

The meeting provided an opportunity to review the programme's achievements, primarily evidence of how the acquired knowledge is applied in the daily work of judges and prosecutors.



The National Institute of Justice confirmed their continued effort to make gender equality a regular part of training for judges and prosecutors. The mentoring programme has created a group of mentors who promote gender equality within their institutions, from the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors, to courts and prosecution offices across the country. By encouraging professionals to learn from each other, build lasting skills and develop stronger communication and empathy, the mentoring programme helps break down barriers that still prevent women's full access to justice, as highlighted in the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029.

One example of this approach came from the Deputy Prosecutor General in the Chișinău Prosecutor's Office, who works with male colleagues to strengthen understanding of victim-centred approaches, especially in cases of violence against women and domestic violence.

The event concluded with a recognition of the achievements of 26 Moldovan mentors and mentees, who received their certificates for their successful participation to the mentoring programme, making another step forward in building a more gender-sensitive justice system in the Republic of Moldova.

This activity 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 regional project "Women's Access to Justice: implementing Council of Europe gender equality and violence against women standards".

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Closing the gender gap by addressing judicial data challenges

Experts and officials from the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership regions met in Budapest to discuss how improved data collection can contribute to closing the gender gap in justice systems.

The roundtable aimed to identify practical ways to connect laws, data, and policies to make justice systems accessible for both men and women. It provided an open space for key actors to align legislative, statistical, and policy domains in line with Council of Europe and international gender equality standards.

The meeting also featured the presentation of the regional Eastern Partnership guidelines on data collection practices relevant to women's access to justice. Participants shared feedback that will be incorporated into the final version of the guidelines, to be published by early 2026.



Access to justice is not the same for everyone. Women and girls face distinct and often invisible barriers when interacting with the justice system, from discriminatory legal provisions and underreporting of gender-based violence, to gaps in judicial and police statistics that fail to reflect gendered patterns.

Discussions during this event showed that collecting and using gender data is vital. Data helps uncover gender inequalities that might otherwise seem unseen, shows where progress is being made, and identifies where further action is needed. Most importantly, it ensures that the experiences of victims are recognised and counted.

"Gender data tools-instruments make justice visible, ensure institutional accountability, and give meaning to the principle of equality before the law",

said one of the participants.

This event was organised within the action "Women's access to justice in the Western Balkans" and the project "Women's Access to Justice: implementing Council of Europe's gender equality and violence against women standards", which are part of the European Union/Council of Europe joint programmes "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye" and "Partnership for Good Governance".

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The Republic of Moldova is strengthening its border security, aligning with the Schengen acquis standards

Secure borders mean a safer country, stronger cooperation between institutions, and safe travel. Against this background, the Border Police of the Republic of Moldova, in partnership with the European Union and the experts from Lithuania and Poland, Central Project Management Agency and Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova, conducted during the period 20–24 October 2025 on-site evaluations from the point of view of the Schengen acquis, as part of the EU-funded project "European Union for Borders Security – Moldova (EU4Borders Security – Moldova)".

The exercise program included visits to several subdivisions of the Border Police – Chișinău International Airport, the Western Regional Directorate and the Sculeni border crossing point, as well as the Southern Regional Directorate and the Cahul border crossing point – where control procedures, interinstitutional coordination, and the use of modern technologies were evaluated.

The exercise brought together European Union experts and Moldovan representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the General Inspectorate of the Border Police, the General Police Inspectorate, the Customs Service, and the General Inspectorate for Migration.

The activity aimed to strengthen institutional capacities, modernise border control procedures, and align them with the Schengen acquis standards and with the EU Member States' best practices.



EU4Borders Security – Moldova: Secure borders through integrity and transparency

In the context of International Anti-Corruption Day, celebrated on 9 December, on 9–11 December 2025, representatives of the General Inspectorate of Border Police (GIBP) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) participated in the training session "preventive measures and strategies against corruption in the MIA and the GIBP: international experience, practice and lessons learned", a part of the EU-funded project "European Union for Borders Security – Moldova (EU4Borders Security – Moldova)".

The activity brought together specialists from law enforcement agencies, with the objective of strengthening the culture of integrity and promoting the implementation of effective mechanisms for preventing corruption within the institutions.



Over the course of the three days, the participants were trained on various topics, including recent trends in the perception of corruption and anti-corruption efforts; global indexes measuring corruption and public integrity; corruption prevention framework in the public sector; and corruption risks in the activities of both institutions.

By participating in this training, the GIBP and the MIA reaffirm their commitment to promoting integrity, professionalism, and accountability, which represent essential elements for strengthening public trust and ensuring the functioning of a safe and efficient border management system.

The "EU4Borders Security – Moldova" project, funded by the European Union and implemented with the Central Project Management Agency, Solidarity Fund PL, and International Organization for Migration, supports Moldova's alignment with EU and Schengen acquis, and European best practices, by strengthening national capacities in border management, cross-border crime prevention, and migration management, promoting a secure, modern, and European border in line with Chapter 24 of the EU enlargement process.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

EU4LawEnforcement: enhancing integrated border management

The Cross-Border Component of the "EU4LawEnforcement in Moldova" Project organised two key activities during 2025's fourth Quarter, namely a Training on Border Security and a Multidisciplinary Workshop.

On 13 and 15 October 2025, a Training package focusing on "Violent Radicalization Detection and Processes, Terrorist Propaganda and Detection of Foreign Terrorist Fighters at the Border" was delivered to the local Border relevant authorities (the General Inspectorate of Border Police - GIBP, The General Inspectorate for Migration - GIM, the Customs Services and the Security and Intelligence Services – SIS), together with trainers from the police academy in the frame of our Train-the-trainers program implementation strategy.



Each day, 59 participants from the abovementioned law enforcement agencies participated in this event, which took place within the premises of the "Stefan Cel Mare" Police Academy in Chișinău – Moldova.

Additionally, a multidisciplinary Cross-Border Workshop on Cross-Border Criminality and Organized Crime took place from 10 to 13 November 2025, also at the "Stefan Cel Mare" Police Academy.

After the traditional opening speeches delivered by representatives from both the Moldovan authorities and the EU Delegation to Moldova, participants from the GIBP, the GIM, the Customs Services and the SIS benefited from that event, together with additional colleagues from the General Inspectorate of Carabinieri (GIC), the General Police Inspectorate (GPI) and trainers from the police academy, thus bringing together 50 participants from various law enforcement agencies which directly contributed to our project's Integrated Border Management implementation strategy.

This multidisciplinary workshop covered Cross-Border Crime topics (Trafficking in Human Beings, Migrant Smuggling, Terrorism, Operational Intelligence and Data Intelligence, Drug Trafficking), with very experienced External Expert that delivered significant corresponding training material.

EU4LawEnforcement in Moldova: enhancing operational capacities through a study visit to France

The EU4LawEnforcement in Moldova project organised a study visit to France for officers of the National Investigation Inspectorate (INI), which included participation in the Milipol 2025 exhibition.

The visit took place from 17 to 21 November 2025. The first two days were dedicated to meetings with French operational services specialised in combating organised crime, while the remaining three days focused on visits to the Milipol 2025 exhibition. The Moldovan delegation consisted of the Head of the Directorate for Combating Organised Crime, the Head of the Directorate for Investigating Illicit Substances Trafficking and Organised Crime, the Head of Section 1 of the Directorate for Operational Analysis, and finally the Head of the Directorate for Strategic Assistance and Special Operations.

They were accompanied by the Head of the Public Order and Organised Crime Component and a language assistant from the EU4LEM Project.

On Monday, 17 November 2025, visits were made to the following departments:

- DCIS (Directorate of International Security Cooperation)
- DNPJ (National Directorate of the Judicial Police) with meetings with the following directorates: DCIO (Department of International Cooperation, point of contact with foreign police forces); OFAC, the Office for Combating Cybercrime, which fights cybercrime; OCLCO (Central Office for Combating Organised Crime).



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Tuesday 18 November saw a visit to the SCRCGN (Central Criminal Intelligence Service of the National Gendarmerie).

These meetings provided an opportunity for a fruitful exchange on the tools and techniques used by the French Gendarmerie services in criminal intelligence and in the fight against organised crime (biometrics, digital investigation, data management, etc.).

The visit to the Milipol trade fair was very fruitful for the Moldovan delegation, providing them with valuable contacts regarding new equipment and new technologies for combating organized crime.

EU4LEM workshops on Schengen IT interoperability readiness

During the period from 29 September to 3 October 2025, international short-term experts familiarised Moldovan partners with the general principles of Schengen Information System (hereinafter – SIS) data management and processing, user types, key legal regulations, cybersecurity and data protection measures, and specific functionalities relating to hardware, software, networks, interfaces and data exchange management within their operational area.

The SIS legal framework defines the data categories stored in SIS, the technical architecture, the competent authorities responsible for operating SIS in each Member State, the security requirements, the conditions for entering alerts, the rights of access and the data protection provisions, among others. According to the SIS Regulations, each Member State is responsible for setting up, operating, maintaining and further developing its National SIS (N.SIS), connecting it to a uniform national interface, and ensuring the uninterrupted availability of SIS data to end users.

Representatives from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Information Technology Service, the General Police Inspectorate and the General Border Police Inspectorate, as well as other relevant law enforcement institutions in Moldova, were involved and worked closely with EU experts.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

EU4LEM: Moldova's readiness for PRÜM regulation alignment (fingerprint data)

On 28–29 October 2025, EU4LEM supported a key step in the initial assessment of Moldova's readiness to implement fingerprint data exchanges under the PRÜM framework, in line with Council Decision 2008/615/JHA and the updated requirements introduced by the PRÜM II Regulation (EU) 2024/982.

The workshops brought together representatives from the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs and its subordinate services, as well as international experts from the EU, to discuss the existing legal and technical frameworks for national databases of offenders', convicted persons' (and, optionally, victims') fingerprints, and latent prints from crime scenes. The aim was to assess the current status of this area of responsibility and support the alignment of Moldovan law enforcement with the automatic exchange. Introductions and discussions relating to the Moldovan legal regulations concerning the collection, management and exchange of dactyloscopy data in the Moldovan AFIS database were held, with the aim of providing Moldovan partners with possible best solutions in this regard.



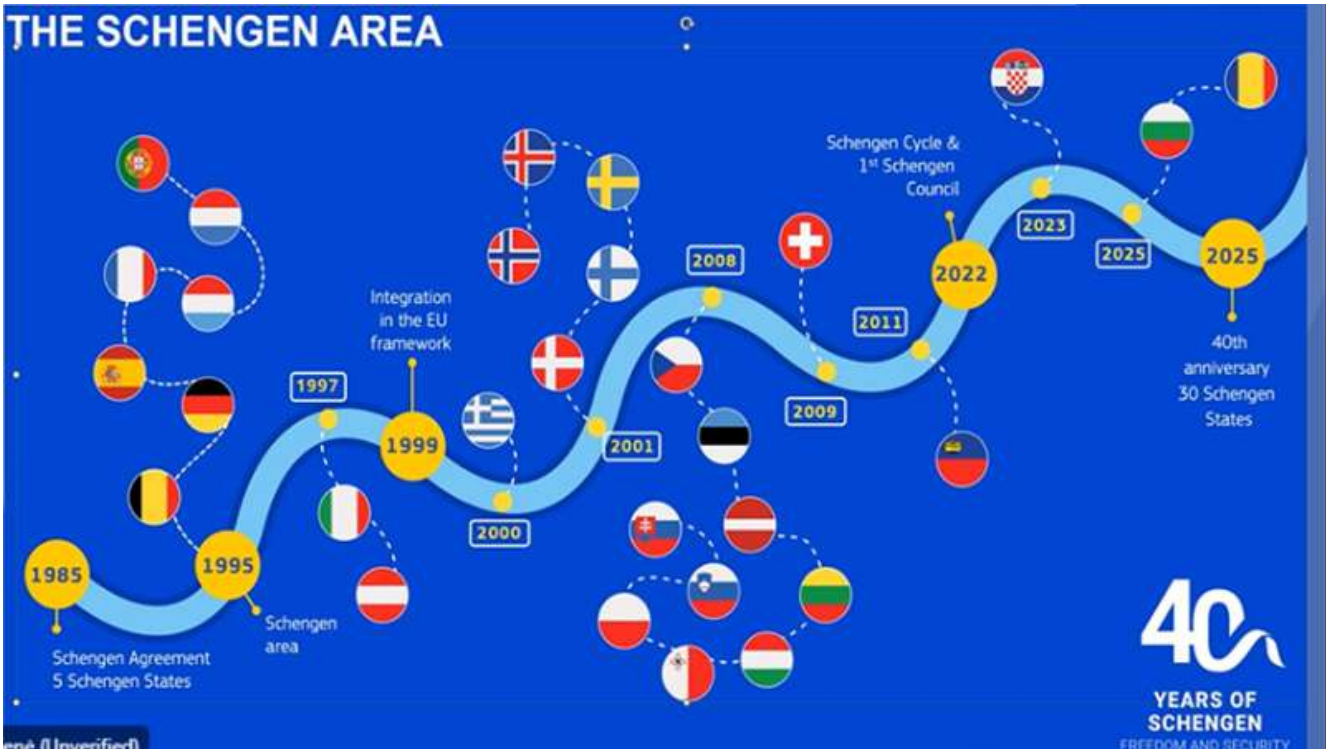
EU4LEM: introduction to Schengen Information System (SIS) datasets and interoperability readiness

During the reporting period of 29–30 October 2025, presentations and reference materials on data stored in the SIS, associated business rules and related technical aspects were prepared and delivered to representatives of the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs and its subordinate agencies.

These materials were developed for the Ministry and its subordinate services to help them strengthen their management of existing IT systems.

Two online workshops were held on 29–30 October 2025, during which international short-term experts introduced Moldovan partners to the key elements of SIS data management and the requirements stemming from the SIS Regulations.

On the first day, the experts presented the logical and technical representation of SIS data, including data formats and standards, business rules, data schemas and dictionaries, code tables and the main procedures governing data management.



On the second day, the focus was on practical implementation, with demonstrations of the functionalities of Lithuania's national systems for managing SIS data. The workshop also covered national SIS data mapping, data search and entry procedures, presentation of structured data requirements, and automation opportunities to enhance processing efficiency.

These explanations were tailored for national application product managers, software developers, database architects and officials responsible for preparing technical specifications, as well as for managers designing operational procedures for law enforcement agencies. Particular attention was given to updating national code tables to align them with the SIS data dictionary, and to introducing additional workflow functions and procedures to ensure compliance with the SIS business rules for alert management.

Representatives of the beneficiary agencies were highly engaged throughout the sessions, providing targeted questions, comments and supplementary requests from IT management and operational perspectives. They were primarily interested in analysing the topics presented and understanding their practical implications for national system development.

Lithuanian experts support Moldova in advancing digital tools for rapid response

In September 2025, Lithuanian experts conducted a mission in Chișinău to support Moldovan law enforcement institutions in strengthening their digital rapid-response capabilities. The mission focused on improving how emergency information is processed and transferred between first responders, ultimately contributing to faster and more coordinated interventions on the ground.

Throughout the visit, the experts worked closely with the General Police Inspectorate, the 112 Emergency Response Service and the Information Technology Service. Discussions examined practical challenges in the current incident-management chain and identified opportunities to streamline workflows from the moment an emergency call is received to the moment the police arrive at the scene.

The Lithuanian team shared hands-on experience with integrated incident-management systems used nationally, including the PRĮR system for police operations and the BPCIS system operated by the 112 Centre. Demonstrations highlighted how removing redundant steps and improving data accuracy can significantly reduce response times.

Moldovan partners showed strong engagement and interest in applying these practices in their own systems. The mission helped outline concrete directions for improving interoperability, optimising operational processes and enhancing the overall quality of emergency response services for citizens.



Moldovan delegation learns from Lithuania's integrated emergency response model

From 8 to 12 December 2025, a six-member delegation from the Republic of Moldova carried out a study visit to Lithuania to explore how Lithuania has developed a fully integrated and digitalised emergency response ecosystem. The programme brought Moldovan partners together with the Lithuanian Police, the 112 Emergency Response Centre and other key institutions.

Participants received detailed presentations on Lithuania's Police Registration and Incident Management System (PRĮR) and the 112 Centre's information system (BPCIS). These sessions demonstrated how emergency calls are verified, categorised and seamlessly transferred to police units, ensuring timely and coordinated interventions.



Field visits showcased the practical application of digital tools in patrol vehicles and specialised units. Delegation members observed how situational awareness technologies help officers prioritise incidents, allocate resources efficiently and respond more safely.

The agenda also included discussions on data protection, cyber resilience and security protocols used by Lithuania's public safety answering points. Particular interest was paid to Lithuania's benchmarking methodology, which supports continuous performance improvement of emergency response services.

The visit strengthened cooperation between Moldovan and Lithuanian institutions and provided participants with a clear vision of how integrated digital systems can enhance operational effectiveness and public safety.



EUBAM donates modern engineering equipment to strengthen Ukraine's border security and infrastructure resilience

In October 2025, the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM), with support from IOM Ukraine, donated five modern mini-excavators to the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (UASBGS). The equipment is intended for deployment along the Moldova–Ukraine state border, where engineering capabilities play a key role in maintaining safe, functional and resilient infrastructure. The initiative forms part of the European Union's broader efforts to support effective and well-managed borders in the region.



The excavators will enhance the UASBGS's ability to maintain and improve border infrastructure, support engineering works, and respond efficiently to operational needs. Each of the five full-swivel machines is equipped with a versatile set of attachments, enabling their use in a wide range of field conditions - including terrain clearing, stabilisation, access-route maintenance and general infrastructure support. These capabilities contribute to the continuity of legitimate trade, reliable mobility and the smooth functioning of border-crossing points along the Moldova–Ukraine border.

The donation also reflects EUBAM's long-standing commitment to supporting the modernisation and professionalisation of partner services. Over the past twenty years, the Mission has worked closely with Moldovan and Ukrainian authorities to introduce European practices in border management, strengthen coordination between agencies and improve operational readiness. Providing modern engineering tools continues this legacy by ensuring that frontline officers are equipped to deliver their tasks safely, efficiently and sustainably.

This contribution stands as a tangible illustration of the EU's support for strengthened border governance, reliable infrastructure and enhanced cooperation at the Moldova–Ukraine state border.

EUBAM supports capacity development to strengthen modern border management along the Moldova–Ukraine state border

In October and November 2025, the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) supported a series of capacity-development activities aimed at strengthening modern border-management practices, improving institutional cooperation, and promoting alignment with European standards in Moldova and Ukraine. These initiatives reflect the Mission's long-standing commitment to supporting professional, transparent, and well-coordinated border governance.



On 2 October, EUBAM and the Moldovan Customs Service organised a seminar dedicated to preventing and detecting VAT-related fraud, with particular attention to vulnerabilities arising from the non-application of VAT in the Transnistrian region. More than 30 representatives of the Ministry of Finance, Customs Service, State Financial Control Inspectorate and Fiscal Inspectorate participated. Experts from the Polish National Revenue Administration presented international approaches to identifying VAT-carousel schemes, while OLAF outlined EU mechanisms such as the Import One Stop Shop (IOSS).

The activity strengthened Moldova's capacity to identify financial risks, protect public revenues, and advance alignment with EU standards.

A second highlight was the advanced "Train the Trainers" workshop on X-ray image analysis, held from 4 to 7 November in Przemyśl, Poland. Conducted in cooperation with the Polish National Revenue Administration and supported by GIZ Ukraine, the workshop enhanced the technical and pedagogical skills of Ukrainian customs officers, ensuring that knowledge can be replicated and passed on within national structures.

EUBAM also facilitated a study visit on 4 November for veterinary specialists from Tiraspol to Moldova's National Food Safety Agency (ANSA). The visit strengthened confidence-building by enabling around 25 participants to learn about EU-aligned veterinary procedures, laboratory diagnostics and priority areas for cooperation. Joint discussion focused on topics such as rabies and salmonellosis control, highlighting opportunities for coordinated monitoring, data exchange and harmonised approaches.

Together, these initiatives illustrate the Mission's practical contribution to strengthening institutions, reinforcing professional skills and supporting cooperation that will continue beyond EUBAM's mandate, which concludes on 30 November 2025.

EUBAM celebrates two decades of partnership and progress at its closing ceremony in Chișinău

On 6 November 2025, partners and friends of the European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM) gathered in Chișinău to mark the Mission's Closing Ceremony, celebrating twenty years of cooperation, institutional development, and shared commitment to European values.

Since its launch in 2005, EUBAM has worked alongside the Border Guard/Police and Customs Services of both countries to modernise border management, strengthen cooperation at the Moldova–Ukraine state border, and support the alignment of national procedures with European and international best practices. The ceremony offered an opportunity to reflect on the progress achieved and the partnerships that made it possible.



Speakers highlighted EUBAM's role as a trusted facilitator of dialogue and a catalyst for practical solutions. Over the years, the Mission supported the introduction of joint control and coordinated procedures, helped establish structured platforms for information exchange, and contributed to greater transparency and predictability in border operations. These achievements have strengthened institutions and promoted a more harmonised, people-centred approach to border management.

The Closing Ceremony gathered key partners and friends of EUBAM, and featured the esteemed speakers Mr Máté Csicsai, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, Ms Ester Ruiz de Azua, Chief of IOM Moldova, Mr Valeriu Mija, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, and H.E. Mr Paun Rohovei, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine in the Republic of Moldova.

A central theme of the event was the legacy of trust fostered through EUBAM's work. Officers from both sides of the border learned, trained, and cooperated together, shaping a professional environment grounded in mutual respect and shared objectives. This cooperation, once new, is now embedded in daily practice.

The ceremony also honoured the dedication of EUBAM's international and national staff, whose professionalism and continuity defined the Mission's identity. Although EUBAM concludes its mandate on 30 November 2025, its contribution will endure through stronger institutions, improved border-management systems, and partnerships that continue to support Moldova and Ukraine on their European paths.

EUPM Moldova: supporting Moldova's democracy through cyber and hybrid threat prevention

Between 18 and19 November, EUPM Moldova supported and participated in the second edition of the Moldova Security Forum that took place in Chișinău. Organized against the backdrop of the 2025 parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova, this forum was dedicated to the topic of democratic resilience, consolidation of security and unity when faced with hybrid threats.

Otto Elmgart, EUPM Moldova's Head of Hybrid Threats & Cybersecurity, spearheaded a dialogue on ramifications for Moldova's cybersecurity architecture that emerge at the intersection between digitalization, cyber threats, and hybrid threats.

The discussions revealed valuable insights on the myriad ways in which the latest technologies and information manipulation may impact Moldova's ability to withstand hybrid threats, focusing on the need for institutions to improve foresight to effectively protect the country's democratic values and European path. The key takeaway underscored that to withstand continuous hybrid threats against the country, Moldova's institutions must match and overcome the persistence of the attackers threatening its society. They must proactively monitor, invest in capacities and build comprehensive partnerships with like-minded actors such as the EU, but also with tech companies.



Building on the results and expertise catalyzed from the first edition, as well as upon the latest developments within Moldova's security sphere, this year's edition brought together decision-makers, experts and opinion leaders from the worldwide security community to address Moldova's ongoing challenges, regional situation and pertinent evolving global patterns.

The forum was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), the NATO Liaison Office and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation with financial support also from EUPM Moldova. The event was attended by high-level representatives from Moldovan ministries and agencies, EU institutions, EU Member State embassies and representatives, as well as by other international partners and civil society organizations.

EUPM Moldova: embracing gender equality for comprehensive national security

Between 11 and 12 November, EUPM Moldova took part in and supported the organization of the Women4Security Conference. This event brought together key Moldovan government officials and representatives from international organizations, civil society and academia, united by the understanding that the security of the Republic of Moldova can only be assured through the equal inclusion of women into its institutional architecture.

This conference endeavored to evolve the notion of women's leadership beyond rhetoric, and thus further involve and empower them in peacekeeping and national security efforts within the Republic of Moldova. The dialogues advanced here sought to involve the country's stakeholders into surmounting remaining cultural and structural barriers and adapt a refined policy approach that will decisively ensure that women are not only participants, but also leaders and architects of peace.



European Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos held the opening speech, where she emphasized that women's involvement in institutions responsible for the safety, freedom and well-being of all citizens contributes directly to enhancing the resilience of the Republic of Moldova.

She congratulated women on their substantial strides to becoming key actors in the country's security, peacekeeping and governance.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together



The European Union further demonstrated a strong involvement in the conference through the active participation of notable key female leaders such as Aude Maio-Coliche, EU Ambassador for Equality, and Kirsi Henriksson, Deputy Civilian Operations Commander at CivOpsHQ, who delivered substantial insights on the importance of women in the security sector, and their transformative impact on early warning, conflict prevention and mediation.



The 2025 Women4Security Forum was organized by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, UN Women Moldova, EUPM Moldova, the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), and the GS Foundation, with financial support from Sweden and Denmark.

European Committee of the Regions' Second Working Group Convenes in Chișinău to Advance Moldova's European Integration at the Local Level

The Working Group of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) on Moldova convened on 24 November 2025 in Chișinău for its second meeting, bringing together representatives of the Moldovan Government, the European Union (EU), diplomatic corps, and local authorities from Moldova and EU Member States. Discussions focused on the state of play of Moldova's EU accession process, effective decentralization, opportunities for local communities, and preparations for accessing European development funds.



The event gathered Prime Minister Alexandru Munteanu, EU Ambassador Iwona Piórko, Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration Cristina Gherasimov, ten CoR members, representatives of EU Member States and more than 100 mayors from Moldova and the EU. The sessions in Chișinău build on the first Working Group meeting held on 27 May in Brussels.

In the opening of the event, Prime Minister Alexandru Munteanu emphasized that European integration aims to build strong communities that offer people comfortable living conditions:

"The European path runs through our localities. The transposition of the EU acquis, our reform agenda, institutional transformations – all of these make sense only if they come to life in every village and city, if they raise the standard of living and improve the services offered to people."

EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova, Iwona Piórko praised Moldova's reform progress, as confirmed in the European Commission's recent Enlargement Report. In her opening remarks she highlighted the importance of Commission's Recommendations for Chapter 22 — Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments:

"Moldova should continue building capacity to manage regional development programmes, ensure sound financial management, and apply the partnership principle by engaging local authorities in policy design and implementation."

Ambassador Piórko underlined that the CoR Working Group plays a crucial role in linking the EU and Moldova's local actors to ensure that European integration is not only a national effort, but one built on strong local foundations. She highlighted that CoR's mission stems on empowering local communities, supporting good governance and promoting balanced integration. In addition, the EU Ambassador stated that Moldova Growth and Reform Plan worth 1.9 billion euro is now ready to deliver the investments needed to sustain reform and support balanced regional growth.

Civil servants in charge of legal approximation take over best practices from Slovenia and Croatia

Thirteen Moldovan officials completed an intensive study tour to Slovenia and Croatia from 23–29 November 2025, aimed at strengthening Moldova's capacity to align national legislation and legislative procedures with the EU's legal framework.

Representatives of the Center for Legal Approximation, the State Chancellery, the Ministry of Justice, and the Bureau for European Integration met with government officials, parliamentarians, and representatives of EU institutions to gain first-hand insights into the accession experiences of both host countries.



Throughout the visit, the delegation engaged with the Ministries of Foreign and European Affairs, the Government Offices of Legislation, the General Secretariats of the Governments, and the national parliaments of Slovenia and Croatia.

Discussions focused on EU coordination structures, inter-ministerial cooperation, relations between government and parliament, legislative drafting and approval processes, and parliamentary oversight of EU accession.

The hosts also showcased digital tools for managing legal approximation and practical approaches to aligning national legislation with the EU acquis.

The delegation visited the European Parliament and European Commission representations in both countries, learning how these institutions support EU citizens and assist member states throughout and after the accession process.

Reflecting on the tour, Slovene and Croatian officials emphasized:

"This study tour was not a classic training, but an opportunity to exchange views and share best practices. Legal approximation is not a mechanical copying of EU legislation, but a substantive transposition of the acquis into domestic law, in full respect of the national legal system and legal traditions."

Alexandrina Bulat-Rotaru, Deputy Head of the Legal Approximation Centre, highlighted the value of the experience:

"It was an excellent opportunity to learn new things and strengthen our existing knowledge as we continue pursuing our shared national goal—European integration."

The study tour was organised within the EU-funded project "Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration."

25 anticorruption specialists enhanced their knowledge in project management and external funding acquisition

25 specialists from the country's key anticorruption institutions – the National Anticorruption Center, the National Integrity Authority, the Financial Investigation Unit, the Anticorruption Prosecutor's Office, and the Prosecutor's Office for Combating Organized Crime and Special Cases – took part in an intensive 16-days' training course on project management and external funding.

The objective of the programme was to develop the skills to design, implement and monitor projects and apply for funding from different national or external sources.

A festive certificates award ceremony took place in the National Anticorruption Centre to mark the completion of the course. Serghei Carapunarli, Deputy Director of the National Anticorruption Centre, and the EU High Level Adviser on Anti-Corruption, Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Recovery and Management, present at the event, commended the participants' engagement and encouraged them to apply the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the programme in their daily work, contributing to stronger institutional performance and more efficient project implementation across the participating institutions.

The training programme was organized by the EU-funded project "Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration".



Strengthen the capacities of the General Inspectorate for Migration for the implementation of migration management and asylum legislation in line with the EU acquis

In the framework of the Twinning Project "Strengthen the capacities of the General Inspectorate for Migration for the implementation of migration management and asylum legislation in line with the EU acquis", in October 2025 two experts from the Swedish Migration Agency visited the Moldovan General Inspectorate for Migration to assess current and future reception capacity.

In addition, during 14-17 October 2025 a study visit to Romania was organized covering legal migration. Among the priorities identified following the visit to Romania (Bucharest and Constanta) were the implementation of integrated digital SOPs, strengthening inter-institutional cooperation, modernizing biometric data management systems, and developing effective mechanisms for preventing illegal stay are top priorities that could contribute to improved service quality at the GIM and gradual alignment to the European standards.



Moreover, the topic of temporary protection was discussed with participation of two Greek experts: Konstantinos Koulaxidis, Greek Asylum Service, Ministry of Migration and Asylum and Ms. Chrysanthi Avloniti, of the same Agency. The peer-to-peer discussion was lively, featuring numerous questions from the Moldovan beneficiary agency, along with case studies and regulatory challenges, etc.

Last but not least the Contingency Planning was the main topic of discussion in mid-November. The activity was carried out by two experts from the Swedish Migration Agency: Ms. Ana-Johanna Viking and Ms. Beatrice Linder. The STEs were welcomed by the newly appointed Head of the GIM, Mr. Dumitru Lazar. The beneficiary authorities shared an abundance of real-life accounts from 2022, when the agency faced a tremendous influx of Ukrainian nationals. It was an exercise in "learning by doing." It became evident that preparedness is essential for the effective management of any potential future influx; therefore, the existence of an overarching contingency plan is paramount.



National Procurement Platform discussed the amendments to the Law on Sectoral Procurement

Members of the National Platform for Public Procurement (NPPP) met in session on Wednesday, 3 December 2025. The Ministry of Finance presented the Draft Law amending the Law on sectoral procurement. Also, the expert at the Association for Efficient and Responsible Governance (AGER), Olga Diaconu, presented an analysis of the trade-off between transparency and efficiency in sectoral procurement.

The event took place in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, within the project "Supporting Moldova's public procurement reform in the EU accession context", implemented by IDIS "Viitorul", with EU support.

At the beginning of the meeting, Wojciech Paczynski, program manager at the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, noted that transposing EU directives into national legislation would be more difficult than transposing ordinary public procurement directives.

"Recently, there was an evaluation of the whole package of three directives on public procurement issued beginning in 2014, including the one on utilities sector. While it revealed many positives, it also highlighted challenges and difficulties within the system. It is a good opportunity for Moldova to take some lessons that could be learned and used in the process of legal reform of the system,"

said Wojciech Paczynski.



Constanția Grosu, senior consultant within the Public Procurement Policy Directorate of the Ministry of Finance, said that the amendment to Law No. 74/2020 on procurement in the energy, water, transport and postal services sectors aims to ensure the complete and compliant transposition of the EU Directive, given the commitments undertaken by the Republic of Moldova in the European integration process and within the bilateral screening exercise for Chapter 5 – "Public Procurement".

The analysis of sectoral procurement carried out by Olga Diaconu, an expert AGER, a member organization of the Public Procurement Monitoring Coalition, showed that some recommendations previously formulated by civil society in the process of working on Law No. 74/2020 were taken into account. However, the monitoring results show that errors and violations persist at all stages, from planning and publication to execution of sectoral procurement contracts.

At the same time, during the meeting, Karolis Granickas, director of the Open Contracting Partnership (OCP) for Europe, mentioned that the financial volume of public procurement has been increasing for more than 10 years.

Greater transparency in public procurement is a positive trend. However, the negative side of this development is that there is currently a very high level of legislative uncertainty and flexibility.

"The field is regulated vertically and horizontally. There are many sectoral sub-regulations, and how to reduce this legislative uncertainty, in such a regulatory framework, horizontally and simultaneously vertically, is a problem we are facing today,"

said Karolis Granickas.

Joint procurements and e-forms in focus at National Public Procurement Platform

Members of the National Platform for Public Procurement met on 20 October 2025 to examine two reforms central to modernising Moldova's public procurement system: the introduction of electronic forms (eForms) and the use of joint procurement mechanisms.

The meeting highlighted eForms as a key driver of procurement digitalisation, expected to increase transparency, reduce administrative burden, and make procedures more accessible — particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. By standardising how procurement and concession notices are published across public, sectoral, defence, and security procurement, the reform is set to improve data quality, strengthen competition, and align national practices more closely with EU requirements.

Discussions also focused on joint procurement as a tool with strong potential for cost savings and more efficient use of public funds, while recognising its complexity and the need for careful, case-by-case application. Participants explored how better coordination and clearer rules could help contracting authorities pool resources without increasing legal or operational risks.

An analysis presented by IDIS Viitorul showed that, although the legal framework allows authorities to associate—mainly for the procurement of goods and services—the mechanism is rarely used in practice. A survey of 68 central and local authorities revealed that the lack of secondary regulations, practical guidance, and standard tools remains a key obstacle, discouraging authorities from using joint procurement despite its clear advantages.

The event was organised in partnership with the Ministry of Finance, within the EU-funded project "Supporting Moldova's public procurement reform in the EU accession context", implemented by IDIS Viitorul between September 2025 and September 2026.



EU-funded training strengthens Moldova's document fraud detection

IOM Moldova delivered an EU-funded training course on the production of security documents and the detection of document fraud for officials from the General Inspectorate of Border Police, the Customs Service, the General Inspectorate of Migration, the "Ștefan cel Mare" Academy, and the Agency for Public Services.

The training enhanced participants' skills in document verification, fraud detection, use of specialized equipment, and profiling in line with EU standards, building on previous EU-supported efforts to strengthen Moldova's border management systems and inter-agency cooperation in combating cross-border crime.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Training boosts K9 officers' skills in detecting smuggling

IOM Moldova, in collaboration with Frontex, EUBAM, and the General Inspectorate of Police, with EU support, trained 22 K9 officers from the Border Police and Customs Service in advanced techniques to detect and analyse hidden objects.

Participants practiced with scanning devices, endoscopic kits, and service dogs during exercises at Cahul–Oancea and Vulcănești Border Crossing Points. The training enhanced operational skills, improved coordination, and contributed to the ongoing professionalization of Moldova's border management authorities.



Strengthening efforts to combat human trafficking in Moldova

IOM Moldova supported the General Inspectorate for Migration in a two-day workshop to prevent human trafficking and better identify foreign victims of labour exploitation.

Key national institutions discussed challenges, validated tools, and explored ways to improve coordination, proactive prevention, and victim protection mechanisms.



OECD-NIJ autumn school on Competition Law and Anti-Corruption

From 21 to 24 October, the OECD organised the first edition of an "Autumn School" in partnership with the Moldova's National Institute of Justice (NIJ), as part of the ongoing EU-funded OECD project *Supporting the Ministry of Justice and Justice Sector Reforms in the Republic* of Moldova. The Autumn School brought together over 60 judges, prosecutors, and lawyers from across the country for four days of interactive capacity building on two core themes: competition law enforcement and the investigation and prosecution of corruption cases.

Through hands-on exercises, case-based learning and peer exchange with OECD and EU practitioners, participants strengthened their practical skills in areas such as evidence assessment, leniency and settlement procedures, digital forensics, complex cartel investigations, and the application of integrity standards in judicial contexts.

The Autumn School also created a platform for NIJ trainers to exchange methodologies with international experts, helping reinforce Moldova's institutional training ecosystem and contributing to longer-term capacity within the judiciary.

This initiative represents a key milestone in advancing Moldova's efforts to build a more transparent, competitive, and integrity-based justice system. The success of the first edition has paved the way for further collaborative training activities.



OECD Investment Policy review of the Republic of Moldova

In early December 2025, the OECD kicked off the OECD Investment Policy Review (IPR) of the Republic of Moldova, marking the first step in a whole-of-government process to assess and strengthen the country's investment climate in line with EU accession priorities and OECD standards.

Implemented under the EU-funded OECD–ITC *Empowering Trade and Competitiveness in EaP countries* project, the IPR aims to provide a comprehensive and forward-looking assessment of Moldova's investment climate, identifying strengths, remaining challenges, and priority reforms to attract sustainable domestic and foreign investment. Based on OECD standards and tools – the Policy Framework for Investment and the FDI Qualities Policy Toolkit, the Review will analyse cross-cutting areas such as investment promotion and facilitation, legal and regulatory environment, tax incentives, responsible business conduct (RBC), investment to support the twin (digital and green) transition, and de-risking options – all highly relevant to Moldova's economic development and alignment with EU standards.

Against this backdrop, the OECD held a series of bilateral meetings with key national stakeholders and international partners in Chișinău and organised the first inter-ministerial working group meeting, bringing together representatives from core Moldovan institutions and the EU. Discussions focused on the scope of the Review, the proposed timeline, and national reform priorities to be reflected in the assessment.

The IPR will run through 2026–2027 and culminate in a set of practical, actionable policy recommendations and a peer review with OECD member countries. It will serve as a strategic tool to help Moldova clarify reform priorities, strengthen policy coherence, and reduce perceived risks for investors. By reinforcing transparency, predictability, and a level playing field, the Review will support Moldova's implementation of the EU acquis, further align investment and industrial policies with OECD good practices, and contribute to the country's broader objective of deeper economic integration with the EU.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Strengthening the capacities of public servants for more effective integration of refugees and migrants in Moldova

In a time when migration is becoming an increasingly present reality, the ability of institutions to respond effectively to the needs of refugees and migrants is essential for social cohesion. As part of the “Cities and Regions for All (CR4A)” project, People in Need Moldova, together with the Prague 5 Municipal District and national partners, carried out a series of training sessions for public servants in Cahul, Bălți, and Chișinău. The activity brought together national and international experts, representatives of central and local authorities, civil society organizations, and professionals from the social, education, health, and migration sectors.

Over two days of training in each city, participants worked through five key modules: the legal and institutional framework on migration and refugee protection, interinstitutional cooperation, socio-economic integration, access to public services, as well as human rights and anti-discrimination, including a practical exercise on developing a local integration plan. This process represents an important step toward aligning national practices with European standards and building a more accessible and responsive system for everyone.



The diverse participation and cooperation between institutions created space for constructive dialogue, and the sessions provided a safe environment for discussing real challenges faced by public servants involved in migrant integration.

This activity is part of the broader project, which aims to support approximately 6,800 refugees and migrants and strengthen cooperation between authorities, civil society, and European partners.

The project "Cities and Regions for All (CR4A): Full Integration of Refugees and Migrants in Urban and Rural Environments" is co-funded by the European Union, contracted by ICMPD through the Migration Partnership Facility. It is implemented by Prague 5 Municipal District and People in Need.

Training on optimising Social Media communication for public institutions

On 13–14 November 2025, the EU-funded “Support the Moldovan Government in identifying and preparing projects linked to the implementation of the Association Agreement” (PPF Project) organised a two-day training course on 'Optimising Social Media Communication for Public Institutions' for the Ministry of Finance and its subordinate institutions



The training brought together officials from the Ministry’s Communication and Protocol, European Integration, and Public Procurement Directorates, alongside officials from the Tax Service, Customs Service, State Financial Control Inspectorate, Public Procurement Agency, and the Centre of Information Technology in Finance.

The course was opened by Ana Luca, Deputy General State Secretary of the Ministry of Finance who encouraged the participants to apply more communication practices in their daily work and leverage the social media.

The first day focused on discussing the role and impact of social media in institutional communication, and the challenges it presents.

Participants learned how to develop a communication strategy and gained experience on how to create and schedule content using Metricool, an automated social media management tool.

The second day of the course focused on content planning and storytelling, with guidance on how to create short, engaging videos using accessible video editing tools such as CapCut, Canva, Inshot and Adobe Express. In the concluding exercise, participants produced 30-second videos and received feedback from the trainer.

The training was delivered by the PPF Project expert Antonia Lončar.

Workshop on national public sector accounting standards, organised in Chișinău

On 7 October 2025, 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 dissemination event on four draft National Public Sector Accounting Standards (NPSAS). The event was hosted by the Ministry of Finance and gathered over 80 participants, including officials and chief accountants from central and local public authorities and representative of academia.

The Minister of Finance Victoria Belous in her opening speech stated that modernising the public sector accounting system remains a key priority for the Ministry. She thanked the PPF Project team for their continuous support and invited participants to share their proposals and observations to ensure a well-coordinated implementation process of the new NPSAS.



The Programme Manager at the EU Delegation to Moldova Wojciech Paczynski in his welcoming remarks highlighted the importance of a credible public sector accounting system for sound decision-making and building trust among partners and stakeholders. PPF Project Expert Irina Grigoryan outlined the Project's one-year support to the Ministry of Finance in advancing the accounting reform. She noted the importance of developing NPSAS suited to Moldova's governance context, and introducing them in stages to ensure a smooth transition.

The officials from the MoF State Treasury General Directorate presented four draft accounting standards to the participants:

NPSAS on Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors; NPSAS on Events After the Reporting Date; NPSAS on Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets; and NPSAS on Inventories.

The presentation was followed by questions from workshop participants and detailed explanations of technical aspects of the draft NPSAS by the MoF State Treasury General Directorate and EU PPF experts.

The public sector accounting reform began in 2017 and was paused due to the pandemic. It has been relaunched with an updated strategy and action plan and aims at gradually aligning the national public sector accounting framework with good international practice. The PPF Project will continue providing technical assistance to advance the implementation of NPSAS throughout the project's duration.

Training on IPSAS 2: cash flow statements

On 17 November 2025, the EU-funded "Support the Moldovan Government in identifying and preparing projects linked to the implementation of the Association Agreement" (PPF Project) continued its training series on the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) with a session on IPSAS 2: Cash Flow Statements, aimed at enhancing participants' understanding of cash flow reporting and related accounting practices.

The training brought together officials from the State Treasury Directorate of the Ministry of Finance, specifically from the Methodology and Reporting Divisions, as well as representatives from the Court of Accounts.

The session was delivered by PPF experts Irina Grigoryan and Eugenia Busmachiu.



Enhancing Moldova's anti-corruption capacity: equipment handover

On 27 November, in the Republic of Moldova, the "Strengthening the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Mechanisms in the Republic of Moldova" (ACT) project provided IT equipment to the anti-corruption panels of the Chișinău District Court and the Court of Appeal, as well as to the General Prosecutor's Office (GPO), during a ceremonial event held at the Ministry of Justice. As part of the project's final phase, computers, printers, scanners, dictation devices, and videoconferencing systems were procured. The equipment will support the GPO and the anti-corruption panels in their daily work, enabling them to process large volumes of data securely and confidentially in the fight against corruption. The videoconferencing systems include anonymisation features, allowing, for example, the remote hearing of protected witnesses.

Over the past five years, the project ACT financed by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has worked closely with the Ministry of Justice, anti-corruption institutions, like the National Anti-corruption Center (NAC) and the Anti-corruption Prosecutor's Office (APO) and civil society organisations to promote a culture of transparency, accountability and ethical behaviour. The project focused on reducing corruption, empowering national and local institutions, empowering citizens to act with integrity and strengthening mechanisms for reporting corruption.

Although the ACT project has reached its conclusion, the structures, the tools and the partnerships developed over the past years will continue to benefit Moldova`s efforts to fight corruption. GIZ remains committed to support national partners in promoting integrity and strengthening institutional capacities in fighting corruption through the next project "Anti-Corruption: For Integrity and Social Responsibility in the Republic of Moldova", which is funded by the German Government and has started in October 2025 with a duration of three years.



EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

Gender-sensitive checklist developed for Moldova's Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry with EU support

Agriculture in Moldova will respond to the needs of women and men more effectively thanks to a gender-sensitive checklist developed for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry by the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by NIRAS.

Developed in October 2025, the checklist will help the ministry integrate gender issues into the drafting of normative acts in the agricultural and agri-food sectors. This marks a significant step toward more inclusive agricultural governance and reinforces Moldova's broader reform efforts to promote gender equality across all sectors. It responds directly to the requirements of Law No. 5/2006 on ensuring equal opportunities between women and men, which mandates the integration of gender equality principles across all policies, programmes and levels of decision-making.

To develop the checklist, the Reform Helpdesk conducted an in-depth gender analysis and forward-looking gender impact assessment to ensure that agricultural regulations address the specific needs and roles of both women and men in the agriculture sector, as well as the diverse constraints they face.

The methodology for developing the checklist followed several structured stages. The first step involved the selection and review of international, European and national studies, reports and analyses on mainstreaming gender in agriculture and agri-food systems.

The Reform Helpdesk identified good practices and presented these in clear, concise information boxes to enhance the ministry's understanding of global standards and effective approaches.

In the second stage, the Reform Helpdesk conducted an extensive assessment of Moldova's national legal and institutional framework, identifying provisions related to gender equality, the responsibilities of central authorities, and mechanisms for implementing equal opportunities. The assessment analysed relevant regulations on the development of normative acts, including key extracts to guide practitioners in understanding their obligations. The Reform Helpdesk's experts also examined international experiences of using checklists for gender mainstreaming to identify suitable models for Moldova's context.

Identifying sex-disaggregated statistical data and sector-specific gender indicators was an important part of the Reform Helpdesk's approach. These elements offer a crucial foundation for evidence-based policymaking, enabling authorities to understand gender gaps in access to land, resources, services and economic opportunities.

The third stage involved the development of a gender-sensitive checklist – a practical tool designed to guide the ministry's staff through each step of drafting normative acts. The checklist enables users to assess potential gender impacts, consider inclusiveness, and ensure that legal provisions do not inadvertently perpetuate inequalities.

Finally, the Reform Helpdesk team prepared conclusions, summary tables and detailed recommendations. These outline medium and long-term recommended actions for strengthening institutional practices, improving data systems, and ensuring sustained gender integration in legislative processes.

Welcoming the quality and utility of these efforts, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry reaffirmed its commitment to integrating gender perspectives into future policy documents.

"The document fully meets our expectations. It will serve as a foundation for integrating gender aspects into the process of developing normative acts at the Ministry level,"

said Alexandru Daguța, Senior Consultant at the Directorate for Public Policy Coordination and European Integration of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry.

Online consultations strengthen gender mainstreaming efforts across public institutions in Moldova

All people in the Republic of Moldova will benefit from renewed commitments by public institutions to advance gender equality across all areas of public policy, and ensure that reforms remain inclusive, evidence-based and aligned with international standards.

More than 80 representatives of central and local public authorities reaffirmed these commitments at an online consultation (18 December 2025) to discuss progress and upcoming priorities under the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project (Phase II).



The consultation brought together civil servants from Moldova's national gender equality machinery, including gender coordinators, gender units, and representatives of structural divisions responsible for policy development and implementation across government institutions. The session covered:

1 results achieved in 2025 in response to official requests for support from Moldova's public authorities to the Reform Helpdesk;

2 institutional needs and priorities for gender mainstreaming support to be provided by the Reform Helpdesk in 2026.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The event opened with welcome remarks by **Aurelia Bulat**, Head of the Gender Equality Policy Directorate at Moldova's Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and **Evghenia Hiora**, Programme Officer of the EU Delegation to Moldova, and. Both highlighted the importance of sustained cooperation between government institutions and the EU to strengthen gender-responsive governance and align national reforms with EU standards.

Andrei Petroia, Deputy Team Leader of the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the project. Participants learned about its objectives, implementation period, countries covered, expert teams, types of technical assistance available, and key successes achieved during its first phase. The presentation also included a detailed overview of results achieved in 2025 under Phase II of the project, as well as identified institutional priorities for 2026.

A presentation on the importance of gender mainstreaming at the sectoral level, delivered by **Angela David**, Junior Non-Key Expert of the Reform Helpdesk, showcased how integrating gender perspectives across policy areas contributes to more effective, equitable and sustainable reforms. The intervention emphasised the need for continuous capacity building and inter-institutional coordination to achieve systemic impact.

A dedicated **panel discussion** enabled representatives of central and local public authorities to share experiences, highlight ongoing challenges, and articulate priority areas for support. Their contributions will play a key role in shaping a coherent and coordinated approach for the Reform Helpdesk's future support.

A key outcome of the consultation with diverse local and central public authorities was the finalisation of a **Joint Engagement Plan for 2026** between the project and the Government of the Republic of Moldova. This plan will guide the planning and implementation of reform assistance service activities, serving as a strategic roadmap and an indicator for assessing the achievements of the Reform Helpdesk project's support.



EU support for gender mainstreaming in policy documents advances equality in Moldova

Women and men across the Republic of Moldova will benefit from governance that better responds to their needs, as central and local public authorities have mainstreamed gender into key strategic, regulatory and administrative documents with the support of the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by NIRAS. These efforts are contributing to ensuring that ongoing reforms across sectors are inclusive, equitable and aligned with Moldova's commitments to gender equality.

Between September and November 2025, the Reform Helpdesk's experts supported gender mainstreaming in several key documents, including:

- the Code of Ethics and Integrity of Anenii Noi City Hall;
- the "Integrated Tool for Managing Data and Documents in the Activities of the Integrity Inspectorate and the Legal Department" of the National Integrity Authority;
- the Employment Policy and the Environment Policy of Telița Village Hall; and
- the Medium-Term Budgetary Framework 2026–2028 of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

This support involved a systematic **gender analysis** of each document – examining women's and men's different needs, and the opportunities and constraints they face.

These analyses identified existing gender gaps and assessed whether proposed policies or tools risk perpetuating inequalities.

Based on these evidence-based assessments, the Reform Helpdesk identified risks and opportunities for strengthening gender-responsiveness in institutional practices.

Building on these findings, the Reform Helpdesk's team facilitated **gender mainstreaming**, ensuring that gender perspectives are incorporated across the content, structure, objectives and implementation mechanisms of each document. This included developing gender-responsive objectives, integrating sex-disaggregated indicators, promoting inclusive language, and embedding equality safeguards into institutional procedures.

As part of these efforts, the Reform Helpdesk also carried out a comprehensive **gender impact assessment** to assess the potential effects of each policy or tool on women and men, particularly groups living in vulnerable situations. This assessment enabled Moldovan institutions to foresee how their policies may influence equality outcomes and to adjust measures accordingly.

Across all partner institutions, the reforms supported by the Reform Helpdesk have reinforced gender equality as a fundamental value for governance, transparency, public integrity, environmental management, employment and fiscal planning. Both central and local authorities commended the relevance of the support provided and confirmed their willingness to continue integrating gender perspectives into future policy documents.

"We agree with the recommendations. In line with them, we will expand the gender perspective in the data collection and reporting process. This was a valuable exercise and we welcome this comprehensive gender guidance,"

said Maria Onea, Senior Consultant at the Directorate for Evaluation, Prevention and Policy Implementation of Moldova's National Integrity Authority.

"Telita City Hall confirms the importance of this expertise for the local authorities in Telița,

said Russu Rodica, Mayor of the Telița Commune.

Tatiana Guzo, Senior Specialist at Anenii Noi City Hall concurred, saying that

"We consider this a very good product with recommendations and legal arguments that can be presented to the councillors in order to update the Code by decision of the Local Council."

These commitments reflect a growing institutional culture of promoting fairness, inclusiveness and equal opportunities for all. Through this collaborative approach, the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk has contributed to strengthening the responsiveness and inclusivity of public institutions in Moldova, in aid of the country's broader commitments to gender equality and sustainable development.

EU supports inclusive local governance with a 10-step tool for mainstreaming gender into local policies

Local services will better meet the needs of residents in the newly amalgamated administrative-territorial unit of Telița–Roșcani–Calfa–Gura Bîcului in Moldova's Anenii Noi region as a new practical tool strengthens the capacity of local authorities to integrate gender equality into decision-making, service provision and strategic planning. Developed by the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by Niras, the "Ten steps for integrating the gender perspective into local policies" tool provides public servants with clear guidance to ensure that local governance responds equitably to the needs and priorities of women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity.

The quality of local governance depends on functional management systems that uphold equal opportunities, non-discrimination and social inclusion. The EU-supported tool is tailor-made to support such responsive, effective local governance. Developed, designed and printed in November–December 2025, the tool is built on the core principles of **gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and gender impact assessment**. Grounded in national legislation – particularly Moldova's Law on ensuring equal opportunities between women and men – the tool demonstrates how gender mainstreaming requires the integration of equality principles into policies and programmes across all sectors and levels of governance. This reflects the overarching goal of Moldova's ongoing public administration reform: to build efficient, inclusive local institutions that deliver high-quality public services for all residents.



The tool is structured into several key components to guide local authorities step-by-step. These include:

- Key areas of intervention for gender equality relevant to local development.
- The **main focus areas** for integrating gender equality perspectives within the newly amalgamated cluster.
- Core competencies and responsibilities required at the local level.
- A summary of Moldova's **legal and policy framework** on gender equality.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

- **Ten concrete steps** for integrating gender perspectives into local public policies – from identifying problems and collecting data to planning, implementation, budgeting and monitoring.
- **Strategic directions** for ensuring equal access to public services and utilities, aligned with local development priorities.

Throughout its development, the Reform Helpdesk applied a participatory approach, tailoring the content to the realities and needs of the amalgamated unit. This involved reviewing demographic and socio-economic data, examining local decision-making processes, and assessing the potential gender impacts of planned policies and reforms. This evidence-based approach ensures that the tool is both practical and directly applicable in daily governance.

Local authorities expressed strong satisfaction with the final product, highlighting its clarity, usability and relevance.

"The document provides an explicit justification for gender mainstreaming, linking it to the quality of local governance, the functionality of management systems, as well as local public authorities' (LPAs) obligations under national legislation and the European Charter,"

said Russu Rodica, Mayor of the Telița Commune in the Anenii Noi.

"It allows LPAs to demonstrate that local policies are not gender neutral, but can have different effects on women and men, girls and boys, which legitimises institutional intervention. It can be used as an internal standard for organising public consultations, preventing formal consultations and ensuring the legitimacy of decisions at the level of the amalgamated territorial administrative unit."

The authorities reaffirmed their commitment to continuing the integration of gender equality perspectives in future documents, strategies and local development initiatives. The tool marks a significant step towards more gender-responsive local governance within the new administrative structures of the Anenii Noi region, and reflects the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk's support for such reforms across Moldova and the broader Eastern Neighbourhood region.

EU-supported training advances gender-responsive public finance management in Moldova

Citizens of Moldova will benefit from the fairer, more equitable allocation of public resources as a new training course strengthened the capacities of the Ministry of Finance to promote gender equality within the public finance system. **Delivered** by the EU4Gender Equality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by NIRAS, the in-person training in Chișinău (27–28 November 2025) deepened 18 civil servants' knowledge, practical skills and professional competencies to apply gender-**responsive planning and budgeting (GRB) in practice**. All participants are women directly involved in planning, budgeting and public finance management processes.



Session 1 of the training introduced participants to gender-responsive budgeting as an essential framework for promoting gender equality and supporting evidence-based public policies. Participants discussed the objectives and conditions necessary for implementing GRB, as well as mechanisms for advancing gender equality within macro-budgeting. Practical examples from Austria and Ukraine illustrated the benefits of institutionalising GRB at the national and regional levels.

Session 2 focused on a practical case study of designing a gender-responsive budget for a school playground. During this session, participants learned how budget decisions can influence the well-being of different groups and how gender-responsive measures can enhance inclusiveness.

Session 3 guided participants on how to align international, national, regional and local policy directions with gender-sensitive objectives and indicators.

Exercises included integrating gender aspects into local development programmes and developing gender-sensitive indicators for planning, budgeting and monitoring.

Session 4 examined the place of gender-responsive budgeting within public finance management more broadly. Using the Gender-Responsive Public Financial Management Assessment (PEFA) Framework, participants discussed Moldova's 2022 PEFA assessment results and reflected on opportunities for institutional strengthening.

During **Session 5**, participants practiced categorising expenditures by gender-sensitivity and conducting gender analyses of budgets. The exercises demonstrated how to identify inequalities and address them through responsive planning and resource allocation.

Session 6 outlined practical ways to integrate gender aspects into each stage of the budget process, clarifying institutional responsibilities and accountability mechanisms. Discussions emphasised the importance of coordinated action among all institutions engaged in budgeting.

The training's final session, **Session 7**, provided an in-depth look at integrating gender-sensitive indicators into programme and performance-based budgeting.

Participants practised developing gender-sensitive goals, objectives and performance indicators across various sectors, including education and the Ministry of Finance's own programmes.

Participants welcomed the relevance, practicality and applicability of the training, reaffirming the Ministry of Finance's commitment to advancing gender-responsive budgeting in future policy and budgeting cycles.

"By combining theoretical approaches with practical exercises, this training facilitates the concrete application of gender equality principles in policies, programmes and budget allocations,"

said Aliona Moisei, Deputy Head of the General Directorate of Institutional Management and Head of the Human Resources Directorate at the Ministry of Finance.

"Thus, the training serves as an essential tool for promoting more equitable public policies, based on evidence and oriented towards the real needs of women and men."



EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

Training strengthens gender-responsive migration management in Moldova with EU support

Migration management in the Republic of Moldova is poised to become more responsive to men's and women's needs after two training sessions strengthened the capacities of the General Inspectorate for Migration. The in-person sessions in Chișinău (20–21 November and 25–26 November 2025) on "Gender mainstreaming in migration management: Strengthening the role of women and protecting the rights of migrants" equipped 19 migration officers (25 women and 14 men) to integrate gender equality principles into their everyday work and ensure that Moldova's migration governance remains aligned with international human rights and equality standards.

Delivered by the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by Niras, the sessions fostered institutional commitment to integrate gender equality at the heart of Moldova's migration management system.



The sessions focused on deepening knowledge, developing practical skills, and building professional competences related to gender equality, non-discrimination, and preventing and addressing sexual harassment, bullying and gender-based violence in the workplace. The vast majority of participants (97%) reported that the training directly improved their knowledge and skills.

These competencies are essential for ensuring an effective, human-centered migration management system – one that recognises the different experiences, needs and vulnerabilities of women and men throughout the migration process.

The training programme covered a wide range of interconnected topics.

Session 1 highlighted gender equality as a foundational principle in public policies and migration governance, drawing on European Union, United Nations and Moldovan commitments. Participants engaged in perception mapping exercises to reflect on their own assumptions about gender and migration.

Session 2 examined the gendered dimensions of migration flows, including the challenges that women migrants face to accessing services, employment, protection mechanisms and reintegration opportunities. Practical case studies stimulated discussion on vulnerabilities and factors that enhance resilience.

Session 3 introduced practical tools for gender mainstreaming, such as gender analysis, sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators. Participants applied these tools to sample migration policy decisions.

In **Session 4,** the focus shifted to daily operational work. Participants identified concrete entry points for integrating gender equality into the procedures, interviews and administrative practices of the General Inspectorate for Migration.

Session 5 addressed the protection of migrants' rights from a gender perspective. A roleplay exercise helped participants better understand how to respond to cases involving migrants in vulnerable situations, including survivors of violence.

Session 6 explored the risks of gender-based violence and trafficking in the context of migration, encouraging the development of referral pathways and interinstitutional cooperation models.

Concluding the training, **Session 7** explored institutional practices and lessons from EU Member States.

Participants drafted a **roadmap with actionable steps** for strengthening gender mainstreaming within the General Inspectorate for Migration. Both groups of participants commended the trainings' practical orientation, relevance and applicability to their professional duties.

"The training provided the employees of the General Inspectorate for Migration with practical knowledge and tools to understand how women and men experience migration differently, as well as to identify gender-specific risks, including violence and human trafficking,"

said Adela Morei, Chief of the Planning, Monitoring and Control Section of the Operational Management Directorate at the General Inspectorate for Migration.

"By applying gender analysis, using gender-sensitive data and practical case studies, the training will support the systematic integration of a gender perspective into the policies, procedures and daily work of the institution. It has contributed to strengthening the role of women, protecting the rights of migrants and improving the quality of migration management from a human rights perspective."

The 2024 census, a national success: Quality data and a sure step towards the European future of the Republic of Moldova

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Moldova, EU Delegation and UNFPA, organized the closing event of the 2024 Population and Housing Census (PHC). The event marked the successful completion of the most extensive national statistical exercise and emphasized the fundamental role of the collected data in shaping evidence-based public policies and supporting the country's European integration path.

The event brought together high-level representatives of the Government, the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), other UN agencies, central and local public authorities, international experts, as well as representatives of civil society and the academic community. Held in a festive atmosphere, the event also celebrated World Statistics Day and National Statistician's Day, highlighting the importance of high-quality data for a modern and transparent society.



Conducted between 8 April and 7 July 2024, the Census gathered data on more than **2.4 million people** and 1.6 million dwellings, following the highest UN and EU standards.

Conducted between **April 8 and July 7, 2024**, the census collected data on more than 2.4 million people and 1.6 million dwellings, in accordance with UN and EU international standards. The activity was supported by the project *"Support to the National Bureau of Statistics for the 2024 Population and Housing Census*," funded by the European Union and implemented by UNFPA.

The event also marks the official completion of this project, a symbolic moment that closes an important chapter in the development of the national statistical system and the strengthening of data-based governance, in line with European and international standards.

Over the course of two and a half years, the project has mobilized resources, expertise, and solid partnerships, contributing significantly to the preparation of the 2024 Census.

In particular:

- Over 5,000 enumerators and supervisors from 45 localities were trained to conduct digital interviews and ensure data confidentiality.
- 3,000 tablets were delivered and used for real-time data collection through CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing).
- A secure virtual IT infrastructure was deployed to support all census operations.
- Modern software tools were developed and tested, including systems for online self-enumeration (CAWI) and administrative data integration.
- A Pilot Census was conducted in 10 diverse localities to test instruments, procedures, and digital tools.
- A nationwide communication campaign was implemented across digital media, outdoor advertising, and journalist training to strengthen transparency and public trust.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

All activities were carried out in accordance with EU standards, UNECE recommendations, and international practices, demonstrating Moldova's capacity to move toward data-driven governance and UNFPA's commitment to modern and inclusive statistical systems.

The 2024 Census was Moldova's first fully digital Census, with enumerators using tablets and digital maps to ensure efficiency, confidentiality, and timely data processing. Results published throughout 2025 provide detailed insights into the country's demographic, educational, migration, ethno-cultural, and housing profiles, enabling informed decisions for national development and EU integration.

Since 26 June 2023, UNFPA in Moldova, in close partnership with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), has been implementing the EU and UNFPA-funded initiative titled: "***Support to the National Bureau of Statistics to Conduct the 2024 Population and Housing Census.***" This project represents a cornerstone investment in Moldova's statistical modernization, with a total budget of 2.075 million euro, jointly supported by the European Union Delegation and UNFPA Moldova. The project's overarching achievement lies in strengthening NBS's institutional readiness for the 2024 Census, with a focus on digital transformation, methodological excellence, and inclusive engagement across the population.



ECONOMY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Connecting Moldova to European infrastructure

The Republic of Moldova is advancing the modernisation of its transport infrastructure, from road and railway upgrades to modern logistics solutions that strengthen trade and mobility.

The European Union is a key partner in this process, providing investment, expertise and strategic support to support alignment with European standards.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

At the heart of this effort lies Moldova's integration into the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), Europe's core road and rail backbone. Progress is supported through EPIC — the Facility for Eastern Partnership Investment in Connectivity — which helps shape infrastructure planning, align national priorities with EU standards, and prepare projects for future financing. This support is already translating into concrete outcomes. Moldova now has a clear roadmap for infrastructure development, anchored in strategic frameworks such as the National Mobility Strategy, the Intelligent Transport Systems framework and the Transport Investment Programme. These set out future priorities, support the digitalisation of the sector, and prepare projects for implementation in the coming years, including:

- Moldova's first electrified railway line, on the Ungheni–Chișinău section, compatible with the European gauge and directly connected to Romania's modern rail network;
- The Ungheni–Chișinău–Odesa corridor, a key route for passengers and trade, where solutions are being assessed to improve safety and mobility in local communities;
- The Chișinău ring road, designed to reduce traffic congestion and pollution in the capital and to redistribute transport flows nationwide;
- The modernisation of two TEN-T routes — M3 towards Giurgiulești and R7 towards Soroca and Costești — vital for trade with Romania and Ukraine;
- The Chișinău inland freight terminal, a project set to reduce logistics costs, streamline procedures for exporters, and strengthen Moldova's position in regional supply chains.

"Modernising transport infrastructure is essential for the development of the Republic of Moldova, and the European Union remains a reliable partner in this process. Roads and railways are not just construction projects, they are strategic investments in mobility, trade, and economic development, contributing to a stronger economy and a better quality of life for people. Integrating Moldova into the Trans-European Transport Network creates more opportunities for citizens and businesses and strengthens the country's ties with the European Union,"

said Iwona Piórko, EU Ambassador to the Republic of Moldova.

To make these transformations more visible to the public, the European Investment Bank, in partnership with the EU Delegation in the Republic of Moldova and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, launched and implemented the #EUConnects campaign. The initiative explains the role of EPIC in transport modernisation, and its materials have generated over three million views, a clear sign of strong public interest in infrastructure projects.

"Through initiatives such as EPIC and the Growth Plan, the European Union and the European Investment Bank support the transformation of Moldova's transport system into a modern, sustainable infrastructure aligned with European standards. Connectivity is essential for a competitive economy and for deeper integration into the European market. Upgrading roads and railways delivers direct benefits for people and businesses and brings Moldova closer to the European Union, step by step,"

said Alberto Carlei, Head of the EIB Representation for the Republic of Moldova.

The Facility for Eastern Partnership Investment in Connectivity supports Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in turning major transport initiatives into projects that meet the highest international standards. The programme is financed by the European Union and managed by the European Investment Bank, in cooperation with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank.



EU and Austrian Government support the modernization of Moldova's vocational education system

The Brătușeni Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture Economics College has completed a comprehensive modernization under the EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme, supported by the European Union and the Austrian Government and implemented with the assistance of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA).

The EUR 325,000 investment upgraded infrastructure, improved energy efficiency, supplied modern equipment and learning materials, strengthened digital systems, and delivered targeted capacity building for staff and students.



The projects strategically target the most pressing needs of the VET institution, ensuring meaningful and lasting improvements.

- The college's infrastructure has been revitalized, with upgraded sanitary facilities, repaired dormitory and teaching block roofs, restoration of moisture-damaged walls, and the installation of solar panels to boost energy efficiency.
- State-of-the-art equipment to enrich hands-on training experiences, including interactive boards, laptops, projectors, and printers, has been donated, along with grooming tools and sanitation supplies.
- Capacity building initiatives have empowered administrators with efficient management skills, equipped teachers

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

with digital pedagogy and innovative teaching methods, and prepared students with essential 21st-century skills.

- VET systemic support included: development of the Teacher's Electronic Register and Student's Electronic Agenda on the Education Management Information System or the VET system.

More than 450 students and staff from Brătușeni College are directly benefiting from these projects. As a result, the college of Brătușeni now offers a modernized, more sustainable environment for education and vocational training, better preparing students for careers that meet labour market demands.

EU4Moldova: Local Communities programme is financed by European Union and German, Austrian and Polish government, and implemented by GIZ Moldova, Austrian Development Agency and the Solidarity Fund PL in Moldova.



Moldova at the Global Innovation Summit in Rio de Janeiro

A delegation from the Republic of Moldova – including representatives of the municipalities of Bălți and Sireți, as well as experts from AEER – participated in the Urban Transitions Mission (UTM) Global Innovation Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro on 6–7 November 2025, under the theme "Unlocking investment for cities: blended finance for urban transitions."

The Urban Transitions Mission (UTM) is a global initiative launched at COP26 in 2021, which supports cities – especially those with more than 50,000 inhabitants – in strengthening their capacity to achieve the transition to climate neutrality through robust knowledge, international cooperation, and the mobilization of resources for local action. From the Republic of Moldova, the municipality of Bălți is part of the global UTM initiative.

At the Summit, speakers from cities around the world shared their knowledge, experiences, and expertise with the UTM community. It was emphasized that cities are where action takes place every day to accelerate transitions toward a climate-neutral, resilient, and inclusive future.



The programme also included a study visit to the Innovative Operations Center of the City of Rio de Janeiro, which manages emergency response and the day-to-day coordination of this large metropolis 24 hours a day. The delegation also explored the city's experience in expanding green mobility initiatives through mobility control centers, as well as waste-to-energy and biogas recovery facilities – best-practice examples for the transition to a circular economy and sustainable energy.

Through this participation, the delegation from the Republic of Moldova reaffirmed its commitment under the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, including the implementation of Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs), thus accelerating the local green transition.

The UTM Global Innovation Summit was supported by the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM) and the European Commission.

EU4Moldova: Local Communities comes to a close – European support brings clean water, jobs, and better living conditions across communities in Moldova

The European Union, in partnership with the governments of Germany, Austria, and Poland, showcased the major accomplishments of the TEAM EUROPE INITIATIVE 'EU4Moldova: Local Communities' over the past four years. The joint investment of over EUR 25 million has helped communities improve essential public services, modernise local infrastructure and create new economic opportunities, providing residents with better living conditions. At the same time, the programme has supported young people to develop their professional skills, encouraging citizens to actively participate in community life, thereby strengthening the long-term development prospects of the regions.

Through the 'EU4Moldova: Local Communities' programme, over 30,000 residents from the Edineț, Leova, and Strășeni districts will benefit from modern water and sewerage services. A total of 35 public institutions — including kindergartens, schools, health centres, and cultural facilities — have been connected to reliable networks. In addition, 13 educational institutions in the Strășeni and Leova districts received new, efficient drinking water filtration systems.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

In Leova raion, around 13,000 residents now benefit from regular waste collection and modern waste management services, enjoying cleaner streets and a healthier environment. Thanks to investments through the 'EU4Moldova: Local Communities' programme and contributions from local authorities, the residents of Iargara and five neighbouring villages have access to a fully functioning public waste management service. With EU support, the Iargara City Hall purchased specialised equipment for waste collection, transport, and compaction, along with approximately 5,000 bins distributed to households and local businesses.

In the economic field, around 80 businesses have been created or expanded through the measures implemented under this programme, generating more than 100 jobs – 30% of which are occupied by women.



Moreover, the EU-LEADER approach to community led local development in Moldova continued to receive strong support. The LEADER Programme advanced its digitalisation at the Agency for Interventions and Payments in Agriculture (AIPA) and strengthened 24 Local Action Groups (LAGs).

Through the project's own fund, these LAGs implemented 198 projects across 430 communities, including 87 focused on environmental protection, waste management, and sustainable resource use. Supported by 39% beneficiary co-financing, the EU-LEADER Rural Development Fund 3.0 generated 65 new permanent jobs, boosting rural development in Moldova.

The ‘EU4Moldova: Local Communities’ programme was launched in 2022 as a Team Europe Initiative to strengthen local development and improve the lives of citizens, with a particular focus on the Edineț, Leova, and Strășeni regions.

The programme is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and Solidarity Fund PL (SFPL) in Moldova.



European support empowers women entrepreneurs in Strășeni, Edineț, and Leova

Sixteen women entrepreneurs from the Edineț, Strășeni, and Leova districts recently celebrated the successful completion of a project designed to strengthen and grow their businesses. The initiative is part of a broader effort supported by the European Union, in partnership with Germany, Austria, and Poland, aimed at fostering rural entrepreneurship and creating sustainable jobs.

The project focused on empowering women in business by providing tailored support, including training, mentoring, and financial grants. Over the course of the project, 54 women from 16 small and medium-sized enterprises enhanced their skills in critical areas such as marketing, accounting, and fundraising. These capacities are essential for building sustainable businesses that can adapt to changing market demands and grow over time.

In addition to training, the women received 197 hours of mentoring, offering strategic guidance to ensure their businesses are not only successful in the short term but also resilient in the long term.

"This project demonstrates that when women in rural areas are supported to develop their entrepreneurial potential, the whole community benefits,"

said Gligor Stojkov, head of component, GIZ Moldova.

For the women participants, the programme offered not only knowledge but also the confidence to scale their ambitions.

"Before joining the project, I wasn't sure how to expand my business or promote my products in the community,"

said Roxana Ursu, an entrepreneur from Edinet.

"The training and mentoring helped me understand my market, and the grant allowed me to purchase new equipment for our small honey production business. Today, I feel prepared to grow and to create jobs in my community,"

mentioned Roxana.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The initiative also provided 16 grants, enabling entrepreneurs to expand their existing businesses. Beyond financial support, the project helped participants increase their visibility and competitiveness through the production of promotional materials, including videos, labels, flyers, and catalogues. These tools allow the businesses to reach new clients, attract partners, and establish a stronger presence in local and regional markets.

The activities were implemented by the National Rural Development and LEADER Network through the 'EU4Moldova: Local Communities' programme – a Team Europe Initiative, launched in 2022 to strengthen local development and improve the lives of citizens, with a particular focus on the Edineț, Leova, and Strășeni regions. The programme is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and Solidarity Fund PL (SFPL) in Moldova.

Capital market specialists consolidated their capacities in the field of prudential framework applicable to investment firms

Representatives of the National Commission for Financial Markets (NCFM) took part in a training session on prudential framework applicable to investment firms, organized in partnership with the EU-funded project "Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration'.

In his opening remarks, NCFM Vice President Vladimir Rusnac emphasized that "the transposition of the European prudential framework for investment firms represents a key pillar in building, both at the authority and market participant level, a risk-based supervision system — an essential element for preventing the materialization of risks on the capital market. This process involves not only legislative adjustments but also the strengthening of the institutional capacity required for the effective implementation and supervision of the new requirements." He underlined that the support provided by the Romanian Financial Supervisory Authority is a valuable contribution to this endeavour, facilitating the harmonization of regulations and the strengthening of governance and supervisory mechanisms, in line with the European integration objectives of the Republic of Moldova.



In turn, Nicolae Grigore, EU High Level Adviser on Financial Services, highlighted the role and importance of these regulations in ensuring investor protection, financial stability, and a fair and competitive environment for investment firms. He underlined that "for the Republic of Moldova, alignment with these European standards is essential not only to facilitate the access of Moldovan investment firms to EU markets, but also to strengthen the confidence of investors and international partners in the national financial system. The implementation of these standards will enable investment firms to better manage their risks, comply with clear rules, and provide enhanced protection to clients and investors."

The information session was delivered by Matilda Precup and Cristina Florescu, short-term experts on capital market prudential requirements for investment firms and representatives of the Romanian Financial Supervisory Authority. They shared their experience regarding the implementation of Directive on the prudential supervision of investment firms and Regulation on prudential requirements for investment firms. The event gathered representatives of the NCFM, the Ministry of Finance, and capital market participants.

Common Transit Convention: easier trade with the EU market, cheaper costs for doing business

Since November 2025, the Republic of Moldova became a member of the Convention on the Common Transit Procedure, and the New Computerized Transit System (NCTS) has been integrated into the European customs network, which allows the use of a single declaration during transport through EU member states and the countries that are signatories to the Convention, without repeating customs formalities.

The benefits of the Convention for businesses were discussed at a roundtable with the business community on 14 November 2025, organized by the Customs Service and the EU-funded project "Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration". The event was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Customs Service, the Economic Council under the Prime Minister, the Delegation of the European Union, as well as the Directorate General for Taxation and Customs Union of the European Commission.



The discussions highlighted the direct benefits for exporters, importers and carriers, who will be able to carry out customs formalities with increased efficiency and predictability, and also discussed the next steps for the full implementation of the new procedures that will contribute to the deepening of our country's integration into the European customs area.

Membership in the Common Transit Convention, as well as the implementation of NCTS, implies less bureaucracy, faster customs clearance, and lower costs for businesses.

In practice, this means easier transit for goods, accelerated business growth, completion of declarations in Moldova, with the seal being broken at destination, and reduced controls.

In total, 39 states apply this regime, with the Republic of Moldova now benefiting from the same rights.

Developing a competitive and climate-resilient horticulture sector: the main focus of the “Fruit Business in the Republic of Moldova” Conference, organized with the EU support

Over 300 Moldovan and foreign representatives of the fruit business sector gathered at the Fruit Business Conference that held its sessions on 27-28 November 2025 in Chișinău.

The conference, at its XI edition, represents the most important platform for information and networking, where Moldovan fruit producers and exporters learnt the best practices from experts from Moldova, Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Germany and Spain.

The 2025 edition of the Conference focused on the strategies and policies to increase the Moldovan fruits competitiveness while integrating into the European Union’s market, as well as on the introduction of smart climate-resilient technologies, and effective solutions for managing pests and diseases.



The conference discussion panels focused on sharing experience and best practices in exporting apples, plums, cherries, apricots and other fruits to the EU market. Fruit producers and exporters emphasized the importance of adopting modern technologies and sustainable practices to meet international requirements and ensure long-term growth of the fruit business.

The event was organized by the Fruit Producers and Exporters Association of Moldova "Moldova Fruct", with the support of the European Union in the framework of the project, Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration' and the Invest Moldova Agency.



New series of trainings for startup entrepreneurs launched in Ialoveni with EU support

A new series of trainings for startup entrepreneurs was launched on 9 December 2025 in Ialoveni, bringing together around 100 participants from the central regions of Moldova. Organized by the EU-funded project "Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration", the Ministry of Finance, the Customs Service, the State Tax Service and the periodical publication "Monitorul fiscal" Fisc.md, the trainings will focus on the essentials of launching and running a business.

Building on the success of the three training sessions held between July and September 2025 which brought together over 350 entrepreneurs, the new series will be carried out in six regions, bringing together participants from 21 localities across Moldova. After the first session in Ialoveni, the next five will take place in Căușeni, Orhei, Edineț, Ungheni, and Comrat between February and August 2026. Each training is expected to gather aspiring and newly registered entrepreneurs eager to strengthen their business knowledge and skills.



In her opening remarks, Director of the State Tax Service, Olga Golban, stressed:

"These trainings were launched to ensure that entrepreneurs beyond Chișinău have access to current information and can seize new opportunities.

The course aims to provide with first-hand information and introduce them to accounting, tax, and customs aspects, helping better understand the opportunities for growing a business and in this way strengthen the economy."

In his turn, Senior Non-Key Expert on Customs and Tax Policy of the ‚Moldova is Europe' project, Rosario de Blasio, stated:

"Early and consistent compliance with legislation is not merely a formal requirement, it is a strategic investment in a company's stability and growth. Businesses that align with legal and procedural standards from the outset are better positioned to access new markets, build trust with partners and authorities. Complying with legislation from the very beginning means preparing your enterprise to thrive in the future European market."

Entrepreneurs will receive practical guidance provided by experts from the Ministry of Finance, Customs Service, State Tax Service, as well as practicing accountants. During the three-day training, startup entrepreneurs will learn how to correctly register and manage their business, meet tax, customs, and legal requirements, use electronic services, and maintain proper financial and accounting records. They will also develop practical skills in communication, negotiation, and team leadership to confidently work with partners, clients, and employees.

From passion to business: a young mother tailors her future at home with EU support

Mihaela Rogoja, a young mother from Florești district, has successfully turned a family-rooted passion into a small business, finding a way to return to the labour market with a flexible schedule adapted to family life.

With the support of European initiatives dedicated to empowering young entrepreneurs, Mihaela received modern equipment – sewing and embroidery machines – which enabled her to open a tailoring workshop and transform her skills into a sustainable source of income. Her interest in tailoring began in childhood and was passed on by her mother, a seamstress who inspired her love for this craft.

> *"Sewing is more than a profession for me; it is a legacy of the heart, something I learned from my mother and want to carry forward,"*
>
> ***says Mihaela.***

Today, her workshop comes to life with every order – from customised garments to delicate embroidery – all created with care, attention to detail and a strong commitment to quality. For Mihaela, the business represents not only income, but also the opportunity to build a stable future for her family and contribute to the local economy.

Her story is one of 204 success stories of young entrepreneurs in the Republic of Moldova who have received support to start or grow their businesses, with total financial assistance exceeding EUR 1 million.

By supporting small businesses, the project "Empowering Young Entrepreneurs in the Republic of Moldova" contributes to job creation, local economic development and reducing migration pressures.



Thanks to the support of the European Union, more and more young people in Moldova are choosing to build their future at home through sustainable and innovative businesses that generate real impact in their communities.

The project "Empowering Young Entrepreneurs in the Republic of Moldova" is funded by the European Union and implemented by a consortium consisting of Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe e.V., DEMOS, Pro Cooperare Regională and HomeCare.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Workshop on private sector participation in infrastructure and financial market development

On 19 November 2025, the EU-funded "Support the Moldovan Government in Identifying and Preparing Projects Linked to the Implementation of the Association Agreement" Project (PPF Project), together with the Nisporeni Rayon Council, organised a workshop to present the Nisporeni Rayon Investment Plan and discuss mechanisms to attract resources from both the government and private sector in supporting the implementation the capital projects included in the Plan.

The event brought together representatives from the Nisporeni Rayon Council, and mayors from the rayon. The workshop was moderated by the PPF Project expert Gnel Sedrakyan.

Opening remarks were delivered by Wojciech Paczynski, Programme Manager at the EU Delegation to Moldova, and Ion Diavor, President of the Nisporeni Rayon Council.

The workshop started with a comprehensive presentation of the Nisporeni Rayon Investment Plan and its 14 individual projects by Galina Triboi, Head of the Cross-Border Cooperation and Investment Attraction Service at the Nisporeni Rayon Council. PPF Project experts Tigran Krmoyan and Spyros Valatas followed with presentation on the methodology to identify and design investment projects, and the methodology for costing investment projects.

During the Q&A session, the President of the Nisporeni Rayon Council emphasised one of the key projects of the Nisporeni Rayon Investment Plan is the construction of a 40 km aqueduct aimed at ensuring access to clean drinking water for eight villages. In addition, the various options for seeking funding for the Nisporeni Rayon Investment Plan projects were discussed, including government sources.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

EU support for better transport connections in Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Moldova

In November 2025, the European Commission handed over grant agreements for EU transport infrastructure funding in Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Ukraine and Moldova — a concrete step following the funding package announced in July 2025 under the **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)**. The support targets strategic cross-border connections and strengthens the EU-Ukraine Solidarity Lanes, helping improve how goods and people move across the region.

For Moldova, the package is more than a set of infrastructure upgrades — it is a direct investment in connectivity, competitiveness, and resilience:

- Faster, more reliable links to the EU market via Romania and onward connections.
- Better regional interoperability with European rail standards and systems.
- Stronger trade routes that complement the Solidarity Lanes and reduce bottlenecks.
- Modernisation of Moldova's rail network, including a landmark step toward electrification.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

A milestone project: Iași–Ungheni rail upgrade (Romania–Moldova)

A key highlight for Moldova is the EUR 33 million EU grant for a joint cross-border project between Romania and Moldova to upgrade the Iași–Ungheni railway section. Crucially, this includes the first-ever electrified railway section in Moldova.

This investment is a practical upgrade with long-term impact: electrification and modernisation typically mean improved efficiency and reliability, and they position Moldova more firmly within European transport corridors.

Complementary investments that strengthen Moldova's regional links

Two additional rail projects in the region further reinforce connectivity for Moldova through upgraded north–south and cross-border routes:

- EUR 45 million to develop an important railway axis in Romania, linking the South (Port of Constanța and Bucharest) to Ukraine and Moldova in the North.
- EUR 73.5 million for a European standard gauge line connecting Poland to Lviv (Ukraine) — supporting wider regional rail integration and cross-border flows.

Together, these investments create a more coherent regional network, with Romania serving as a key connection point between Moldova, Ukraine, and the EU.

The **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)** is the EU's main tool for financing the trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T). Looking ahead, the European Commission has proposed over EUR 51 billion for cross-border connectivity in the 2028–2034 period — including high-speed rail and military mobility — doubling the previous CEF budget.

For Moldova, these investments signal a clear direction: deeper integration into European transport networks and more robust, future-ready connections to regional and EU markets.



Closer to Europe by rail: Moldova and Ukraine move forward on EU rail integration

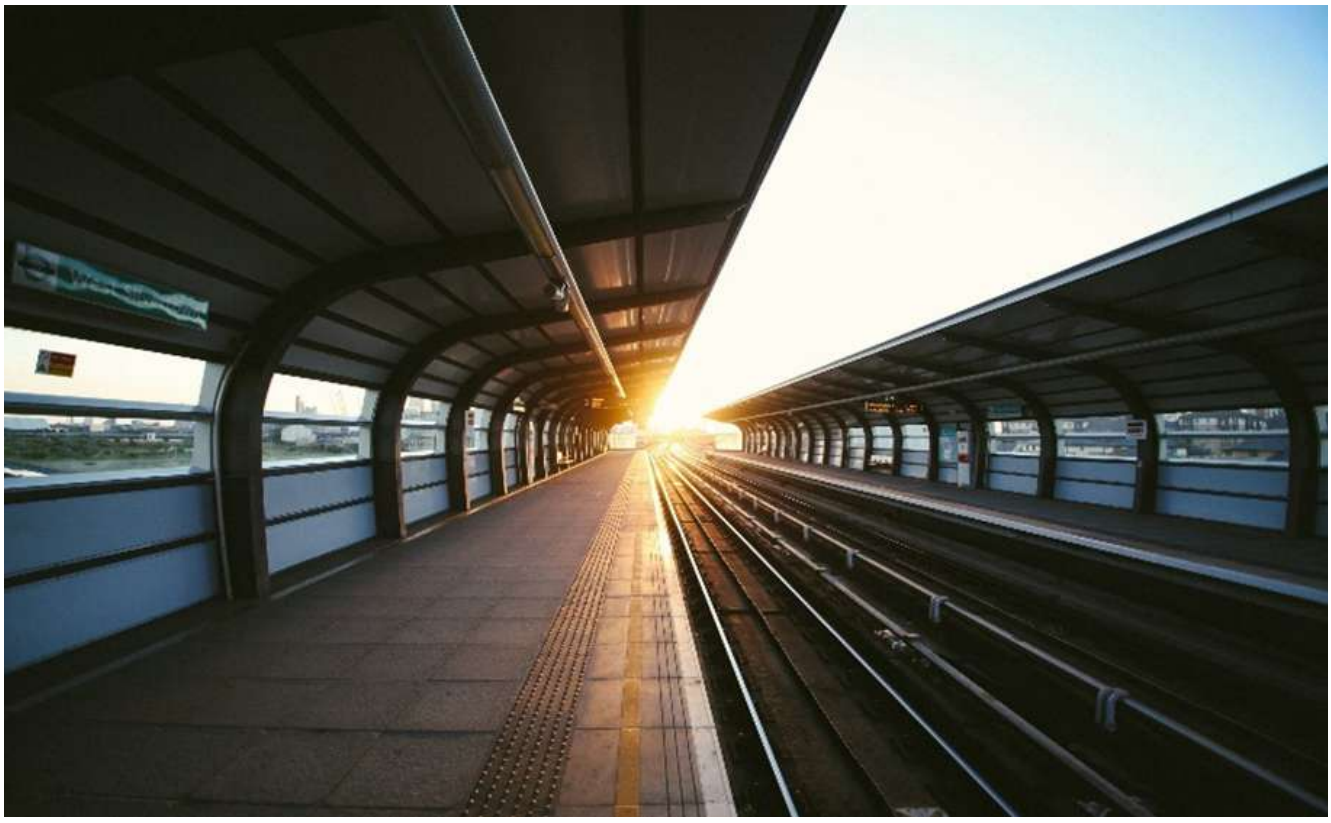
A major shift is underway in the way rail connectivity is being built between the EU, Ukraine, and Moldova: moving from high-level strategy to concrete project preparation and implementation. The work is driven by the European Commission together with the European Investment Bank (EIB) Advisory/ JASPERS, and it is designed to help integrate Ukraine's and Moldova's railways into the EU transport system.

From plan to action for Moldova

The EU is helping Moldova and Ukraine connect better to Europe by gradually adding EU-standard rail tracks while keeping today's rail system running, so trains and cargo can continue moving during the upgrade.

What's being prepared in Moldova now

- a study for an electrified rail link between Chișinău and Ungheni built to EU standards, and
- a study for a new intermodal freight terminal in Chișinău, where goods can switch faster between trucks and trains.



These projects can make cross-border transport faster and more reliable, strengthen trade routes to Romania and the EU, and help Moldova attract investments by preparing projects that are ready for EU financing.

Next for Moldova: finalising EPIC-supported studies and technical options, defining phased investments (corridor sections, nodes and terminal capacity), and aligning the Chișinău–Ungheni corridor and Chișinău intermodal terminal with Romania–Ukraine–Moldova regional connectivity plans—turning strategy into implementation-ready projects.

EU-Moldova

Stronger Together

Solidarity Lanes: Faster border crossings between Moldova and Romania

The EU supported Solidarity Lanes continue to deliver practical improvements for regional connectivity, with Moldova and Romania making a tangible step forward at the **Galați** border area.

Since late August 2025, coordinated controls in Galați (exit from Moldova) have been implemented as an important milestone to ease cross-border movement and reduce delays for freight and passenger traffic between Moldova and Romania. By streamlining procedures and improving coordination at the border, this measure supports smoother flows on one of the key routes linking Moldova to the EU.

What comes next

The next priority is to expand this progress by introducing bi-directional coordinated controls – so that streamlined checks work efficiently in both directions—at Moldova and Romania's main road border crossing points. The focus is on three key BCPs, including:

- **Galați – Albița**
- **Ungheni**



Extending bi-directional coordinated controls to these crossings would further cut waiting times, improve predictability for transport operators, and strengthen Moldova's cross-border connectivity—supporting trade, mobility, and resilience in line with the Solidarity Lanes objectives.



Mayors from Moldova join European leaders at the European Parliament in Brussels

Emotional moments unfolded at the European Parliament in Brussels on October 16, 2025, during the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy Ceremony — a flagship event that brought together over 700 participants and more than 150 mayors from across Europe.

The ceremony marked the 17th anniversary of the largest European movement of local authorities dedicated to combating climate change and advancing the clean energy transition, demonstrating that Europe's future is built locally — in its towns and villages.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

The ceremony opened by Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament, who emphasized that "Europe exists in all its cities and regions, and citizens are the ones building Europe every day."

Following her remarks, Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, stated that "we are on track to achieve our 2030 targets." She underlined the importance of sustainable housing and climate resilience for towns and regions, noting that both are key priorities currently addressed by the European Commission.

Von der Leyen warmly welcomed the delegations from Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, reaffirming that "these countries belong to the European family."

In the European Parliament Hall, alongside local leaders from all over Europe, 15 mayors from the Republic of Moldova and 5 from Ukraine, signatories of the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, joined the celebration.

Inspired by their European colleagues, mayors from the Republic of Moldova shared concrete environmental and energy actions implemented at the local level:

- Olga Pac, Mayor of Vișniovca, Republic of Moldova, emphasized the importance of the Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP), noting that Vișniovca has already achieved 65% of its targets, including the thermal insulation of the local gymnasium and the planting of over 80 hectares of forests.
- Nicolae Tudoreanu, Mayor of Fețelița, Republic of Moldova, recalled that his community has been a Covenant signatory since 2013, and highlighted that European experiences and models continue to inspire their local actions.
- Eduard Sturza, Mayor of Geamăna, Republic of Moldova, recently joined the Covenant, yet his locality has already implemented projects to reduce carbon emissions by using biomass and renewable energy for heating public institutions.

The CoM Ceremony 2025 once again confirmed that the strength of a green Europe begins in its local communities, with a shared vision — a climate-neutral, resilient, and united continent.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

From Bălți and Sireți to Rio de Janeiro. Shared concerns of signatories of the European Covenant of Mayors initiative worldwide

Mayors and representatives of local authorities that are signatories of the Covenant of Mayors from Moldova, Ukraine, and Azerbaijan joined city leaders from around the world at the C40 World Mayors Summit, held on 3–5 November 2025 in Rio de Janeiro. This year's Summit marked the launch of the COP30 Local Leaders Forum, co-hosted by Bloomberg Philanthropies and the COP30 Presidency. The Forum places local leadership at the heart of global negotiations, highlighting scalable, city-led solutions and ensuring that local priorities shape the outcomes of COP30.



It was noted at the Summit that C40 member cities are reducing per capita carbon emissions five times faster than the global average. However, aware that this progress is still not sufficient, mayors left with a renewed commitment to do even more. C40 launched three new Action Accelerators: the "Cool Cities" Accelerator to tackle extreme and deadly heatwaves; the Thriving Food Systems Accelerator, aimed at transforming access to food and urban economies by 2035; and the Urban Planning Accelerator, which places climate action at the core of urban development, while also announcing the second phase of the Youth Climate Action Fund.

Over the course of three days, more than 3,000 mayors, governors, and subnational leaders from over 120 countries demonstrated how cities are providing decisive leadership in addressing the climate crisis.

"We return home with inspiration, ideas, and the determination to implement concrete actions to reduce the impact of climate change,"

said Ana Gherciu, Deputy Mayor of the village of Sireți, Moldova.

Stela Pripa, representing the Municipality of Bălți, added to the lessons she is taking home from Rio de Janeiro:

"Here we have seen that, at the global level, collaboration is the most valuable currency of our time—it gives value to every project, every idea, and every community that truly wants to evolve."

From Ukraine, Oleksandr Syenkevych, Mayor of Mykolaiv, emphasized that cities in the CoM East region "are at the forefront of turning climate commitments into real action."

The participation of the Covenant of Mayors delegation from the Eastern Partnership region was made possible with the support of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM) and Bloomberg Philanthropies.

EUSEW 2025: winners awarded

The closing ceremony of the European Sustainable Energy Week – EUSEW 2025 took place in Chișinău, organized under the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy – CoM-East III project, with the support of the European Union.

This year's campaign ran from 1 June to 10 September 2025 and delivered significant results:

- 20 Covenant of Mayors signatory municipalities
- 200+ local activities
- 10,000+ participants – students, teachers, volunteers, local authorities
- The first edition of the "Energy Management Star Moldova" competition

Throughout EUSEW 2025, Moldova hosted thematic workshops, environmental education and creative recycling campaigns, "green" bike races and eco-hikes, exhibitions, art competitions, and lessons on energy efficiency. These activities engaged thousands of children, youth, teachers, parents, and volunteers, sending a European message of responsibility and solidarity.

Local events had an intergenerational character, involving children, parents, and seniors in joint activities. The innovation of EUSEW 2025 was the launch of the first edition of the "Energy Management Star Moldova 2025" competition, noted Irina Plis, CoM-East national expert.



To honour the participants of EUSEW 2025, the final event on 23 October 2025 gathered representatives of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova, the Ministries of Energy and Environment, the CoM-East III project, and the LEEN project.

Covenant signatory municipalities received Certificates of Excellence for promoting sustainable energy and climate initiatives, as well as financial vouchers to purchase tree saplings for a local "Signatories' Alley" or energy-efficient equipment for local institutions. Value vouchers were awarded to the municipalities of Ceadîr-Lunga (€400); Bălți and Sireți (€350); Slobozia Mare and Ialoveni (€150); and to the municipality of Volintiri (€100).

At the event, mayors Olga Pac (Vișniovca) and Nicolae Tudoreanu (Fețelița) shared insights from their visit to Brussels, where they took part in the Covenant of Mayors Ceremony at the European Parliament, marking 17 years of European commitment to climate and energy.

EUSEW 2025 in Moldova demonstrated that change begins locally — in schools, in communities, and in people's hearts.

Covenant of Mayors Signatories inspired by the experience of the Municipality of Botoșani

A delegation of Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy signatories from the Republic of Moldova, beneficiaries of the support programme provided by the Covenant Secretariat (second cohort), carried out a technical study visit to the Municipality of Botoșani (27–28 November 2025), focused on the exchange of experience in the fields of energy transition, sustainable urban mobility, and climate change adaptation.

The visit programme included an in-depth look at Botoșani's waste management model. The delegation visited the Municipal Recycling Waste Collection Centre, established on the site of a former illegal landfill that was recently closed through a project financed with European funds. Here, residents of Botoșani can bring bulky waste, construction debris, and green waste free of charge, all collected separately. Construction waste is crushed and reused, while green waste is transformed into compost.

Participants also climbed the "hill" of the former landfill, which was closed in the previous year. They learned about the stages of the landfill closure process, from impact assessment to covering the site with layers of clay and topsoil, fencing, and the installation of public lighting.

Another important stop of the visit was the "Elena Rareș" Gymnasium School, fully renovated from an energy-efficiency perspective, with a direct positive impact on the quality of the learning environment for its 949 students.

During the visit, the delegation also explored other projects relevant to the energy transition and sustainable urban development presented by the Municipality of Botoșani, including urban regeneration



and green infrastructure projects, residential buildings undergoing energy efficiency upgrades, and urban regeneration models for sustainable tourism, among others.

In recent years, the Municipality of Botoșani has attracted over EUR 160 million in investments, resources that have accelerated the city's transformation into a greener, better connected, and more climate-resilient community.

The visit to Botoșani offered the Covenant of Mayors signatories in Moldova valuable examples of investments, management, and innovation that can be transferred and adapted in their own localities.

Opening of the MEIR project office in Chișinău: a new step toward Moldova's energy independence

On 17 November 2025, the Moldova Energy Independence and Resilience (MEIR) project office was officially inaugurated in Chișinău — a key milestone in supporting Moldova's European energy pathway. The event brought together high-level representatives from national authorities, the European Union Delegation, and the Energy Community Secretariat, highlighting strengthened international cooperation in energy sector reforms.

The MEIR project, funded by the European Union and implemented by the Energy Community Secretariat, supports the Republic of Moldova in its transition towards energy independence, decarbonisation and climate neutrality by 2050. The Chișinău office provides technical assistance and capacity building for the institutions involved in reforms in the electricity, gas, renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors.



The inauguration ceremony was attended by Dorin Junghietu, Minister of Energy, Mate Csicsai, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Moldova, and Artur Lorkowski, Director of the Energy Community Secretariat. Officials emphasized the positive impact of external cooperation in transforming Moldova's energy sector, from crisis response strengthening to the implementation of reforms aligned with EU standards.

The opening of the MEIR office reflects Moldova's strategic commitment to align its energy legislation and practices with those of the European Union while reinforcing the national energy system's resilience against external challenges.

A step forward towards more energy efficient social services

Between October and December 2025, the "Local Partnerships for Energy Efficiency in Social Services" project financed by the European Union, co-financed and implemented by the Soros Foundation Moldova, in partnership with I. P. Keystone Moldova and the Social Innovation Fund of Moldova project made important progress both technically and in the strengthening of local partnerships.

One of the most important milestones of the period was the initiation of energy efficiency works in buildings providing social services. These include complex interventions implemented in partnership with local public authorities that range from wall insulation and modernization of the lighting systems to the installation of photovoltaic panels. Thanks to these investments, the spaces providing social services become more efficient, safe and sustainable, helping to reduce maintenance costs and improve the conditions for beneficiaries.



In parallel, there has been a step-up in the process of development of integrated local Energy and Climate plans – strategic documents that are essential for guiding local public policies towards sustainability.

Based on the technical assistance provided by project partners, civil society organizations and local authorities worked in a team to define measures adjusted to the specifics of each community.

A moment of special visibility was marked on December 3, 2025, by the visit of Her Excellency Iwona Piórko, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Moldova, at the Home for elderly and disabled people "Alexandra Grajdian" in Criuleni – one of the 35 project beneficiary institutions. During the visit, the Ambassador emphasized the importance of local partnerships and the European support for the transition to modern, energy efficient and people-centered social services.

Also, during this period, the representatives of the 35 civil society organizations, subgrant-beneficiaries, together with the project implementation partners, gathered in Chișinău for the bi-annual evaluation and planning session. The event provided a valuable space for learning, exchange of experience and strengthening of cooperation between actors involved in promoting energy efficiency at the local level and in improving social services.

Through these complex actions, the project continues demonstrating that investments in energy efficiency, going hand in hand with the involvement of communities and the support of authorities, can generate a real, sustainable and visible impact on the lives of people across the country.





From Vilnius to Chișinău: shared solutions toward waste management

Representatives of state institutions from the Ministry of Environment, Environmental Agency, Environmental Protection Inspectorate, Customs Service, State Tax Service and several economic operators from the Republic of Moldova took part in a study visit to the Republic of Lithuania between 20 and 24 of October. The event was organized with the support of the EU-funded Twinning project "Air Quality and Environment" and aimed to exchange experiences in practical application of the selective collection of municipal waste, as well as hazardous waste management in the context of the circular economy and control activities (at customs level).

The program included meetings with counterpart institutions in Lithuania – the Ministry of Environment, the Environmental Protection Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Environmental Project Management Agency, State Tax Inspectorate under the Ministry of Finance, and Customs. In the context of Moldova's European integration and reform agenda, the discussions allowed Moldovan officials to understand better the preparation, implementation, and supervision of waste management strategy in Lithuania, permit issuance procedures, IT systems, and principles of conducting on-site inspections.

During the visits, Moldovan specialists had the opportunity to see how these systems run in real conditions and handle day-to-day operational issues – for example, green waste composting, collection of bulky waste, mechanical biological treatment with anaerobic digestion, gas and electricity production, management of biological waste, asbestos waste, etc. On-site discussions helped Moldovan experts understand which EU practices can be realistically adapted to Moldova's legal, financial, and social conditions when it comes to topics such as waste-to-energy strategy and energy recovery from non-recyclable waste, deposit refund system for beverage packaging, integrated model combining recycling, manufacturing and plant operations and dual-fuel system (municipal waste and biofuel).



The Lithuanian experience directly supports Moldova's efforts to improve national waste management in line with the country's National Waste Management Plan 2023–2027, which aims to develop an integrated and economically efficient waste system that protect public health and the environment.

These improvements will empower citizens to actively participate in waste sorting and recycling, support the development of a functioning circular economy market in Moldova, and significantly reduce the need for landfilling by promoting waste prevention, reuse, and energy recovery from non-recyclable waste.

Progress for cleaner air in Moldova - the first stage of the Twinning project is completed

December 2025 marks the end of the first stage of the Twinning Project "Air Quality and Environment", funded by the European Union and implemented with the support of partners from Finland, Lithuania and Sweden. Since the project's launch, around 60 weeks of missions have been organized, with experts from the EU Member States providing expertise and support to their partners from the Ministry of Environment, the Environmental Agency and the Environmental Protection Inspectorate of the Republic of Moldova. These missions contribute to institutional capacity building and the implementation of European best practices.



The results obtained during the project's first stage were presented at the mid-term conference, including: hands-on training sessions for technicians at the local automatic air quality measurement stations; training sessions on Dispersion modelling, SILAM (forecasting), ESCAPE (chemical accidents), CLP and REACH regulations, RoHS Directive, chemicals and hazardous waste management; two study visits to Finland and Lithuania; development of the strategy for a new national air quality monitoring network, consisting of 12 modern, EU-compliant stations; and others.

As a result of the conducted activities, the air quality monitoring systems are to be enhanced, and the institutions involved will be able to better analyse available environmental data, better inform the population, and make better substantiated decisions in the field of environmental policies.

The Twinning Project "*Air Quality and Environment*" has a total duration of 30 months and continues to support the modernization process of environmental policies and institutions, in compliance with European Union standards.

Moldova frees its rivers: dam removals mark important step for water resilience

This 8 October, as the world marks Dam Removal Day, Moldova has its own story to tell. In 2024, the Ministry of Environment and the Environmental Protection Inspectorate reported the demolition1 of 51 illegally built dams on rivers such as the Ciulucul Mare and Ciulucul Mijlociu, Ialpugel, Draghiște, Ciuhur, Ciorna in the Răut river basin, as well as Ichel river, all tributaries of the Dniester.

Freeing rivers from unnecessary barriers to secure water for all

In Moldova, many small, unlicensed dams are built by local residents to secure water for cattle, crops, and other needs. Yet many such constructions were not permitted2, and when poorly designed, unregulated, or too numerous, they can alter the river flows, reducing water availability for other water users downstream, and degrading ecosystems.



At the request of Apele Moldovei, a pilot study carried out by UNECE as part of the EU-funded programme EU4Environment – Water&Data (2021–2024) in the Ișnovăț River, a tributary of the Bic and ultimately the Dniester, provided Moldova with its first inventory of dams — legal and illegal, active and abandoned. It revealed that many reservoirs were poorly maintained, silted, or even dried out, posing flood risks and cutting off communities and ecosystems from vital water flows.

By targeting the most problematic illegal dams, Moldovan authorities aim to restore fairer access to water and improve the resilience of river systems.

Solutions must go beyond dam demolition alone

Restoring rivers is essential for biodiversity, fish migration, as well as for maintaining natural floodplains that play an important role in flood retention. In a country already facing a projected 16–20% decline in surface flows by 2030 due to climate change, every drop of restored flow counts.

The challenge, however, is far more complex. Removing dams does not always mean rivers will resume their natural flow — in many places, the water simply isn't there anymore. Decades of overuse, poor maintenance of infrastructure, and climate change have left scars too deep to heal in the short-term. At the same time, as there has been no water flow in the rivers for the last 10-15 years, and the rivers dry up over summer, certain dams continue to provide water for farming, animals, and livelihoods in rural areas where economic opportunities are limited.

Strengthening knowledge of rivers

In line with the EU Water Framework Directive and based on the findings of the pilot study carried out by UNECE in the Ișnovăț River Basin, the Government of Moldova adopted on 16 October 2024 a national methodology for identifying and monitoring hydromorphological changes in rivers— changes in rivers' natural shape, flow, sediment transport, and connection with surrounding landscapes - caused by structures like dams, levees, or diversion channels. When excessive, these alterations weaken rivers' natural ability to support biodiversity, regulate floods, decompose pollution, and recharge groundwater resources.

The adoption of this methodology marks a first step toward better understanding the physical condition and dynamics of Moldova's rivers. It establishes a common analytical framework to assess where human activities — such as dams, riverbed modifications, or land use changes — are altering watercourses. Similar approaches have proven essential in EU Member States under the EU Water Framework Directive, where hydromorphology is recognised as a key "supporting element" for assessing the ecological status of rivers.

In Moldova, this methodology will provide the necessary baseline information to inform future water management measures.

Encouraging dialogue between water users

Healthy, living rivers need a degree of freedom: the ability to meander, to flood seasonally, and to connect with wetlands and groundwater. In many European countries, past efforts to tame rivers — by building dykes, digging canals, and draining wetlands — reduced flooding in the short term but also disconnected rivers from their ecosystems, making them less resilient to droughts and climate change. Moldova faces the same challenge: how to reconcile people's needs with the ecological functions that sustain rivers.

The underlying challenge is thus to achieve a sustainable water balance and ensure the fair sharing of water resources across the entire river basin. This requires a change in former water and land use practices, as well as regular dialogue between all water users, including farmers, industries, municipal authorities and nature conservationists caring about the often-forgotten ecosystems on which human life depends.

Building on the experience of existing basin councils for the Prut, Dniester and Black Sea river basin, which already facilitate cooperation at transboundary and national levels, and whose work was supported by the EU4Envrionment -Water and Data (2021-2024) programme and other regional projects, the EU supports Moldova in extending this dialogue to more local scales. Through EU4Green Recovery East programme (2025-2028), efforts are now focused on establishing pilot councils at sub-basin and community levels—bringing together local authorities, farmers, and other stakeholders to discuss practical solutions. By strengthening dialogue where decisions are made, these initiatives aim to balance local water needs with the shared responsibility of protecting Moldova's rivers. The EU4Green Recovery East programme (2025-2028) will thereby ensure continuity of support so that water is managed as a critical resource for people, nature, and the economy alike.

The EU4Green Recovery East programme (2025–2028) supports the countries of the EU's Eastern Partnership in their transition towards greener, more resilient economies. With EU funding of EUR 21.3 million, it focuses on five areas: (1) circular economy, (2) water management, (3) legal approximation to EU environmental law, (4) environmental data integration, and (5) transboundary cooperation.

Moldova strengthens water management and advances circular economy reforms

Moldova has taken significant steps this autumn to improve water governance and advance its circular economy transition, with support from the European Union through the EU4Green Recovery East programme and long-standing cooperation under the UN Protocol on Water and Health.

On 15–16 October, Moldova launched its national coordination platform for implementing the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). Supported by the European Union and led by the Ministry of Environment, the platform will strengthen cooperation between national institutions on water monitoring, data management, and river basin planning—key elements of alignment with EU standards.

Moldova's progress was also showcased at the 7th Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health (5-7 November 2025), a UN treaty serviced by UNECE and WHO/Europe. Moldova's EU-backed National Policy Dialogue on water was highlighted as a successful model of coordinated action to improve water and sanitation governance. The Republic of Moldova was elected to chair the Protocol's work over the next three years.

With a regional budget of €21.3 million, EU4Green Recovery East continues to help Moldova and other Eastern Partnership countries build a greener, more resilient future. Through strengthened water management and progress toward a circular economy, Moldova is advancing steadily on its European path.



Future journalists will develop their professional skills in the optional course "Environmental Journalism", conducted with the financial support of the European Union

About 20 students from the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Sciences at Moldova State University will learn to write press materials on local environmental issues. The training programme will run from October 2025 to May 2026, with the support of the European Union and UNDP Moldova, in partnership with the Association of Environmental Journalists in Moldova.

The course will provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to produce engaging, high-quality media content that contributes to public awareness of environmental issues and informed dialogue on climate change, the environment, and sustainability.

Present at the launch of the current edition of the optional course "Environmental Journalism," Franciska Flugt, Programme Manager, European Union Delegation to the Republic of Moldova said: "Strong environmental journalism is also essential for Moldova's European integration. As Moldova moves forward on its EU accession path, the ability to ensure transparency, accountability, and open public dialogue becomes increasingly important."



The training course will combine theoretical sessions, debates, lectures by experts, and practical field activities, helping students develop solid skills in communicating about environmental topics and data-driven reporting. At the same time, students will learn more about climate change, the circular economy, and sustainable development.

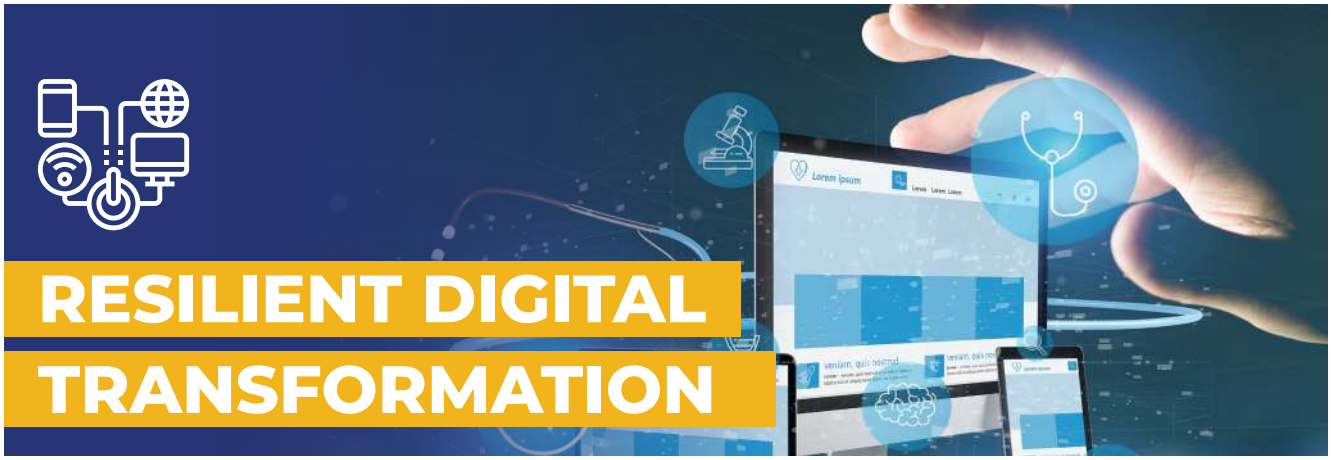
"From the Environmental Journalism course, I expect to learn how to write about environmental issues and how to inform people about the importance of protecting nature. I hope to learn how to write interesting and useful articles on this topic,"

notes Carolina Baracu, a 20-year-old student at Moldova State University.

"For me, this course is a good start to my career as a journalist. I hope to gain relevant information, interact with specialists in the field, and develop useful skills and knowledge,"

says Sergiu Guțu, a 21-year-old student at Moldova State University.

In the 2024-2025 school year, students from 87 schools studied energy and climate in modules integrated into subjects such as physics, geography, social studies, and personal development. These achievements were made possible thanks to modules developed with the support of the European Union and UNDP Moldova, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Environment, and the Presidency of the Republic of Moldova.



Moldova Cyber Summit 2025: Stronger Together

Moldova's path toward EU integration is increasingly defined by its ability to build a secure, trusted, and resilient digital society. The *Moldova Cyber Summit 2025: Stronger Together* brought this journey into focus, gathering leaders from government, critical infrastructure sectors, civil society, and international partners to discuss the country's most pressing cybersecurity priorities.

The two-day summit highlighted the central role of cybersecurity in Moldova's democratic resilience, economic development, and alignment with the European Union's digital standards. More than 150 participants from Moldova, EU institutions, Member States, and NATO explored how to strengthen national systems in an era where threats increasingly transcend borders.



Building a strong national foundation

The Summit showed how much progress Moldova has made in building a stronger cybersecurity system. Speakers highlighted that institutions now have clearer roles, coordination is improving, and practical measures are in place to manage incidents and protect critical services. Recent steps — such as adopting the Law on Cybersecurity, launching the Agency for Cybersecurity (ASC), and expanding STISC's operational functions — are already making the national system more effective.

Participants also pointed out that Moldova is steadily aligning with the European cybersecurity framework, including NIS2, DORA, and new resilience requirements. Support from EU initiatives like the Cyber Solidarity Act and various regional programmes is helping Moldova turn these rules into real capabilities, especially in preparing for hybrid threats, disinformation, and attempts to disrupt public institutions.

Representatives from sectors such as justice, energy, internal affairs, and digitalisation stressed that continued investment in skills, procedures, and support for essential service providers will remain crucial as Moldova advances toward EU standards.

Throughout the Summit, it was clear that Moldova's progress is strengthened by cooperation with partners across the region. Joint exercises, expert exchanges, and shared experience all contribute to better preparedness and a stronger sense of belonging to the wider European cybersecurity community.

Human-centred cybersecurity

Beyond policy and technology, the Summit placed significant emphasis on people. Several discussions underlined the importance of cyber awareness, media literacy, and trusted communication as essential elements of societal resilience.

Panels explored how informed citizens serve as the first line of defence, how the private sector supports safe digital adoption, and how law enforcement and civil society collaborate to counter online harms. Topics such as election security, personal data protection, and combating disinformation emerged as interconnected challenges tied to maintaining public trust.

As Moldova prepares for upcoming electoral cycles and deepens its cooperation with the EU, speakers emphasised the importance of early preparation, coordinated communication, and close collaboration between electoral authorities, cybersecurity teams, and state institutions.

Looking ahead

The Summit also marked the completion of the **EU-funded Moldova Cybersecurity Rapid Assistance project**, implemented by the **e-Governance Academy**, which provided essential support for strengthening institutions, improving procedures, training specialists, and building Moldova's broader cyber ecosystem.

Across all discussions, one message stood out: cybersecurity is now a core pillar of Moldova's European future. Strengthening institutions, aligning with European standards, investing in people, and fostering cooperation remain essential to building a secure and resilient digital Moldova.

Moldova fights online fraud with strategic awareness and training

Online fraud is rising fast. In a year, reported losses grew from 73 million lei to over 211 million lei, which is nearly triple. Online financial-banking crimes increased from 832 to 1,225 cases (+47%). The pattern is actually global; for example, Estonia registered 6,515 high-impact incidents in 2024, about double the year before.

In October, Moldova launched "Stop Fake Investments!", a nationwide campaign to strengthen cyber resilience and fight online financial crime. Led by the **General Police Inspectorate** together with the **e-Governance Academy** (eGA), the campaign was delivered under the **EU-funded Moldova Cybersecurity Rapid Assistance 2.0 project**.



Reaching people where they are

Most cyber incidents are driven by human error. An eGA study in Moldova reveals a critical gap between knowledge and action: 89% of respondents believe cybersecurity is important, yet 44% never change their passwords, and 33% let others use their smartphones even though they know the password.

To meet people in everyday places, the campaign used a behaviour-change approach and a broad media mix. From October to November, prevention messages ran on public transport, in stations and markets, in supermarkets and on radio, across social media and local TV, and even via police car announcements. The mix included 50,000 flyers, 1,000 booklets, placements in 11 localities, ads on 60 taxi LED screens in Chișinău, supermarket and top four radio spots, 25+ social posts, five explainer videos, and four influencer collaborations. In four weeks, the campaign reached 513,725 people online, generated 1.1M+ impressions, and drew coverage from 9 TV channels and 35 local media articles.

From awareness to safer habits

In parallel with the public campaign, eGA and the Moldcell Foundation ran the "Cyber Academy", a training series focused on practical cyber hygiene: using strong passwords, turning on multi-factor authentication (MFA), and keeping email accounts secure. Email was a special focus, as the primary inbox is the "master key" to a user's online life.

The programme focused on practical learning. The aim wasn't just to share information, but to help people change their habits and apply new skills. Success meant participants could actually do something different — like turning on MFA for their main email account or reporting phishing correctly at work. Between February and October 2025, the Cyber Academy ran 100 sessions and trained 1,638 participants.

With EU support, "Stop Fake Investments!" and the "Cyber Academy" worked together to close the gap between knowing and doing. The public campaign made risks visible in everyday places and gave people clear, simple steps. The training then helped participants turn those steps into habits, from setting up MFA to spotting and reporting phishing.

This mix matters because most incidents still come down to human error. When people know what to look for and practise what to do, services are safer, and losses fall.

The approach also showed the value of partnership. The National Police brought reach and credibility, eGA provided methods and content, and the Moldcell Foundation helped take practical skills to communities. Under the **EU-funded Moldova Cybersecurity Rapid Assistance 2.0 project**, these efforts supported the wider work to strengthen institutions and improve coordination. The task does not end here, but Moldova now has the tools, the partners, and a shared playbook to keep building resilience.

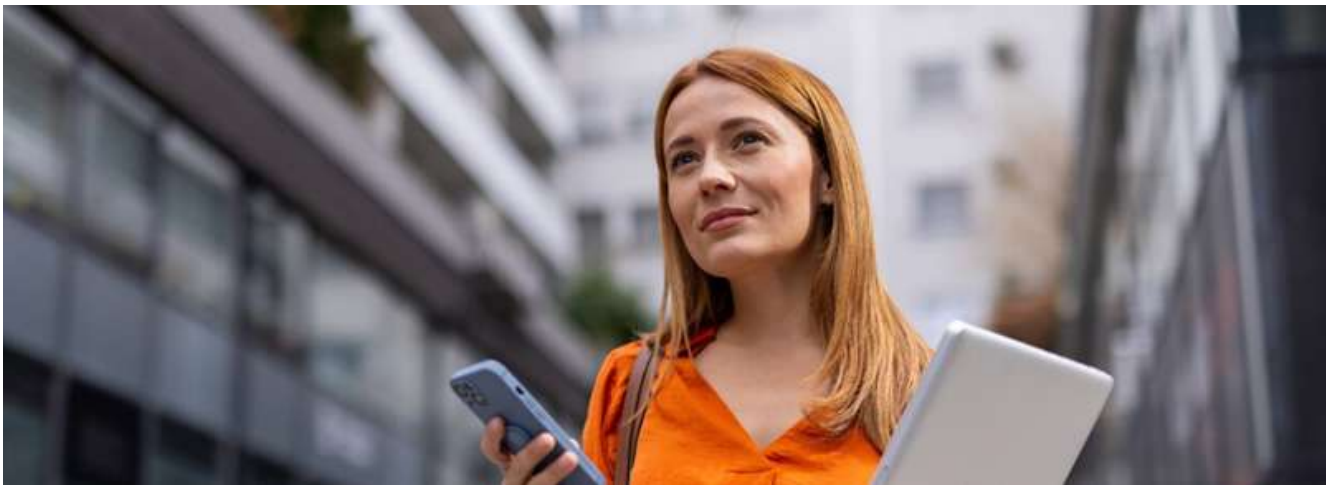


EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Digitalisation of Business' course now available from EU4Digital Academy

The EU4Digital Facility is delighted that its new, free-of-charge online course, on 'Digitalisation of Business', is now available through the EU4Digital Academy. It is available in English, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Romanian and Ukrainian.

This beginner-friendly course is designed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) stay competitive in today's fast-changing digital world. EU4Digital Academy is making this course available via the ATINGI platform for trainees from across the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region.



Course content and registration

Learn how to use affordable, easy-to-implement digital tools to streamline daily operations, improve customer experiences and drive long-term business growth – no technical background required!

The course is structured in eight practical modules covering everything from the basics of digitalisation and customer experience to advanced topics such as data analytics for small businesses, cybersecurity and emerging technologies for SMEs.

The course was co-developed with experts from European Union countries as well as EaP entrepreneurs, sharing their insights and best practices for SMEs to learn from.

Further information: 'Digitalisation of Business' course now available from EU4Digital Academy - EU4Digital

Towards competitive broadband: new EU4Digital access monitoring reports and recommendations

A new series of EU4Digital Facility reports show significant progress in fixed and mobile broadband services across the Eastern Partnership in 2021–2024. The 'Regional broadband access monitoring report', published in December 2025, highlights improvements and development needs, while country-specific reports give a comprehensive overview of broadband internet access in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova.



The annual EU4Digital broadband access monitoring reports support the Eastern partner countries with insights into regional, European and national broadband access trends, providing harmonised data for comparison with EU averages, and guiding policymakers and regulators in improving broadband access.

Regional broadband access

The latest regional report harmonises data collection indicators and methods and gives accurate comparisons between EU and Eastern partner countries. For this purpose, the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) framework was applied to collect quantitative data, in close cooperation with the Independence of Regulators and Broadband Development Expert Working Group (IRB EWG) of the Eastern Partnership Electronic Communications Regulators (EaPeReg), and as part of an annual data collection and reporting cycle.

The report highlights quantitative developments based on this data. Where applicable, each country's distinct market structure for mobile broadband was taken into account. In addition, information on qualitative developments for 2024 was collected from public sources and confirmed by the relevant national stakeholders.

This regional report not only reveals significant progress in fixed and mobile broadband services in 2021–2024, but also identifies the need for further development, for example in 5G technology availability and in the uptake of high-speed fixed broadband.

Also, comparison with EU averages provides a benchmark for the Eastern partner countries to focus upon when developing fixed and mobile broadband access.

Country-specific broadband access

EU4Digital prepared the separate but complementary country-specific reports in collaboration with the National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova as well as members of the IRB EWG.

Further information: Towards competitive broadband: new EU4Digital access monitoring reports and recommendations - EU4Digital

Supporting fair competition: new EU4Digital Eastern Partnership broadband market report

A new EU4Digital Facility report provides an overview of broadband market structures, competitive conditions and regulatory needs across the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region. EU4Digital prepared the 'Regional report on broadband market analysis' in close cooperation with national regulators in Azerbaijan, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. The report, published in December 2025, supports EU4Digital and regional goals to promote investment, foster sustainable competition and advance broader digital integration.



Ensuring fair, efficient and future-ready broadband markets

Competitive broadband internet markets support lower prices, higher-quality services and sustainable infrastructure investment. Conversely, where a single operator controls essential broadband networks, competitors face barriers and consumers risk not enjoying the benefits of a competitive market. To address such challenges, the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC) requires regular broadband market analysis to be performed, to assess competition and identify any market shortcomings.

As Eastern partner countries advance their digital transformation, digital infrastructures and broadband access have become critical enablers of economic and social development. As they align their regulatory frameworks with EU standards, these countries must adopt the EECC-required market assessments.

As part of the harmonisation of market regulation and legislation with EU requirements, EU4Digital worked with Eastern partner country representatives to complete the regional report on the outcomes of a market analysis process.

Further information: Supporting fair competition: new EU4Digital Eastern Partnership broadband market report - EU4Digital

First Eastern Partnership regional analysis reports voice-call market barriers

A new EU4Digital Facility report reveals competition barriers in wholesale voice call termination (VCT) markets across the Eastern Partnership (EaP), based on the first coordinated regional assessment conducted with the national regulators of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The EU4Digital 'Voice call termination market analysis report', published in December 2025, shares a comprehensive overview, results and recommendations.



Voice call termination — the process that allows an operator to complete a call to another network — directly affects the price and quality of every phone call. Under the predominant connection scenario, each operator controls access to its own network: this means the market can easily become unbalanced, potentially leading to a lack of access opportunities, high charges and limited competition.

To support the Eastern partner countries in strengthening competition, improving pricing transparency, and in aligning with European Union rules on fair and cost-oriented wholesale charges, this report examines how operators charge each other to complete calls and why these fees matter for consumers and for a healthy electronic communications market.

Key findings from the regional assessment

Using a methodology based on common EU best practice, EU4Digital worked with representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in assessing their wholesale VCT markets. This work covered more than 180 fixed and mobile operators, offering the most complete regional overview to date. Moldova and Ukraine had recently completed their own national analyses, which were also included in the regional report.

Across all examined markets, the results show high and persistent barriers to competition. This means regulators need to maintain or introduce clear rules on access and pricing in order to prevent unfair charges and protect smaller operators. When termination fees are too high or applied inconsistently, consumers pay more and the market becomes less competitive.

By applying common rules and transparent pricing, Eastern partner countries can:

- lower call costs for end-users;
- ensure equal conditions for operators of all sizes;
- move closer to EU regulatory standards, including EU-wide caps on termination rates;
- pave the way for more regional cross-border cooperation, such as common roaming arrangements.

Further information: First Eastern Partnership regional analysis reports voice-call market barriers - EU4Digital



Leaving nobody behind: EU4Digital showcases achievements at EU4Youth Days 2025

The EU4Digital Facility presented its digital skills and transformation activities at the annual EU4Youth Days, on 8–9 October 2025 in Brussels, the flagship event for advancing employment, participation and education opportunities in the Eastern Partnership (EaP).

EU4Digital leader Arturas Piliponis explained how digital transformation is reshaping how organisations operate and compete, making digital and technical skills essential for both individuals and economies to stay relevant.



Around 150 EU4Youth programme participants and other attendees joined the event, including youth representatives, practitioners, decision-makers and stakeholders from European Union and Eastern partner countries. The EU4Youth Days discussions reflected the cross-cutting importance of education, inclusion and diversity, climate action, digital transformation and youth well-being, underlining the interconnectedness of the challenges and opportunities that young people face across the EaP region.

In speeches on digital transformation and skills development and on competitiveness and the EU4Digital Academy, Arturas Piliponis highlighted how international programmes that promote digital skills and women in tech often focus on inclusive, practical learning. This ensures that nobody is left behind in the rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Further information: https://eufordigital.eu/leaving-nobody-behind-eu4digital-showcases-achievements-at-eu4youth-days-2025/

Moldova in Motion: highlights from how to Web 2025

On 1-2 October, Moldova's innovation ecosystem took center stage at How to Web 2025, one of Eastern Europe's most influential platforms for tech founders, product builders, and investors. With support from EU4Innovation East and in collaboration with Startup Moldova, nearly 30 representatives from Moldova's startup landscape actively participated in the conference — showcasing bold solutions, forging new connections, and amplifying Moldova's visibility on the European tech map.



From the official Startup Pavilion to a dynamic country booth, Moldova's presence spotlighted the infrastructure, talent, and support driving its innovation. Founders, enablers, and strategic partners engaged in real-time dialogue, presented solutions, and forged valuable networks to advance cross-border collaboration and investment. The Country Stand served as a dynamic hub for exchange, while Moldovan startups demonstrated the creativity, resilience, and ambition fueling their growth.

This coordinated effort reflected Moldova's ambition to integrate more deeply into the European startup landscape — with EU4Innovation East providing strategic support for the ecosystem development.

A standout moment was the panel discussion "Is Moldova's Startup Ecosystem Picking Up?" on the Startup Stage. With startup funding doubling in 2024, the panel explored whether this marked sustained momentum or a temporary surge. Speakers unpacked ecosystem fundamentals, emerging success stories, and infrastructure investments shaping Moldova's future as a regional tech hub.

Throughout the event, Moldova made a powerful impression — with 15 ambitious startups fueling the momentum:

Showcased at the Country Booth: Fagura, OneSyncs, BravinAI, selftalk.space, Brizy, Argus AI, Eventino, Cardneto

Exploring, connecting, and attending: GemsAround.com, Index MIND, ISHIP, AI Mobile, Magic Wish, Sumboard

BravinAI's Top 5 finish among 20 pitching startups was a breakthrough that placed Moldova's deep tech talent firmly in the spotlight.

Together with Startup Moldova, EU4Innovation East proudly supported this showcase of creativity, resilience, and cross-border ambition. Moldova's presence at How to Web 2025 marked a movement toward deeper regional integration, stronger partnerships, and a future where Moldova is recognized as a tech hub in Eastern Europe.

EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

Moldova showcased its innovation strength at Web Summit Lisbon

Moldova's presence at Web Summit 2025 in Lisbon marked a significant milestone for the country's rapidly developing innovation ecosystem. Supported by the EU4Innovation East Project and other international and national partners, Moldova joined one of the world's most influential technology gatherings. This year's Web Summit brought together more than 71,000 participants from across the globe, offering an exceptional platform for visibility and international engagement. In this dynamic environment, Moldova's participation offered exceptional visibility, enabling local innovators to connect with international investors, potential partners, and high-level stakeholders.



Moldova's innovation landscape has expanded significantly in recent years, driven by a growing community of founders, active support organizations, and a strengthening digital infrastructure. The country has seen increased investment and a surge in tech talent, supported by national programs, international donors, and public–private partnerships that encourage innovation, digitalization, and entrepreneurship.

EU4Innovation East is actively contributing to this momentum by supporting ecosystem development, cross-border cooperation, startup acceleration, and access to international markets. Participation in global events such as Web Summit forms an integral part of these efforts, helping Moldovan startups gain exposure, validate their products, and integrate into international innovation networks.

This year, ten Moldovan startups represented the country at Web Summit, demonstrating the ambition and creativity driving Moldova's tech sector. With direct support from EU4Innovation East, five teams—ArgusAI, Eating AI, Vector Academy, Brizy, and gardy.me—presented their solutions in dedicated Startup Pods, attracting strong interest from global investors and industry leaders. Additional startups, including Fagura, Finergy Tech, Cardneto, DeepGuard, and City Farm, further underscored the diversity and maturity of the Moldovan tech scene.

The national stand — co-funded and supported by EU4Innovation East, together with Moldova Innovation Technology Park, USAID/UE-Moldova AEF, Innovate Moldova, GIZ Moldova, Invest Moldova Agency, and Startup Moldova—served as a central meeting point for showcasing Moldova's tech potential.

Throughout the event, visitors engaged with Moldovan founders, explored product demos, and learned firsthand about the country's emergence as a regional innovation hub, supported by competitive advantages such as the 7% single tax offered through Moldova Innovation Technology Park.

Across four days, Moldovan teams engaged in pitch sessions, strategic business meetings, and targeted networking, securing new partnerships and opportunities for expansion. Their participation reinforced Moldova's reputation as an agile and fast-growing ecosystem capable of competing internationally.

EU4Innovation East Supports Moldova's Tech Talent at MITP Awards 2025

EU4Innovation East proudly joined the MITP Awards 2025 Gala as a Strategic Partner for the Best Startup category, reaffirming its commitment to strengthening Moldova's innovation ecosystem and connecting local talent to regional and global opportunities.



The MITP Awards, now in its second edition, has quickly become a flagship competition for Moldova's tech sector. Organized by the Moldova Innovation Technology Park, the Gala brought together founders, investors, industry leaders, and diaspora professionals to celebrate excellence and innovation. An international jury evaluated projects based on originality, applicability, scalability, and impact, selecting five winners from among the country's most promising initiatives. Each finalist received €3,000 in funding and access passes to leading global tech events, underscoring the competition's role as a launchpad for Moldovan startups.

EU4Innovation East was honoured to support the recognition of Argus AI, winner of the Best Startup award. By combining artificial intelligence and Mixed Reality, Argus AI empowers surgeons with enhanced precision, visibility, and safety during complex procedures.

Other winners included KeyIVR for Best Product Innovation, Orange Systems for Best Service Innovation, Endava for Impactful Initiative of the Year, and MEGA Promoting for the Special Jury Prize. Together, these projects showcased Moldova's creativity, technical expertise, and growing alignment with European digitalization trends.

Marina Bzovîi, Administrator of MITP, emphasized that the Awards highlight Moldova's ability to deliver world-class solutions: "The world's best solutions are created here and reach global markets, from America to Asia."

As Deputy Director Charles Mathiaux stated, "MITP Awards are a clear proof that Moldova's tech ecosystem is evolving rapidly. We are proud to help connect these initiatives to regional networks and opportunities, so their solutions can reach as far as possible."

Through strategic partnerships like MITP Awards, EU4Innovation East ensures that Moldova's entrepreneurs gain visibility, resources, and pathways to scale their solutions internationally.

MITP Awards was organized by MITP, supported by the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, in partnership with maib, Innovate Moldova, UMAEF and EU4Innovation East.

Capital market specialists consolidate capacities in Digital Operational Resilience

Over 20 participants from the National Commission for Financial Markets (NCFM), the Single Central Depository, commercial banks and other capital market representatives, participated in a training session dedicated to the legal framework and the main provisions of the Regulation on digital operational resilience for the financial sector (DORA). The event was organised in the framework of the EU-funded project "Moldova is Europe – Support for EU Integration."

In his opening speech, the EU High Level Adviser on Financial Services, Nicolae Grigore, emphasized the importance of the implementation of DORA in the Republic of Moldova, in the context of the need to ensure increased protection for financial institutions against cyber risks and incidents that may affect the stability of the financial system. "The application of the DORA Regulation represent an essential step for the modernization and consolidation of the financial sector, alignment with European standards, and the advancement of the accession process to the European Union. The implementation of this regulation will ensure that the financial system in the Republic of Moldova will comply with the same rules and digital resilience standards applicable to the EU Member States."

The information session was delivered by Tudor Doman, Expert on EU Digital Finance Regulations within the project. He shared Romania's experience in the process of applying the Regulation on digital operational resilience in the financial sector, after which participants had the possibility to address questions and receive practical answers.



EU-Moldova
Stronger Together

EU supports gender-responsive public service digitalisation in Moldova

Drivers in the Republic of Moldova will reap the benefits of driver examination and vehicle registration services tailored to men's and women's diverse needs, following extensive analytical and advisory support for the State Chancellery and the Public Services Agency by the EU4GenderEquality Reform Helpdesk project, funded by the European Union and implemented by NIRAS.

This support will make the digitalisation of these services more gender-responsive – including recommendations to mainstream gender in Draft Government Decision No. 177. The Reform Helpdesk's support between July and September 2025 contributed to embedding gender equality principles within this strategically important area of public service digitalisation, ensuring that it promotes fairness, equal access and inclusive development for all citizens.

To assist Moldovan authorities in addressing gender disparities in driving tests, driver documentation and vehicle registration services, the Reform Helpdesk first conducted a comprehensive gender analysis. This began by examining Moldova's legal and strategic framework on gender equality, as well as the institutional context governing driver examination and documentation services. It then assessed how national gender equality commitments intersect with digitalisation reforms, identifying gaps and opportunities for integrating a gender perspective into service modernisation.

Subsequent chapters of the gender analysis explored gender disparities in theoretical and practical driving tests, patterns of access to driver documentation, and trends in annual vehicle registrations. Its findings reveal differences in pass rates, access barriers and ownership patterns among women and men. The analysis also assessed the fairness and accessibility of complaint and appeal procedures, as well as gender-specific risks of service digitalisation, including digital literacy gaps and unequal access to digital tools.

Based on this evidence, the Reform Helpdesk conducted a targeted gender impact assessment. This evaluated how proposed reforms under Draft Government Decision No. 177, on the digitalisation and modernisation of driver examination and vehicle registration services, might affect women and men differently. These efforts culminated in tailored recommendations to mainstream gender in the draft decision, including measures to ensure digital accessibility for all users, improve gender-responsive data collection, incorporate safeguards for non-discriminatory evaluation, and strengthen monitoring mechanisms.

The State Chancellery and the Public Services Agency welcomed the clarity, relevance, and practical value of the Reform Helpdesk's findings and recommendations.

> *"We appreciate the attention to detail and professional approach that ensured the quality of the final result,"*
>
> ***said Țurcanu Drăgălina, Head of the Policy Coordination and Project Management Department at the State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova.***

> *"The result obtained reflects the professionalism and of the team and represents a valuable contribution to the consolidation of joint activities."*

Both institutions reaffirmed their commitment to continuing to integrate a gender perspective in future reforms and policy documents.



This newsletter is produced within the framework of the project "EU Visibility and communication in the Republic of Moldova 2025-2026". The project is funded by the European Union and implemented by the GOPA PACE S.A.

Contact data:

The European Union Delegation to the Republic of Moldova:
Delegation-Moldova@eeas.europa.eu

Editorial team:

Svetlana Japalau, Team Leader,
svetlana.japalau@eu4moldova.eu

Natalia Ionel, Key Expert,
natalia.ionel@eu4moldova.eu

The content of this publication is the exclusive responsibility of the GOPA PACE S.A. and the editorial team, and it does not in any way reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

EU-MOLDOVA: STRONGER TOGETHER