EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 4.11.2025
SWD(2025) 758 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Republic of Moldova 2025 Report

Accompanying the document

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

2025 Communication on EU enlargement policy

{COM(2025) 690 final} - {SWD(2025) 750 final} - {SWD(2025) 751 final} - {SWD(2025) 752 final} - {SWD(2025) 753 final} - {SWD(2025) 754 final} - {SWD(2025) 755 final} - {SWD(2025) 756 final} - {SWD(2025) 757 final} - {SWD(2025) 759 final}

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1. INTRODUCTION[1]

1.1 CONTEXT

On 3 March 2022, the Republic of Moldova ('Moldova') applied for EU membership. Following the Commission's recommendation in November 2023, the European Council decided in December 2023 to open accession negotiations with Moldova. The first Intergovernmental Conference marking the formal launch of the accession negotiations was held on 25 June 2024. Moldova has continued to progress on the path to EU accession. The bilateral screening meetings, which began in July 2024, finished in September 2025.

The October 2024 constitutional referendum anchored EU integration in the Moldovan Constitution. The country held parliamentary elections on 28 September. Moldova has continued to face unprecedented challenges as a result of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, attempts by Russia and its proxies to destabilise the country, and threats to its energy supply and security. Despite this, Moldova has shown resilience and commitment to reforms. The first ever EU-Moldova Summit was held in Chișinău on 4 July 2025, highlighting the strategic importance of Moldova's future within the EU.

As part of the Moldova Growth Plan to support economic transformation and EU integration, the EU has committed a substantial support package of EUR 1.9 billion from 2025-2027 through the Reform and Growth Facility for Moldova[1], adopted in March 2025. Moldova continues to implement the EU-Moldova Association Agreement (AA), including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).

The EU remains fully committed to Moldova's territorial integrity and to the peaceful resolution of conflict, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders. The DCFTA applies to the entire territory of Moldova.

1.2 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

CLUSTER 1: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ACCESSION PROCESS

Democracy

The existing framework provides an adequate foundation for holding democratic elections, in line with international standards. Both rounds of the presidential elections held on 20 October and 3 November 2024, the constitutional referendum on EU accession on 20 October, and the parliamentary elections on 28 September 2025 were well-managed despite unprecedented foreign interference, according to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). OSCE/ODIHR concluded that the 2025 parliamentary elections were competitive and offered voters a clear choice among political alternatives, despite the aforementioned

[1] This report covers the period from 1 September 2024 to 1 September 2025. It is based on input from a variety of sources, including contributions from the government of Moldova, EU Member States, European Parliament reports and information from various international and non-governmental organisations. It also includes the results of comparative assessments and indices produced by other stakeholders, in particular in the area of rule of law.

The report uses the following assessment scale to describe the state of play: early stage, some level of preparation, moderately prepared, good level of preparation and well advanced. To describe progress made during the reporting period, it uses the following scale: backsliding, no progress, limited progress, some progress, good progress and very good progress. Where appropriate, interim steps have also been used.

foreign interference. In addition, extensive disinformation, particularly on social media, and partisan coverage in most media hindered voters' ability to make an informed decision, and decisions to ban two parties on the eve of elections limited legal certainty. The elections were held under the new provisions of the Electoral Code, in force since January 2023, which was deemed a sound basis for democratic elections. Foreign interference in electoral processes remains a concern and Moldova worked to address it, including by strengthening legal tools such as the Law on Combating Electoral Corruption, which needs to be brought in line with European standards. However, frequent changes to the legislation reduced legal certainty, including in the context of the September elections, and are a challenge to effective implementation. Moldova should nevertheless further align its legislation pertaining to elections and its electoral processes with European and international standards and implement all unaddressed recommendations by the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR. The Central Electoral Commission (CEC) should be provided with the necessary resources to ensure it can function properly, in particular for monitoring online campaigning.

Parliament can overall exercise its powers in an effective way. Further efforts are needed to increase parliamentary transparency, accountability, integrity and overall effectiveness. This includes enhancing the use of oversight tools and ensuring the timely and comprehensive publication of activities, decisions, draft laws and accompanying documents. Moldova should accelerate the adoption of the Code on the Organisation and Functioning of Parliament and of the Law on the status, conduct and ethics of MPs. Moldova should set up a specialised standing committee on European integration and adopt annual legislative plans. A broader regulation of Parliament's responsibilities concerning European integration efforts is needed, particularly in relation to its oversight of the government.

The institutional arrangements for **EU integration** are mostly in place. In May 2025, Moldova adopted the 2025-2029 National Programme for the Accession of Moldova to the EU, the main document for planning and monitoring the fulfilment of the obligations arising from the accession negotiations. The government needs to further strengthen the capacity of its EU coordination structures.

The ***government*** continued implementing EU integration policies, while countering foreign hybrid activities and destabilisation attempts. Steps were taken to improve coordination mechanisms for policy planning and to mainstream EU accession-related policy making into government planning. Legislative provisions on the transparency of decision making should be implemented more efficiently. Despite some improvement, the limited capacity of public administration impedes fully efficient policy implementation. The capacity of ministries to systemically oversee policy implementation and address recommendations of the independent institutions should be further strengthened. Implementation of the local government reform should be accelerated.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) operate in an overall enabling environment. The regulatory framework governing the establishment and functioning of CSOs is in line with European standards, but continuous efforts to improve the transparency in decision-making processes and public participation, at both central and local levels, are essential for the sustainable development of civil society.

Public administration reform

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the area of public administration reform and **some progress** has been made. The Parliament approved the first two voluntary amalgamation processes by amending the law on territorial organisation of the country, after many

preparatory and complementary activities undertaken at the local level in 2024/2025. Some improvements in the areas of civil service, strategic planning and policy design, accountability, and service delivery were achieved at the central level of administration.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ adopt a consistent and transparent regulatory framework for central public institutions, supported by effective implementing legislation;
→ enhance the capacities of local public administrations through consolidation mechanisms, notably voluntary territorial amalgamation;
→ strengthen the human resource capacity of the Ministry of Finance and consolidate the internal audit subdivisions across ministries and other central public authorities.

Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights

Moldova has **some level of preparation** and has made **some progress** in the area of judiciary, the fight against corruption and fundamental rights.

Functioning of the judiciary

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the area of the judiciary. The country made **good progress** in reforming the justice sector. The vetting and appointment of top judges and prosecutors continued. The specialised bodies of the Superior Council of Prosecutors are in full composition with vetted members, while appointments to the specialised bodies of the Superior Council of Magistracy are ongoing. Sufficient resources for these bodies must be guaranteed to ensure their effective functioning. Appointments to the Supreme Court of Justice from vetted candidates are still ongoing. This is delaying the implementation of the new regulatory framework on the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice. In parallel, the vetting process for other categories of top judges and prosecutors is ongoing. The new judicial and prosecutorial maps have entered into force, and their implementation is ongoing. More efforts are needed to reduce the length of proceedings across all areas and improve low clearance rates, in particular in criminal cases.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ finalise the vetting and appointment of judges especially the Supreme Court of Justice, as well as specialised bodies of the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Courts of appeal, and continue vetting prosecutors from prosecutorial institutions including specialised prosecutors' offices;

→ improve the functioning of the National Institute of Justice by implementing all the outstanding 2022 TAIEX recommendations, develop human resource strategies for the judiciary and prosecution services, including a comprehensive salary reform, and implement the judicial and prosecutorial maps;

→ introduce a randomised case allocation system for prosecutors based on strict and objective criteria;

→ significantly improve clearance rates and disposition time in courts.

Fight against corruption

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the fight against corruption and has achieved **some progress**. The track record in the fight against corruption has improved. On the

prevention of corruption, Moldova adopted amendments which strengthened the powers of the National Integrity Authority to enhance asset declarations, verifications and confiscations. However, interoperability between automated verification systems and state registries must still be strengthened and the services sufficiently staffed. A draft law to dissolve the two anti-corruption and organised crime prosecution institutions and create a new specialised prosecutor's office was discussed in Parliament but never adopted. The capacities of the relevant anti-corruption institutions should be strengthened and their cooperation reinforced, including clarifying the respective jurisdiction of territorial prosecutor's offices and the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office. Targeted risk assessments and specific measures are needed to address corruption in the most vulnerable sectors.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ continue proactive and efficient anti-corruption investigations leading to a positive track record of investigations, prosecutions and final judgements at all levels; and further strengthen the independence, integrity and operational capacity of prosecution services;

→ amend legislation to provide for the mandatory vetting of all judges of the specialised anticorruption panels, including in the first instance panels by the relevant vetting commission, step up cooperation between the Anti-corruption Prosecutor's Office, the National Anti-corruption Centre and law enforcement agencies and continuously monitor the capacity of all institutions engaged in anti-corruption processes to exercise their competences and provide sufficient resources for their functioning;

→ implement the ODIHR opinion and guidance on transparency and accountability, and pending Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) recommendations including as regards strengthening the capacity and functioning of the National Integrity Authority (NIA) to effectively verify the assets and personal interests of high-level public officials and reach full alignment of the legal framework on whistleblower protection with the EU acquis.

Fundamental rights

The legislative and institutional framework is largely in place. Implementation of the national human rights action programme is ongoing. Detention conditions remain a concern, as does the treatment of people with disabilities in specialised institutions. Efforts to combat gender-based violence should continue.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ improve interinstitutional cooperation, especially with the Equality Council and the People's Advocate Office, and ensure that adequate resources are available;

→ improve detention conditions to implement judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and address all the recommendations of the 2023 report of the Committee on the Prevention of Torture, including by improving medical treatment of persons deprived of their liberty;

→ adopt the National Social Inclusion Programme of People with Disabilities, step up safe deinstitutionalisation of adults and children with disabilities through community-based solutions; strengthen the institutional capacities, data management, funding and implementation of the national programmes on gender equality and gender-based violence.

Freedom of expression

Moldova **between having some and a moderate level of preparation** in freedom of expression and has made **good progress,** notably in adopting new legislation on access to information, implementing the law on the Media Subsidy Fund, amending the audiovisual media services code (AVMSC) and on advertising, as well as on the protection of journalists. Rules for selecting members of the public service broadcaster and the Audiovisual Council have been reviewed. Media ownership concentration and political influence persist. The intimidation of journalists by private actors has increased, and no notable progress has been made on the protection of journalists in practice. Moldova worked intensively to address foreign interference and information manipulation (FIMI), however continuous vigilance is needed to ensure that efforts to counter FIMI are aligned with European standards on freedom of expression and opinion.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partly implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ review the mechanism allowing the withdrawal of the licences of TV/radio channels under the law on strategic investment to bring it in line with the EU *acquis* and international standards and extend the ownership transparency requirements to online and print media;

→ adopt a new Law on mass media to improve the regulatory framework on freedom of expression, including print and online media (transparency);

→ ensure adequate protection of journalists against intimidation and attacks, including thorough law enforcement investigations.

Chapter 24: Justice, freedom and security

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in aligning with the EU *acquis* in the area of justice, freedom and security. **Some progress** was made during the reporting period by continuing to improve the legal alignment and to strengthen the strategic and institutional frameworks, including by revising the general home affairs strategy for 2022-2030, as well as interinstitutional cooperation and coordination.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ adopt the Integrated State Border Management Programme 2025 – 2030 in line with the European IBM methodology to improve legal and irregular migration management capacities and coordination mechanisms, as well as border management;
→ further align the legal framework with EU *acquis* on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting victims.
→ strengthen the legal framework and institutional capacity for assessing risks and fighting cyber-enabled crime.

Fight against serious and organised crime

Moldova is **between having some and a moderate level of preparation** and has made **good progress** in implementing the EU *acquis* in this area. In particular, Moldova increased operational cooperation including through data exchange via SIENA. It also continued fighting against firearms and drugs trafficking. The objectives of the EU action plan on firearms trafficking continue to be met, while the country also increased the physical security and stockpile safety. The 2026-2030 national policy document for small arms and

light weapons control was adopted in August 2025. Moldova made progress on putting in place the legal framework for the National Drugs Observatory and the national early warning system on the information exchange of new psychoactive substances. Further efforts are needed to ensure full operationality.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ align relevant legislation on fight against organised crime with the EU *acquis*, including on the investigation and criminalisation of money laundering as well as on asset recovery and confiscation;

→ continue improving the cooperation with EU Member States and EU institutions and agencies (including data exchange via SIENA and related collection, analysis and sharing across services, supported through the proactive use of information exchange tools) to address international cooperation requests;

→ continue to operationalise the national focal point on firearms and put in place a National Early Warning System on new psychoactive substances and an operational National Drugs Observatory.

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

The existence of a functioning market economy

Moldova has **some level of preparation** and has made **good progress** in creating a functioning market economy. Despite a challenging external environment, the authorities remain committed to pursuing macroeconomic stability and submitted the second economic reform programme in January 2025. The adoption of a law on strengthening economic governance is still pending. Economic growth in 2024 has stalled, with the current account deficit experiencing a significant widening as it continues to be affected by structural vulnerabilities. Moldova has continued advancing fiscal structural reforms, notably to improve public investment management and spending efficiency, while no decisive steps have been taken to consolidate tax expenditures. The banking sector remains well capitalised and stable, and credit growth expanded; however, financial intermediation remains low. A large informal economy and slow progress on the reform of state-owned enterprises limits the quality of the business environment. Employment growth started to lose steam due to economic slowdown, while reforms to support female participation helped to mitigate the effect on female employment.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ pursue fiscal policy aimed at achieving prudent medium-term fiscal positions and ensuring debt sustainability, while increasing public investments, notably through the Growth Plan, broadening the tax base including through reducing the scope of tax expenditures and improving spending efficiency;

→ ensure a timely implementation of economic policy reforms, with the support of international financial organisations, encompassing all Growth Plan, EU enlargement and other economic policy commitments, reduce vulnerability to external shocks including through efforts to extend and diversity the export base and improve business regulations and competition in key sectors while speeding up the state-owned enterprise reform including by finalising the digitalisation of the public property registry, selecting

independent board members and launching the preparations for the privatisation of selected SOEs to implement the triage;

→ continue efforts to address informal employment, including by identifying ways to incentivise formal employment.

The capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union

Moldova is **between an early stage of preparation and having some level of preparation** and has made **some progress** to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the EU. The government has taken steps to improve the quality of education and expand vocational and educational training offers; however, the shortage of both low and high skilled labour, low levels of FDI and innovation negatively affect the country's competitiveness. Significant efforts were made to improve energy security, particularly through domestic renewable energy production, and digitalisation levels continue to increase. However, investment needs, notably in quality infrastructure, remain significant. Integration with the EU continues to deepen but Moldova's trade performance continues to be affected by its narrow export base.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ address the skills mismatch, notably by advancing on the curriculum and dual-education reform and setting up regular public-private dialogues to better assess labour market needs;

→ increase public investment, including through the Growth Plan, especially in infrastructure, to further improve energy security, climate resilience and to facilitate domestic and cross-border trade;

→ step up measures to promote foreign direct investment, especially in the tradable sectors, and increase efforts to promote innovation, including by technology transfers.

Chapter 5 - Public procurement

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the area of public procurement, and **some progress** has been made. Implementation of the National Programme for the Development of the Public Procurement System for 2023-2026 is ongoing. Legislation on concessions was adopted, and the Law on public-private partnerships was amended.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ develop implementing legislation in anticipation of the entry into force of the Law on public procurement in January 2027);

→ implement the National Programme for the Development of the Public Procurement System, with a focus on professionalisation and centralisation;

→ speed up the design and development of the new electronic procurement system.

Chapter 18 - Statistics

Moldova has **some level of preparation** on statistics. The country made **good progress** over the reporting period, in particular by presenting the results of the 2024 population and housing census and increasing institutional capacity. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has strengthened the integration of administrative and privately held data into

statistical production. Data transmission to Eurostat remains limited, but with a clear upward trend continuing.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ align the produced statistics with the EU acquis, in particular the macro-economic domain;

→ increase the use of administrative and privately held data in producing official statistics;

→ set up a functional statistical geodatabase on the basis of the 2024 Population and Housing Census.

Chapter 32 - Financial control

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the area of financial control. **Good progress** was achieved, notably with the ratification of the 1929 Geneva Convention on the suppression of counterfeiting of currency. Moldova also finalised the appointment of an anti-fraud coordination body and set up an anti-fraud coordination network. The efficiency of parliamentary oversight of public funds management needs to improve.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ ensure the full organisational, functional, and financial independence of the Court of Accounts (CoA) by adopting necessary legislation

→ implement the newly ratified 1929 Geneva Convention on the suppression of counterfeiting of currency;

→ ensure the full operationalisation of the anti-fraud coordination service (AFCOS) and the national anti-fraud coordination network, making them effective in practice.

CLUSTER 2: INTERNAL MARKET

Chapter 1 - Free movement of goods

Moldova is **moderately prepared** in the area of the free movement of goods. **Some progress** was made during the reporting period, with Moldova adopting further legislation related to the principle of mutual recognition of goods legally traded in the EU. Additionally, operational assessment of several institutions from the quality infrastructure sector was carried out and Moldova made progress on capacity building.

The Commission's recommendation from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ continue to screen legislation and administrative practices in non-harmonised areas and prepare a strategy to ensure compliance with Articles 34-36 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) case law;

→ align with the EU acquis on tractors (agricultural, forestry);

→ strengthen quality infrastructure, in line with Action Plan for implementing the Industrialisation Program in standardisation, conformity assessment and accreditation. quality infrastructure, in line with Action Plan for implementing the Industrialisation Program in standardisation, conformity assessment and accreditation.

Chapter 2 - Freedom of movement for workers

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the freedom of movement for workers. **Good progress** was made during the reporting period by signing further bilateral agreements on social security coordination with EU Member States and continuing the preparatory work to join the European Network of Employment Services (EURES) upon accession. Moldova also signed a cooperation agreement with the European Labour Authority.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ align national legislation with the EU *acquis* on access for EU citizens to the labour market

→ conclude additional agreements on social security coordination, in particular with EU Member States, and develop IT infrastructure for the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI), as well as administrative capacity in view of joining the future EESSI Network;

→ continue the preparatory work for joining EURES upon accession, including by reinforcing the Public Employment Service's IT infrastructure.

Chapter 3 - Right of establishment and freedom to provide services

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the area of the right of establishment and freedom to provide services. **Good progress** was made, notably by further aligning with the Services Directive.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ align its legal framework with the Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications, especially with the minimum training requirements for professions benefiting from automatic recognition;

→ align national legislation with the Proportionality Test Directive;

→ align national sectoral legislation with the EU Services Directive.

Chapter 4 - Free movement of capital

Moldova is **moderately prepared** in the area of free movement of capital. **Good progress** was made during the reporting period, particularly, by strengthening the capacities of the AML Office within the Financial Intelligence Unit and by upgrades on three FATF recommendations. Moldova's application to join the geographical scope of the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) schemes was also approved by the European Payments Council.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ continue the gradual liberalisation of capital movements including on foreign exchange operations;

→ continue strengthening the institutional capacity of the Office for Prevention and Combating of Money Laundering within the Financial Intelligence Unit and enforce sanctions for non-compliance with beneficial ownership obligations;

→ continue addressing the remaining technical deficiencies identified in the FATF Recommendations and introduce further legislative and institutional reforms to facilitate AML/CFT regulation and supervision of virtual asset service providers.

Chapter 6 - Company law

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in company law. **Good progress** was made during the reporting period, including advancing on the implementation of the roadmap for strengthening the administrative capacity of the Public Services Agency, the updated State Register of Legal Entities, amendments to national legislation on shareholder rights, single member companies, financial reporting and audit legislation, company reporting and transparency on capital markets.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ revise legislation on insolvency and bankruptcy procedures.

→ align with the EU *acquis* on takeover bids, cross-border conversions, mergers and divisions,

→ improve the capacity and independence of the audit oversight systems.

Chapter 7 - Intellectual property law

Moldova is **moderately prepared** in the area of intellectual property rights (IP). **Some progress** was made during the reporting period, notably on copyright and related rights. The State Agency on Intellectual Property (AGEPI) continued cooperation with the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO).

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ adopt legislation to improve the enforcement of IPR;

→ improve collective rights management to safeguard appropriate royalty payments;

→ increase the administrative and institutional capacity of the AGEPI and continue to take advantage of collaboration with the EUIPO to improve aligning legislation and enhancing enforcement.

Chapter 8 - Competition policy

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the area of competition policy. **Some progress** was made during the reporting period, notably with the further amendments to the Law on competition and to the legislative framework on antitrust, mergers and State aid through the adoption of regulations on the Competition Council and merger control.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ further align the legislative framework with the EU acquis on antitrust and mergers, in particular on the dismissal of the members of the Board of the Competition Council and the level of fines which can be imposed and the overall empowerment of the Competition Council to be more effective enforcers;

→ further align the legislative framework with the EU acquis on State aid, increase the transparency of State aid, further align State aid schemes in place with the EU acquis and ensure the state aid registry is updated and fully operational, requiring all state aid, including de minimis aid, to be reported digitally;

→ continue to strengthen the administrative and institutional capacity of the Competition Council including by deploying an e-case management system and integrating forensic IT tools for inspections consistent with EU standards while also by ensuring adequate resources, training, and autonomy to effectively enforce competition laws.

Chapter 9 - Financial services

Moldova **has some level of preparation** in the area of financial services. It made **some progress** in the reporting period by adopting central bank regulations to partially align with the EU Solvency II Directive.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ continue efforts to align legislation with the EU *acquis* related to the regulation of the banking sector, including bank recovery and resolution and bank deposit guarantee schemes;

→ advance efforts for alignment with the EU acquis on insurance and occupational pensions, including Solvency II and the Motor Insurance Directive;

→ continue efforts to align legislation with the EU acquis on securities markets, investment funds and investment services, financial market infrastructure and digital finance.

Chapter 28 - Consumer and health protection

Moldova is **between having some and a moderate level of preparation** in consumer and health protection. **Some progress** was achieved by launching the European Consumer Centre and developing digital tools for improving the collaboration between the authorities, such as the single phone number for consumers and the e-petitions platform. The national legislation was aligned with General Product Safety Regulation.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ continue to align the legal framework with the EU *acquis* on consumer protection and product safety, and improve cooperation between the public institutions dealing with consumer protection;

→ improve the quality of healthcare by implementing the National Health Strategy, with a focus on the digitalisation of health services and protection of personal data;

→ continue tackling the geographical and socio-economic divide in health services and ensure access for the most vulnerable groups (people with disabilities, older people, Roma, women, as well as people with multiple layers of vulnerability) by continuing to invest in rural healthcare and in retaining human capital.

CLUSTER 3: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Chapter 10 - Digital transformation and media

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in the area of digital transformation and media. **Good progress** was made during the reporting period as the government continued to implement the Digital Transformation Strategy 2023-2030 (MDTS) and notable progress was made on all key performance indicators. Legislative advancements were made in alignment with the EU roaming *acquis* and EU electronic identification requirements, while a normative framework for the implementation of the cybersecurity law was approved.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ implement the secondary legislation of the EU roaming *acquis*, including the European Electronic Communication Code, to allow for the integration of Moldova into the EU 'roam like at home' area;

→ ensure institutional capacity to continue implementing the priority areas under the MDTS 2023-2030, in particular to align legislation with data protection and cybersecurity standards, including with the EU's Toolbox for 5G cybersecurity;

→ adopt and implement media and digital services legislation in line with the EU *acquis*, including the EU Media Freedom Act and the Digital Services Act.

Chapter 16 - Taxation

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in taxation. **Good progress** was made in further aligning national legislation with the EU *acquis* in the areas of indirect and direct taxation, excise duties, and the digitalisation of tax administration services. Moldova further improved its capacity in administrative cooperation and mutual assistance.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partly implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ further align excise and VAT legislation with EU standards to minimise competitive distortions and legal uncertainties, and prevent issues such as non-taxation, double taxation, tax evasion, and fraud;

→ step up procedures to limit tax avoidance and increase tax revenue, in particular by aligning legislation with the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive (CFC rules) by developing a roadmap and implementing of BEPS provisions and by concluding a thorough, comprehensive review of the tax system;

→ continue modernising the tax administration, notably by implementing an automated compliance risk management system that supports voluntary and enforced compliance.

Chapter 17 - Economic and monetary policy

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in economic and monetary policy and made **some progress** in the reporting period. Steps to further strengthen central bank independence are still pending and recent amendments to the Single Central Securities Depository law raise concerns about monetary financing. Moldova advanced significantly on the ongoing public investment management reform which could help address the recurrent under-execution of planned expenditure and strengthen the reliability of fiscal planning. In January 2025, the country submitted its second Economic Reform Programme, which for the first time included an alternative macroeconomic scenario and estimates of the general government structural balance.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and therefore remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ continue strengthening central bank independence to prevent the interference from the government, Parliament and other third parties and also strengthen its governance and decision-making structure by adoption of the amendments to the central bank law;

→ amend its legal framework to fully comply with the prohibition of monetary financing, notably preventing the NBM's majority ownership of the stock exchange;

→ improve the capacity to produce macroeconomic and fiscal forecasts, including for long-term projections of expenditures required to conduct a debt sustainability analysis and in the areas of the labour market and the external sector.

Chapter 19 - Social policy and employment

The country is **between having some and a moderate level of preparation** in social policy and employment and made **good progress** during the reporting period. Measures were taken to increase employment and to strengthen cooperation between social assistance authorities and employment authorities.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ implement the measures set out in the concept paper on reforming the National Employment Agency to ensure adequate capacity;

→ ensure that the State labour inspectorate has the power to conduct unannounced inspection visits and eliminate limitations linked to the current law, in line with ILO conventions, also making sure that a monitoring system for inspection visits' recommendations is in place;

→ continue the reform of social assistance with a focus on the most vulnerable by ensuring recruitment and retention of 200 child protection specialists, and aligning the national legislation with EU acquis and standards on non-discrimination and equality, including gender equality.

Chapter 20 - Enterprise and industrial policy

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in enterprise and industrial policy. **Some progress** was made during the reporting period. Moldova continued implementation of the national programme for the promotion of entrepreneurship and increasing competitiveness for 2023-2027 and has started implementing the national industrialisation programme for 2024-2028 and National Smart Specialisation programme 2024-2027. The Programme on Administration of State Public Property for 2024-2027 was approved leading to the operationalisation of the state property strategy.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ streamline support to SMEs, digitalise the national Entrepreneurship Development Organisation (ODA) processes and strengthen its capacities in internal controls and risk management;

→ take further steps towards aligning with EU Late Payment Directive.

Chapter 25 - Science and research

Moldova is **moderately prepared** in the area of science and research. **Good progress** was made during the reporting period. Notably, the government advanced the implementation of the National Programme for Research and Innovation 2024-2027 and started implementing the National Program for Smart Specialisation 2024-2027 'Smart Moldova'.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ ensure the transparency of the competitive procedures under the Smart Specialisation Strategy, including through the involvement of independent international experts in evaluation processes;

→ increase the level of public investment in R&I and develop measures to tackle the pending recommendations from the 2016 and 2021 Horizon policy support facility reviews;

→ develop further training and capacity-building measures to enhance Moldova's participation in Horizon Europe in cooperation with the National Horizon Office.

Chapter 26 - Education and culture

Moldova is **moderately prepared** in the area of education and culture. **Good progress** was made during the reporting period as the authorities advanced reforms to enhance the relevance, quality and inclusiveness of education and consolidate the school network both in general education and in vocational education and training (VET). Challenges remain in the implementation of impactful reforms for inclusive education, as well as effective measures to reduce the mismatch between vocational skills and labour market demands.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ adopt measures to improve efficiency of public spending in education and direct resources towards strengthening the governance of the education system and the overall quality of education, including by implementing robust anti-corruption and anti-fraud measures in universities;

→ advance reforms to enhance quality and relevance of vocational education and training, contributing to reduce the mismatch between skills and labour market demands, by aligning active VET study programmes with qualification-based curricula, improving opportunities in dual VET, and increasing the number of teachers with digital skills, based on the DigiCompEdu framework;

→ advance inclusive education reforms to ensure equitable access to quality education for children with special educational needs, disabilities and social or economic vulnerabilities, including children from ethnic minorities.

Chapter 29 - Customs union

Moldova has a **good level of preparation** in the area of the customs union, especially in the area of legislative alignment. The country has made **good progress,** notably in aligning its customs transit declaration system to the EU's New Computerised Transit System (NCTS)**.** Institutional capacities have also been strengthened, and Moldova joined the Common Transit Convention (CTC) as of 1 November 2025. The country also adopted a government regulation for the establishment of a traceability system for tobacco products.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ approve a multi-annual strategic national IT programme for the Customs Service, as well as a work programme for the gradual deployment of digital solutions to enable a full digital customs environment and interoperability with the EU electronic customs environment while implementing the customs decision system (CDS), with 17 out of 17 applications/ authorisations operational;

→ optimise internal procedures and ensure appropriate delegation of powers between central and regional customs offices under the principle of a single legal entity, reducing the autonomy of regional customs offices;

→ take action on customs functions most vulnerable to corruption including periodic rotation of staff holding sensitive posts, and robust monitoring and evaluation of progress on anti-corruption measures.

CLUSTER 4: THE GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY

Chapter 14 - Transport policy

Moldova is **between having some level and a moderate level** of preparation in transport policy. **Some progress** was made in the reporting period, notably with the entry into force of the new Railway Code, and on the legislation concerning vehicle equipment and air passenger rights.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ continue aligning the social and market rules for road transport with the EU road transport acquis;

→ make further progress in developing sustainable urban mobility plans (SUMPS) according to EU methodology in anticipation of the urban nodes agenda of the TEN-T for enhanced connectivity;

→ continue progress to be removed from the blacklist of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control.

Chapter 15 - Energy

Moldova is **between a moderate and a good level of preparation** in this area and has made **very good progress** in the area of energy, including through the full alignment with the Electricity Integration Package, and the adoption on National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP). Despite the need to manage the supply crisis in the electricity sector, Moldova has accelerated reforms in electricity and gas sector. The government also developed an action plan, which foresees renewable energy and storage auctions.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should:

→ start implementing the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP);

→ advance the reform of the electricity market to be ready for market coupling with the EU in 2027, attract investments in balancing capacities, and launch the electricity balancing market;

→ attract investments in renewable energy sources and advance the energy efficiency program.

Chapter 21 - Trans-European networks

Moldova has **some level of preparation** in trans-European networks and made **some progress** such as starting as well as completing key feasibility studies to further align Moldova with the TEN-T network and some progress in the deployment of the European standard gauge.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should in particular:

→ continue accelerating the implementation of key infrastructure projects on Solidarity Lanes, in particular by rehabilitating the North-South railway corridor as well as projects approved under the Connecting Europe Facility calls of 2022 and 2023;

→ accelerate progress on key documents for the development of priority TEN-T road and rail corridors, including the feasibility study for the Chișinău ring road, the pre-feasibility

and feasibility studies for the Ungheni-Chișinău-Odesa road corridor, and for the Ungheni-Chișinău standard gauge rail connection.

Chapter 27 - Environment and climate change

Moldova is **between an early stage of preparation and having some level of preparation** in this chapter and made **some progress**. In the field on environment, Moldova adopted guidelines for the implementation of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and approved the establishment of the national inventory system of air pollutant emissions and the national integrated air quality monitoring system. Moldova published a new Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement in May 2025, with a slightly enhanced emission reduction target for 2030. Moreover, the National Energy and Climate Plan was approved and Moldova started working with the European Environment Agency as a Cooperating Country.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ complete the reforms of subordinated bodies under the Ministry of Environment and allocate the human and financial resources needed to increase policy and law enforcement;

→ align with and implement the Monitoring Reporting Verification and Accreditation (MRVA) acquis for the purpose of introducing carbon pricing and aligning with the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) in its full scope;

→ adopt a long-term low-emission development strategy and improve institutional and inter-agency coordination.

CLUSTER 5: RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE AND COHESION

Chapter 11 - Agriculture and rural development

Moldova is **between an early stage and having some level of preparation** in agriculture and rural development. **Some progress** was made during the reporting period to establish the integrated administration and control system (IACS) as well as to provide the institutional structure for managing the farm sustainability data network (FSDN).

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ take further steps to strengthen the administrative capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry and of the Agency for Interventions and Payments in Agriculture;

→ make progress in establishing the IACS, with a focus on rolling out the farm register, and establishing the FSDN;

→ continue developing farm advisory services and the EU agricultural knowledge and innovation system (AKIS).

Chapter 12 - Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy

Moldova has **a moderate level of preparation** on food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy and has made **some progress**, notably in boosting the capacities of the competent authorities by implementing its human resource development strategy and training programmes for Food Safety Agency staff and food business operators. Improvements were also recorded in the areas of animal health and the surveillance system for animal diseases.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ strengthen the diagnostic resources of the competent authorities and broaden the scope of the national monitoring and surveillance programme for food safety, animal feed and veterinary drugs to increase the level of assurance for animal origin products;

→advance alignment with the EU animal health and animal welfare legislation and prepare a national plan to upgrade establishments producing food, feed and animal by-products to meet EU structural standards;

→ strengthen the administrative capacities of the National Food Safety Agency (NFSA) for effective implementation and conduct out of efficient and risk-based official controls and continue to implement the NFSA human resource development strategy and specialised training programme for inspectors from local subdivisions;

Chapter 13 - Fisheries and aquaculture

Moldova has a **moderate level of preparation** in the area of fisheries and has made **good progress**, notably on aquaculture policy with the adoption of the law on aquaculture policy and the organisation of the market for fishery and aquaculture products in December 2024 and the preparation of a Strategic Programme for the Aquaculture Sector 2025–2030. It has also made progress on aligning quality and marketing standards with those under the EU common market organisation in fishery and aquaculture products and it has improved the traceability of fishery and aquaculture products and strengthened import inspections to prevent importation of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing through the above mentioned legislation.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and some remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ adopt the multiannual national strategic plan dedicated to aquaculture and implementing provisions;

→ implement the new legislation on aquaculture policy and the organisation of the market for fishery and aquaculture products.

Chapter 22 - Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments

Moldova has **a moderate level of preparation** on regional policy and coordination of structural instruments. **Some progress** was made in the reporting period, notably by setting up management and control structures for Interreg programmes.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ ensure it has sufficient administrative capacity to implement all cross-border and transnational cooperation (Interreg) programmes;

→ increase the efficiency of the management and control system for Interreg cooperation programmes, as well as audit structures specialised in auditing EU funds.

Chapter 33 - Financial and budgetary provisions

Moldova is **between an early stage and some level of preparation** in the area of financial and budgetary provisions. **Some progress** was made over the reporting period, addressing part of the recommendations from the previous enlargement report, especially by creating the Coordination Body for Own Resources.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ finish setting up and operationalise the Coordination Body for Own Resources;

→ continue upgrading the IT infrastructure for traditional own resources;

→ advance alignment with the EU *acquis*, particularly concerning VAT rules and GNI compilation.

CLUSTER 6: EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Chapter 30 - External relations

Moldova is **moderately prepared** in external relations and made **some progress**. Moldova amended the legislation on import licensing for agricultural products and brought it in line with the EU-Moldova Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) and WTO provisions. The law on the control regime of trade in strategic goods entered into force in January 2025.

The Commission's recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ align the functioning of the Council for the promotion of investment projects of national importance with international and EU standards;

→ build up the capacity of a new department for development cooperation within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and advance work on the legal framework on international cooperation, development and humanitarian aid to non-EU countries, in line with EU policies and principles.

Chapter 31 - Foreign, security and defence policy

Moldova has a **good level of preparation** in the area of foreign, security and defence policy. **Good progress** was made by continued intense political dialogue with the EU at all levels, significantly enhanced security and defence cooperation with the EU and its Member States and maintaining a high alignment rate with the EU's common foreign and security policy (CFSP). Moldova has further increased its participation in EU crisis management missions and operations under the common security and defence policy (CSDP).

The recommendations from last year were partially implemented and remain valid. In the coming year, Moldova should, in particular:

→ continue increasing the alignment with the CFSP, ensure that the restrictive measures are implemented and continue the good cooperation on preventing any attempts to circumvent sanctions against Russia and Belarus;

→ continue efforts to strengthen resilience to hybrid threats.

1.3 STATE OF PLAY OF THE ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS

Following the first Intergovernmental Conference opening accession negotiations with Moldova, the bilateral screening meetings that began on 10 July 2024 were concluded on 22 September 2025. The screening reports for all clusters except for cluster 5 have been presented to the Council.

2 CLUSTER 1: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ACCESSION PROCESS

2.1 FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM

2.1.1 Democracy

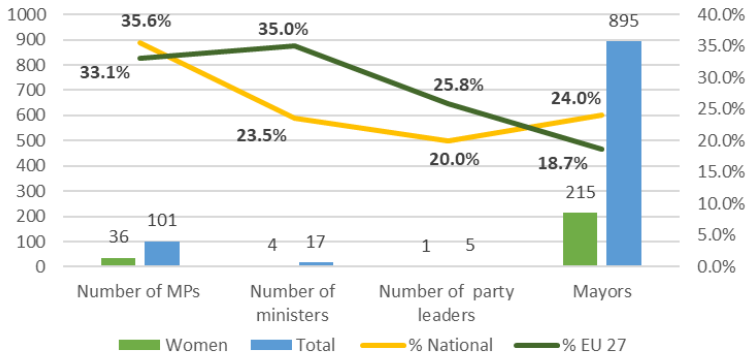
The functioning of democratic institutions is generally stable. Moldova continued to implement reforms, despite persistent foreign interference attempts and hybrid attacks on the democratic processes and institutions, and a notable degree of political polarisation. Presidential elections, a constitutional referendum on EU accession, and parliamentary elections took place during the reporting period. The authorities sought to balance measures to counter foreign interference with respect for the rule of law and fundamental rights.

Elections

Two rounds of presidential elections and a constitutional referendum on EU accession were held on 20 October 2024 and 3 November 2024 in a context of political polarisation and substantial foreign information manipulation and interference. According to the OSCE-ODIHR, fundamental freedoms were generally respected, and candidates were able to campaign freely, although the misuse of administrative resources was noted in 2024 and there was an increase in negative and hateful rhetoric, often with a gender-targeting angle. Legal remedies in cases of election disputes were limited. Overall, media coverage provided sufficient information to enable voters to make an informed choice. Due to security and disinformation concerns, the authorities blocked access to several websites and Telegram channels and suspended some media outlets.

The presidential election was conducted under the 2022 Electoral Code and its amendments, which provides a solid framework for democratic elections and implements many ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations. Amendments adopted in 2025 strengthened campaign finance regulations and oversight, clarified candidate nomination procedures, and revised the process for nominating CEC members to enhance impartiality. Amendments to the Law on postal voting expanded postal voting to four more countries.

Graph 1 : Moldova - Women in political life



Source: Parliament, Government, Public Services Agency, Central Election Commission (national); EU 27 - European Institute for Gender Equality

The Central Electoral Commission (CEC) operated in full composition (nine members). Electoral preparations were efficient, impartial and transparent, including the application of the Law on postal voting. In Gagauzia, the elections were administered by a temporary District Electoral Council, which was set up following the decision of the People's Assembly of Gagauzia to terminate the powers of the permanent CEC of Gagauzia.

Four out of 11 presidential candidates (36%) were women. Women constituted the majority (including at leadership level) of the election management bodies established at various levels, comprising the CEC, the District Electoral Councils, and the Precinct Electoral Bureaus.

Moldova held parliamentary elections on 28 September 2025. According to the preliminary report by the OSCE ODIHR election observation mission, the elections were competitive and offered voters a clear choice between political alternatives, although the process was marred by serious cases of foreign interference, vote-buying schemes, illegal funding, and cyberattacks. Extensive disinformation, particularly on social media and partisan coverage in most media hindered voters' ability to make an informed decision. The election authorities prepared professionally for the elections and were transparent in their work at all levels, although certain decisions by the Central Electoral Commission gave rise to doubts about its impartiality, while decisions in the days before elections banning two political parties limited legal certainty and their right to effective remedy. Election day was overall orderly and transparent. The recently revised legal electoral framework provided a sound basis for conducting democratic elections, although legislative changes shortly before the elections impacted legal certainty. The national authorities worked actively and in a coordinated manner to prevent, detect and counter foreign interference attempts, including illicit financing and vote-buying schemes, with the aim of safeguarding electoral integrity and democratic process.

Some OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission recommendations remain unaddressed, in particular those concerning the political balance of CEC members, the revision of criteria for de-registration of candidates, clarifying the grounds for suspending and dissolving political parties, and political party registration requirements including the criteria to define "successor parties", clearer provisions on the misuse of administrative resources, the extension of campaign finance regulations, transparency of ownership of print and online media, and rules for contesting election results. The regulation of campaign and political party financing creates a sufficient legal basis for financial accountability and integrity. Nonetheless, according to OSCE/ODIHR findings, the capacity of the CEC should be strengthened, and it should be provided with sufficient resources to ensure comprehensive and efficient campaign finance oversight, including for online campaigning, in line with OSCE/ODIHR recommendations. Moldova should ensure its legislative framework pertaining to elections, including the Law on combating electoral corruption, is brought in line with European standards.

Parliament

The draft rules of procedure of Parliament and the draft law on the status, conduct and ethics of members of parliament (MPs) should be adopted. Rules on conflicts of interest and interactions with third parties/lobbyists should be strengthened.

In the reporting period, only some parliamentary oversight instruments were used (interpellations and parliamentary hearings). The *ex post* legal assessment reached a 95% implementation rate in 2024. The implementation rate of the *ex post* impact assessment was only 29% and should be increased. The *ex post* assessment plan for 2025 was approved in February 2025. No effective parliamentary oversight mechanism was adopted to cover the activities of the Commission for Exceptional Situations. The Parliament is planning to establish a Standing Committee for European Integration by December 2025.

Political polarisation continued to undermine the effectiveness of parliamentary functions. No plenary sessions in 2024 were dedicated to opposition draft bills, disregarding the rules of procedure. Out of the 323 laws adopted in 2024, 93 laws passed through majority-opposition consensus. The parliamentary opposition submitted 44 draft laws, of which six were adopted.

No legislative plan for 2025 was adopted. Advance publication of draft laws and increased publication of supporting documents would further improve the quality of the legislative process. The number of draft laws submitted under urgent procedure or priority procedure remains high - 65 draft normative acts in 2024 at the request of the government, the President of Moldova, or the Speaker of Parliament, out of which 47 were adopted, including two that were passed in a single plenary sitting.

Governance

Positive steps were taken to systematically integrate the process of alignment with EU law and policies into policy planning and budgetary documents.

The State Chancellery initiated the process of modifying the methodologies needed for the implementation of the new Regulation on Strategic Planning but did not yet approve them. It also developed a centralised inter-ministerial online platform for monitoring the implementation of decisions adopted by the Council for the Coordination of Sustainable Development and the Inter-Ministerial Committee for Strategic Planning.

Implementation of the legislative framework on public consultations should be strengthened by providing information on suggestions which were taken into account, or the reasoning for not incorporating certain proposals. The Secretary General of the Government issued an order in January 2025 setting up a working group to draft amendments to the existing regulatory framework on transparency of decision making.

The law amending provisions on declarations of assets and personal interests[2] entered into force in March 2025, promoting measures to strengthen integrity.

The government continued to improve the institutional framework and to promote voluntary amalgamation of local governments. However, progress is slow due to the political sensitivity linked to the cycle of recent elections. A new assignment of competences between central and subnational levels would be necessary after a significant reform of the *raion* tier. Consolidation of local administration is necessary at this level, together with improvements of the intergovernmental transfer system.

After concerns about the election of the Governor (*Bashkan*) of Gagauzia, the *Bashkan* was not appointed as a full member of the government by presidential decree, as required by law. In August, a first instance court sentenced the Bashkan to seven years in prison for illicit financing of political parties and ordered the confiscation of MDL 40.9 million (approx. EUR 2.04 million). The Gagauz authorities criticised the implementation of the law on the special status of Gagauzia and accused the central government of attempts to dismantle its autonomy. The parliamentary working group on Gagauzia remains suspended. Efforts to ensure regular communication between the central authorities and Gagauzia should continue.

The state of emergency temporarily introduced at the beginning of 2025 due to the energy crisis in the Transnistrian region did not significantly affect political stability or the functionality of the central government.

EU integration

2 https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=147738&lang=ro

The institutions in charge of the EU integration process are in place. The institutional capacity of the Bureau for European Integration (BEI) was strengthened and staff numbers increased, allowing for improved operational and analytical capacity. The Parliament presented plans to set up a standing committee for European Integration in the legislature 2025 – 2029.

The Bureau developed the internal 2024-2026 Strategy for Public Communication about EU Integration, with an action plan for the respective period. Based on these documents, the Bureau organised communication campaigns adapted to different target groups. In April 2025, the government approved the 2026-2028 National Development Plan, which includes EU accession priorities, including those set out in the Moldova Growth Plan. The 2025-2029 National Programme for the Accession of the Republic of Moldova to the EU was adopted in May 2025 following broad stakeholder consultation. The capacity of the government's EU coordination structures need to be further strengthened.

Civil society

Civil society organisations (CSOs) operate in an overall enabling environment. The regulatory framework governing the establishment and functioning of CSOs is in line with European standards. Civil society is actively involved in decision making and in the government's preparations for the technical phase of the EU accession process. Remaining gaps must be addressed, particularly to guarantee the effective protection of civil society organisations and human rights defenders. While consultation processes have improved, sustained efforts are still required to make them systematic and genuinely meaningful to foster an enabling environment.

Cooperation with civil society at government level has slightly improved during the reporting period. By the end of 2024, permanent consultative platforms had been set up across all 14 ministries, although not all are functional. There has been limited progress in the first year of implementation of the national programme for the development of civil society organisations 2024-2027. USAID funding cuts have further highlighted civil society's reliance on international donors, affecting its ability to operate effectively and challenging its long-term sustainability.

Civilian oversight of the security and intelligence sector

The Security and Intelligence Service (SIS) last submitted an annual report on its activity to the Parliament in July 2024. A working group was convened in the Parliament in March 2024 for a public consultation to discuss a new concept of parliamentary control over the work of the SIS but there was no immediate follow-up.

According to the provisions of the National Security Strategy, the Supreme Security Council submitted an annual report on the implementation of the strategy to the Parliament on 7 March 2025.

2.1.2. Public administration reform

Strategic framework on public administration reform

The strategic framework for public administration reform (PAR) is in place. The implementation of the PAR strategy still needs to be advanced.

During the reporting period the Government has continued to implement the PAR strategy 2023-2030 and its implementation programme 2023-2026. The implementation and

monitoring structures for the PAR strategy, created at the level of the State Chancellery, are fully functional.

The State Chancellery with the support of international donors undertook a significant number of complementary informative activities related to the voluntary amalgamation process. At the start of 2025, 20 clusters of local government units capable of voluntary amalgamation were operational, with 17 local councils having also initiated the process. However, the first complete and finalised voluntary consolidation is expected to occur no earlier than the end of 2025.

The Government allocated funds in 2024 and 2025 to support the implementation of the PAR strategy, primarily to cover financial incentives for voluntary amalgamation. However, due to the slow progress of the process, the amounts disbursed to date have been low.

Political support for the PAR strategy implementation is generally limited to the government and civil society organisations, while the support of local government authorities or other social groups remains selective and limited. The government follows a cautious approach in communicating the benefits of the PAR strategy, particularly on the reform of local government.

Policy development and coordination

A policy development and coordination framework is in place, but the institutional capacity still needs to be improved.

During the reporting period, the Government adopted several key policy documents: the National Development Plan (2025-2027), the Government's Action Plan for 2025, and the National Action Plan for EU Accession (2025-2028) in May 2025. These documents outline the Government's short and medium-term priorities and are partially reflected in the budgetary framework (2025-2027) and the 2025 state budget.

The Government also adopted several measures to increase the institutional capacity to carry out reforms and to improve the quality of policy design and the coordination process related to accession to the European Union. New improved instruments to evaluate the costs of policies were approved and implemented, generating a significant increase in the quality of the financial and budgetary assessment of policy documents; improved regulatory improved assessment (RIA) methodologies have been designed and implemented; a new mechanism for performance evaluation of the public administration using key performance indicators (KPIs) has been implemented; institutional capacity in policy design and coordination has been improved by training 570 civil servants from central public administration.

However, major problems remain to be solved despite the existence of an appropriate regulatory framework in this area. These include an in-silo approach of policy design and a lack of consultations, information transfer and dialogue from the early stages of the policy process; ongoing challenges relating to cost estimations and correlation between policy documents requesting financial resources and the medium-term budgetary framework (MTBF); limited quality of RIAs .

Public financial management.

The **public financial management** is broadly in place but needs to be further improved. The implementation of the strategy for the development of public finance management for 2023-2030 is ongoing. The ongoing loss of human resources at the Ministry of Finance needs to be addressed to sustain the pace and quality of reforms. The ministry needs to strengthen

its capacity and improve the quality of dialogue on the governance of public finances with both public and private stakeholders. The budget calendar is not systematically adhered to, as required by the Law on public finances and budgetary-fiscal responsibility. The link between strategic planning and the medium-term budgetary framework remains weak and needs improvement. A high share of expenditure is kept under the 'General actions' budget line, which undermines budget transparency.

Moldova submitted its second economic reform programme aiming to further strengthen macroeconomic forecasting and medium-term budget planning. The country is taking steps to implement green and gender-responsive budgeting. The Ministry of Finance remains committed to the transparency of public finances. The Government set up the web-based project appraisal IT module as part of the public investment management reforms but additional effort is needed to effectively apply the procedure across public services.

Public service and human resources management

The public service and human resources management need to be improved.

The legal framework theoretically ensures a professional and non-politicised public service, as both primary and secondary legislation on the civil service were drafted on the basis of SIGMA principles. The civil service is composed of 17.7 thousand positions filled with 14.2 thousand civil servants, with central public administration accounting for over 63%. In terms of gender balance of civil service employees, women represent around 75% of the total civil service, over 72% of the management positions and over 32% of political elected/appointed positions.

During the reporting period, the civil service institutional and legislative framework was slightly improved. This included institutional improvement of the HR units organised at the level of line ministries; improving the process of performance assessment by designing and implementing new methodological guides; increasing the capacity by specialised training in HR management dedicated to central and local public staff (110 civil servants trained). The State Chancellery and the Ministry of Finance have started the process of job evaluation – a key phase in the reform of the pay system.

Despite these positive changes, some reasons for concern remain: the civil service management system continues to be fragmented and understaffed; a new Human Resources Management Information System (HRMIS) is only in the incipient design phase; the ratio of vacant positions in the civil service remains high at 19.5% (with over 22% at the level of central administration); participation in competitions to fill vacant positions is very limited, with an average of 1.65 candidates per competition; an excessive share (67.9%) of performance appraisals are being awarded the highest results; voluntary turnover remains significant, at 9% among non-management civil servants and 7.7% in top management; limited progress regarding the pay system reform in the public sector, which remains fragmented and contains many reference values, with a high ratio of the variable part of the salary, and has not been extended to the whole public administration.

Accountability of administration

The accountability of the public administration still needs to be improved. The typology of administrative bodies laid down by the Law on the central public administration provides a governance and accountability scheme for ministries, administrative authorities under ministries, and central administrative authorities reporting to the Government. However, it also provides an escape route from the general framework of governance, public financial and budgetary management, transparency, and the civil service regime of employment, as well as from the rigours of the unitary pay system in the public sector. The reform of public institutions is ongoing and should be fully implemented by 2027.

The legislation on access to public information emphasises proactive transparency obligations, providing an extended catalogue of information to be published on public authority websites. During the reporting period, the Government improved procedures and methodologies regarding public information and public participation in the policy design process – the platform e-Democracy has been launched, together with improvements to the websites of central public institutions. However, significant challenges remain regarding the capacity of central and local public administration to publish aggregated data and to monitor the implementation of legislation.

Despite enhancements to the institutional mechanism for tracking the implementation of the Ombudsman's recommendations during the reporting period, major concerns remain regarding the inadequate response from public authorities and the poor visibility of this body which hinders the overall effectiveness of independent executive oversight.

Service delivery to individuals and business

The service delivery to individuals and business is generally satisfactory.

As regards user-oriented service delivery, the Government has made progress in modernising administrative services based on a solid institutional setup and clear policy objectives. The main strategic documents on public administration reform and digital transformation are fully aligned. Over 50% of services mapped for businesses and individuals are (fully or partially) available digitally, but service delivery conditions vary. During the reporting period 22 new Unified Public Service Centres (CUPS) were set up (increasing the total to 105), providing electronic public services access for people in rural areas. Two new online services, dedicated to car registration, were launched on the electronic services platform. E-signature usage is active with over 266 000 users, representing 10% of Moldova's adult population, and a new service has recently been launched – EVOSign.

However, significant challenges remain: the limitation in the use of e-government services generated by a still low demand (especially in rural areas); no government-wide methodology for producing and reporting performance metrics; and no full state-level quality management policy.

2.2 RULE OF LAW AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

2.2.1 Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights

The EU's founding values include the rule of law and respect for human rights. An effective (independent, high-quality and efficient) judicial system and an effective fight against corruption are of paramount importance, as is the respect for fundamental rights in law and in practice.

Functioning of the judiciary

Strategic documents

The implementation of the 2022-2025 Justice Sector Reform Strategy and its action plan is satisfactory. The first Superior Council of Magistracy Strategic Plan (2025-2029) was approved, as well as the Strategic Development Programme of the Superior Council of Prosecutors (2025-2029) with its Action Plan, providing also financial resources for their implementation. It contains a human resources component, the adoption of a Human

Resources Strategy of the Judicial System and the adoption an Instrument for reducing backlogs in the courts.

Management bodies

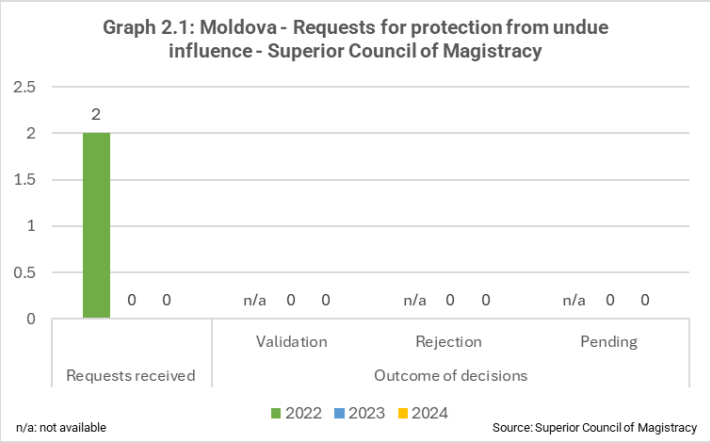
The management bodies are in place and generally function adequately. The capacity and attractiveness of the management bodies should be further strengthened by increasing their human resources capacity, especially in their secretariats, and by improving their internal procedures.

The Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM) is fully functional and acts in full composition with vetted members. The last vetted member was appointed in April 2025. All members of the Superior Council of Prosecutors (SCP) are vetted and appointed. The SCM and SCP exercise their mandate, including their role in appointing, suspending and transferring judges and prosecutors and reviewing decisions of the Vetting Commissions.

The SCM and SCP specialised bodies are now fully functional in a vetted composition. Their role is crucial for enhancing the overall capacity of the SCM and SCP and the independence, integrity and accountability of the judiciary. In 2025, six vetted members (out of nine members in total) were appointed to the SCM specialised body for the selection and evaluation of judges, and five vetted members (out of seven members in total) were appointed to the SCM specialised body for disciplinary proceedings. Remaining vacancies should be filled without delay. All 14 members of the SCP specialised bodies for the selection and evaluation of prosecutors and for disciplinary proceedings were appointed.

The re-evaluation of pending appeals in the process of extraordinary evaluation of candidates for vacant positions in the SCM and the SCP (also known as 'pre-vetting') is still to be finalised.

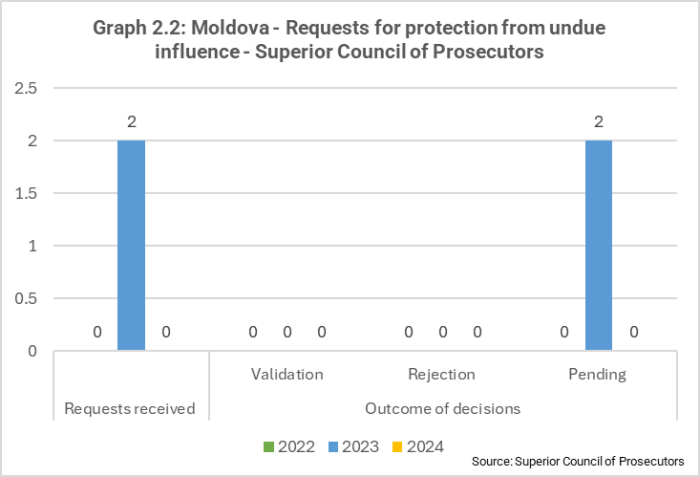
Independence and impartiality



The independence and impartiality of judges and prosecutors is improving through the extraordinary evaluation ('vetting') of judges and prosecutors in top positions.

During the reporting period, the vetting process has continued. It slowly progressed for candidates to the Supreme Court of Justice, with two new appointed and vetted members. The vetting process for the judges of the Courts of Appeal (Chișinău, North/Balti, and South/Cahul and Comrat) started in February 2025 with the hearing of subjects. The vetting for the presidents and vice-presidents of first instance courts was launched in May 2025. Opposition to vetting has continued, with 36 judges of the Courts of Appeal and 10 judges of first instance courts resigning in order to avoid the process.

In May 2025, the vetting processes for specialised prosecutors on organised crime and chief prosecutors from the General Prosecutors' Office was launched. The vetting of specialised anticorruption prosecutors, which started in May 2024, remains in early stages. In the prosecution service as well, the announcement of vetting led to resignations, creating a high



number of vacancies. Vetting of prosecutors was negatively impacted by the decision of the US to suspend its financial assistance to the secretariat of the vetting commission, but the costs are being taken over by the EU.

To accelerate the vetting process, the Parliament adopted a new law in May 2025 to expand the numbers of members of the two vetting commissions for judges and prosecutors. Furthermore, to encourage candidates to apply for the vacancies generated by resignations, the 2024 state budget included significant salary increases of up to 72% for key judicial posts. Starting from 1 January 2025, salaries have been further increased by up to 50% for some judges and prosecutors based on clear criteria.

Amendments to the law on performance evaluation of judges and prosecutors were adopted in July 2025 with the aim of strengthening the integrity verification mechanism for judges and prosecutors who are not subject to the vetting process This will contribute to the sustainability of strengthened integrity procedures for the judiciary beyond the vetting process

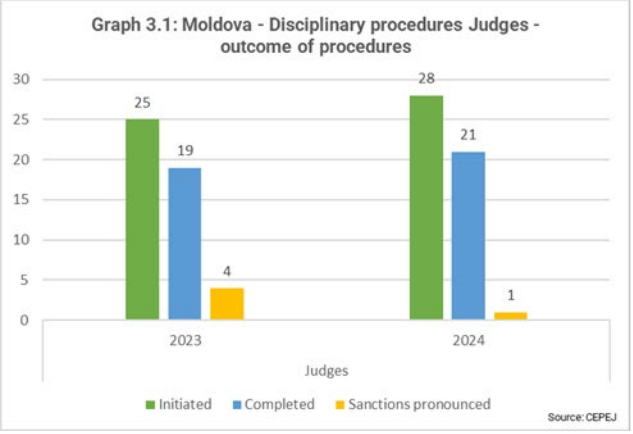
Continuing a positive change of practice in judicial appointments, the SCM and the SCP continued to also select new judges and prosecutors from among graduates of the National Institute of Justice.

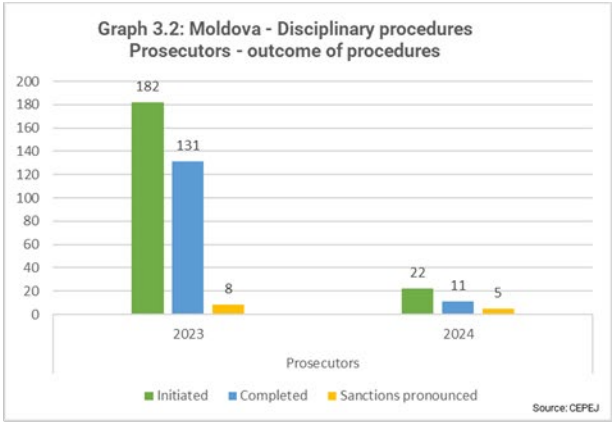
Transparency in the distribution of court cases is ensured by random case allocation through the electronic case management system for judges. The system still needs to be complemented with a common online calendar for judges, lawyers and prosecutors. The internal control of the process of random allocation of files is carried out by the president/vice-president of the court and the Judicial Inspection. For prosecutors, cases are allocated by line managers according to the areas of competence, considering criteria defined by internal normative acts, including specialisation and experience. An automated system for randomised allocation of cases to prosecutors based on strict and objective criteria should be introduced. The autonomy of specialised prosecutors should be ensured by revising the Prosecutor General Office's powers to avoid instructions to specialised prosecutors or interference in their procedural decisions.

Accountability

The framework for the regulation of accountability is satisfactory.

The disciplinary bodies of the SCM and SCP have become fully functional with vetted members. This will speed up the examination of disciplinary cases and reduce the backlog of cases. The resources and capacity of disciplinary boards should be strengthened to ensure better enforcement of disciplinary liability provisions regarding judges and prosecutors.



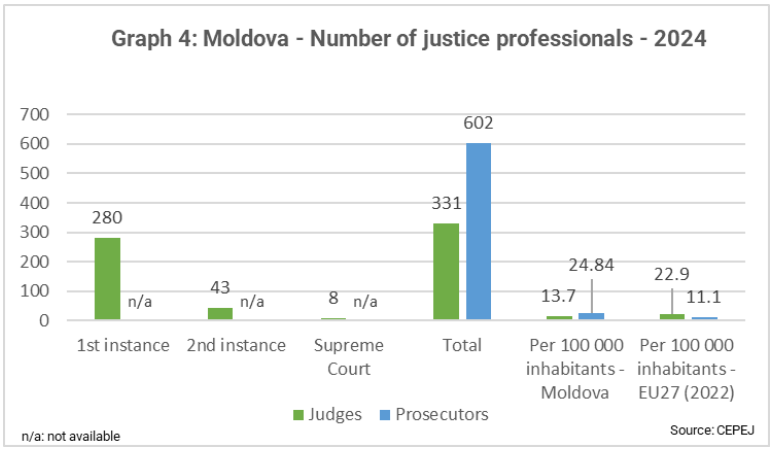


The Inspectorate for Public Prosecutions is now operational, with five inspectors appointed out of nine in total. The selection process for the remaining four inspectors is ongoing and should be finalised without delay.

Quality of justice

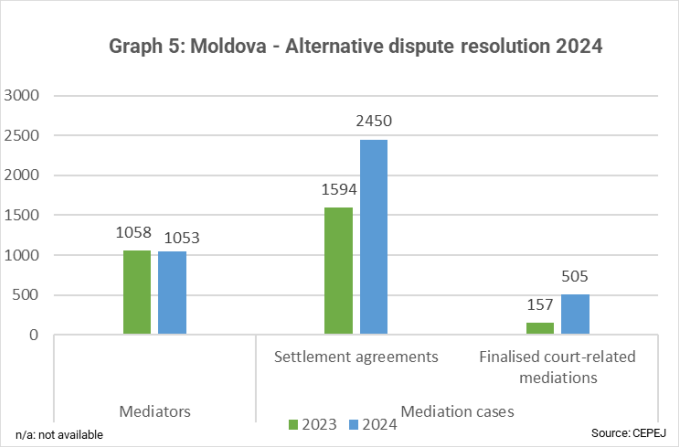
The quality of justice needs to improve.

As a positive development, in February 2025, a new permanent director of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) was appointed, after more than 4 years of vacancy. In 2024, a 'European Union Law' module was included in the training plan, in line with the 2022 TAIEX mission recommendations. Some outstanding recommendations of this peer review still stand and should be addressed without delay, such as the current model of recruiting candidates and appointing judges and prosecutors, and the admission and graduation process for the NIJ.



Starting from 1 January 2025, salaries for NIJ staff were increased, including for the Director and the Deputy Director. In 2024, 98% of all judges (331) and 85% of all prosecutors (512) received continuous training, while 42 candidates to become judges and 33 candidate prosecutors received initial training.

Moldova should continue efforts to ensure sufficient human and financial resources to enable the judiciary to function efficiently, as done by increasing salaries. The SCM adopted a strategic plan for 2025-2029, which includes specific measures on human resources. Moldova should develop human resources strategies for the judiciary and prosecution services, including a revision of the salary system. In 2024, EUR 33.2 million was allocated to courts of law (0.78% of the state budget) and EUR 23.4 million to the prosecutor's offices (0.55% of the state budget), constituting a budget increase of 12% for the courts and 10% for the prosecution service compared to 2023.



Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in the form of non-judicial mediation, conciliation and arbitration continue to be barely used (about 1% of all cases), due to poor public awareness of these mechanisms. On 29 May 2025, the Parliament adopted a law that will expand access to state-guaranteed legal aid for low-income people by broadening the eligibility criteria.

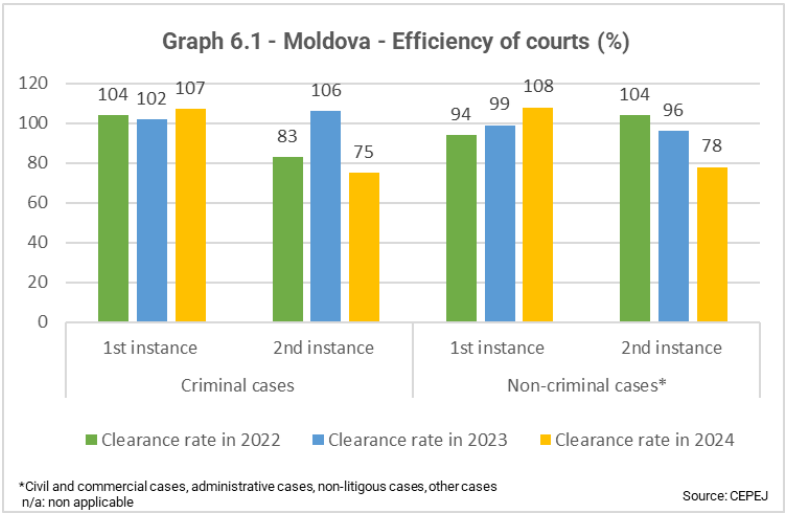
The law on the judicial map reorganisation is being implemented. A new structure of the prosecutors' offices to align with the new judicial map entered into force in April 2025. As a result, the number of territorial prosecutors' offices will be reduced from 36 to 14.

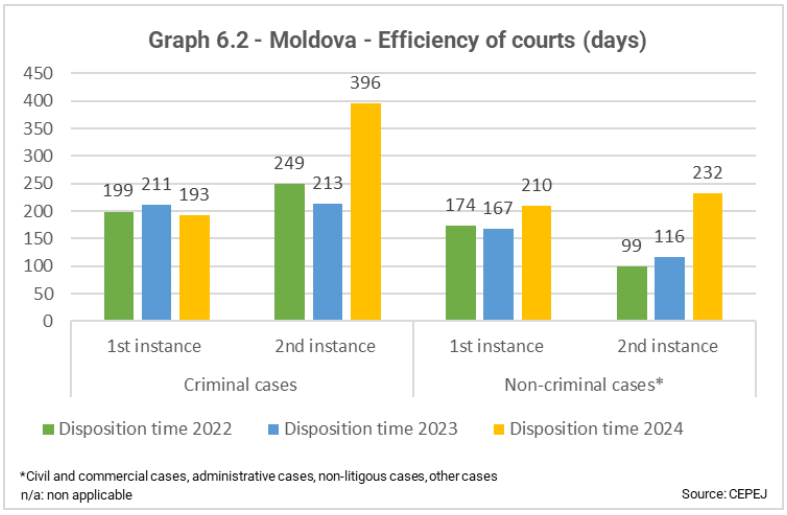
Moldova adopted a new law on the Constitutional Court to enhance its independence and operational efficiency. While the new law received an overall positive opinion from the Venice Commission, some of the recommendations still have to be addressed, in particular on transparency in nomination procedure. To further improve the quality of court decisions, the quality standards for judicial decisions should be adopted by the Superior Council of Magistracy and the NIJ training on court decision reasoning should be improved.

<u>Efficiency</u>

The efficiency of justice needs to be improved.

The disposition time and the clearance rate in courts remained a concern, in particular the disposition time in civil and commercial cases in first instance and criminal cases in second instance, and the clearance rate in second instance in all types of cases, most notably criminal ones. The disposition time in first instance administrative cases improved considerably but is still reaching 764 days for cases at the Supreme Court of Justice (SCJ). The clearance rate is only 64% in criminal cases assigned to SCJ. If courts performance does not improve it may lead to the further accumulation of pending cases, backlogs and





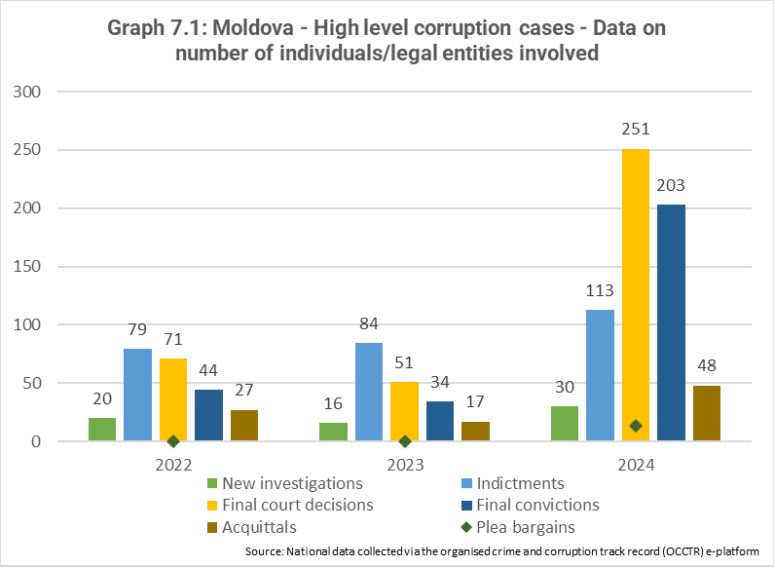
prolonged duration of trials. While SCJ has tried to reduce backlog by prioritising old cases, the Courts of Appeals show a negative trend in their clearance rate.

A new Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Judicial Administration was set up on 1 January 2025 and has a mandate to ensure the development of an integrated legal information system, and the development, administration and interoperability of information systems in the justice sector. The operationalisation of the Agency needs speeding up.

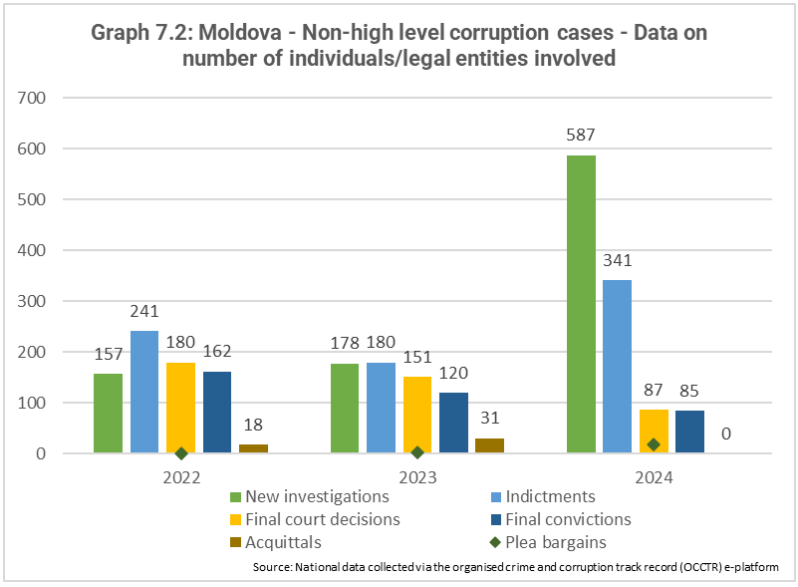
Fight against corruption

Track record

The fight against corruption track record has improved for both high-level cases and non-high-level cases.



On high-level corruption cases, in 2024 the Anti-Corruption Prosecutors' Office (APO) sent 71 cases to court involving 113 individuals/entities, compared to 35 cases in 2023. In 2025, until September, APO had sent 24 cases to court. Similarly, 183 court decisions involving 251 individuals/legal entities were handed down in 2024, and 140 in 2025 until September, compared to 162 involving 202 individuals in 2023. APO indicted multiple high-ranking officials, including members of parliament and regional leaders, for accepting illegal political financing from an organised criminal group supported by Russia, which aimed to significantly undermine Moldova's electoral integrity, sovereignty, and democratic processes ahead of the parliamentary elections. On adjudication of corruption cases, according to the activity report of the Chișinău District Court, there was an 8.77% increase in the number of resolved corruption cases in 2024 compared to 2023. This positive development can be explained by the work of specialised panels set up in the Chișinău District Court as a pilot project in 2024.



The National Anti-corruption Centre (NAC) registered substantial improvements in its casework on non-high-level cases. In 2024, NAC investigative officers opened new investigations on 587 individuals/legal entities (up from 178 in 2023). This is around three times higher than the numbers from 2023 and 2022,

where it was quite stable. The number of indictments on non-high-level corruption cases almost doubled from 2023, with 180, to 2024, with 341 indictments. Finally, there is a slight diminution of final court decisions and final convictions from 2023 to 2024.

In the 2025 electoral period Moldova's law enforcement mobilised to fight illicit financing organised by a coordinated network, involving cryptocurrency and electronic cards connected to accounts in Russia. The efforts resulted in 844 searches, the detention of 122 individuals, 13 criminal cases and 46 preventive measures imposed. Newly introduced fines against electoral corruption were seen as an effective deterrent to vote buying.

Legal framework

The legal framework on the fight against corruption is in place. It is adequate regarding preventive measures but needs to be improved regarding repressive measures.

In November 2024, the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe (GRECO) acknowledged Moldova's progress in meeting recommendations of its fourth-round evaluation report on the prevention of corruption regarding members of parliament, judges and prosecutors. Moldova has satisfactorily implemented 13 of the 18 recommendations and partly implemented four recommendations, with one recommendation (on the need to introduce rules for parliamentarians on how to interact with third parties seeking to influence legislative process) still outstanding.

In March 2025, Moldova adopted amendments to the Law on the National Integrity Authority (NIA) and the Law on the declaration of assets and personal interests to strengthen integrity and anti-corruption efforts. The reforms expanded NIA's mandate to include policy development in this field, improved procedures for ex officio checks, strengthened political neutrality rules for the Integrity Council, and clarified the management of the State Register of persons banned from public office. At the same time, the asset declaration regime was broadened to cover a wider range of assets, introduced real market value reporting, and strengthened sanctions for non-compliance, including dismissal. Declarations will now be published in open data format and stored for 15 years.

In response to multiple vote-buying incidents during the 2024 presidential elections and referendum on EU accession, the Parliament adopted a law to combat electoral corruption on 13 June, which contains substantial amendments to thirteen laws and addressed some of the most recent OSCE/ODIHR recommendations and introduced key improvements such as clearer definitions of electoral corruption, tougher penalties, and better regulation of campaign financing. Key unaddressed recommendations of the Venice Commission and of OSCE/ODIHR include the need to clarify the grounds for suspending and dissolving political parties and political party registration requirements, including and the criteria for banning successor parties of non-constitutional parties. Moldova should ensure the Law on combating electoral corruption is brought in line with European standards. Proactive law enforcement, communication efforts and fines to fight illicit financing schemes and vote buying were seen to have a mitigating and deterrent effect.

Moldova needs to further align its legal framework on whistleblower protection with the EU *acquis*, especially regarding the material and personal scope, the conditions for protection for reports and public disclosures, and the measures of support and protection against retaliation.

Strategic documents

The strategic documents are in place and adequate.

The National Integrity and Anti-corruption Programme (NIAP) for 2024-2028 and its National Action Plan are currently being implemented, with semi-annual and annual submissions and a monitoring group in place.

A progress report approved by the Monitoring Group notes that the implementation in 2024 showed mixed progress. Out of 56 actions scheduled for 2024, 21 actions were fully implemented, 24 actions are currently in progress, 9 actions were partially implemented while 2 actions were not implemented.

Institutional framework

The institutional framework on the fight against corruption is in place but needs to be strengthened on both preventive and repressive measures.

Following the delineation of competences between the National Anti-corruption Centre (NAC) and Anti-Corruption Prosecutors' Office (APO) in 2023, communication and coordination between them and other law enforcement agencies should be improved. The capacity of all institutions should be continuously monitored and improved. In this context, in September 2024 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between 12 national institutions to facilitate secondments of personnel to APO.

The APO's operational capacities need to be significantly reinforced, in particular to proactively detect latent high-level corruption cases. While a decision was adopted in 2024 to increase the number of staff by 54, only a few of these positions have been filled due to logistical constraints. Furthermore, an appropriate solution should be found to allocate an adequate headquarters to the APO.

At the beginning of 2025, the Parliament examined a draft law to dissolve the two existing specialised prosecution offices (APO and the Prosecutor's office for Combating Organised Crime and Special Cases (PCCOCS)), and to create a new entity (the Prosecution Office for Combating Corruption and Organised Crime (PACCO)). The draft law was however never adopted. In any case, it is important to enhance the effectiveness of the institutional framework, guarantee the independence of prosecutors, ensure specialisation and make further progress on the track record of cases.

In July 2025, Moldova adopted a new law to set up specialised anti-corruption panels at first and second instance level in the Chișinău Court. This aims to speed up the adjudication of corruption cases. The law should be amended to follow recommendations of the Venice Commission, in particular, as regards to ensuring the integrity of all the judges of the specialised panels, including at first instance, through the vetting process by the relevant vetting commission.

Fundamental rights

General framework

The general framework for fundamental rights is broadly satisfactory. The implementation and enforcement of fundamental rights needs to be improved, notably by allocating adequate resources to the relevant institutions. Recent studies suggest there is limited awareness about human rights among rights holders.

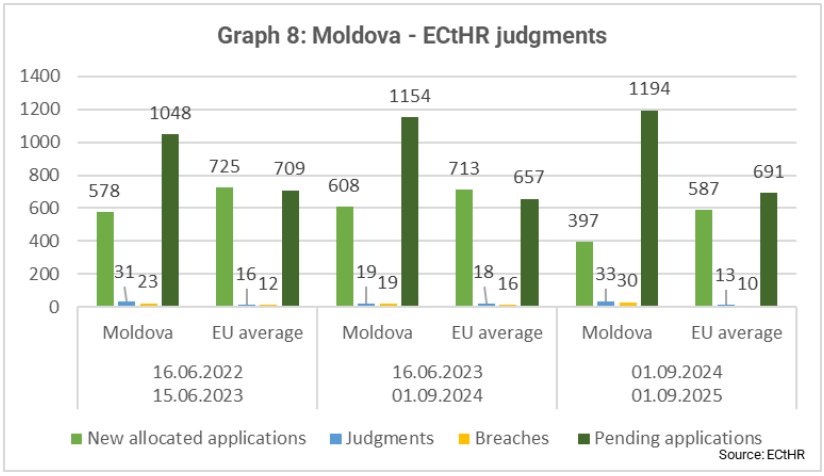
International human rights instruments

The cooperation with international human rights monitoring bodies and the follow-up to their recommendations needs to be improved.

In 2024, Moldova ratified the Revised European Social Charter and the International Labor Organization Convention No 190 on violence and harassment at work. Moldova has not ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and Protocol No 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights (on anti-discrimination).

European Court of Human Rights

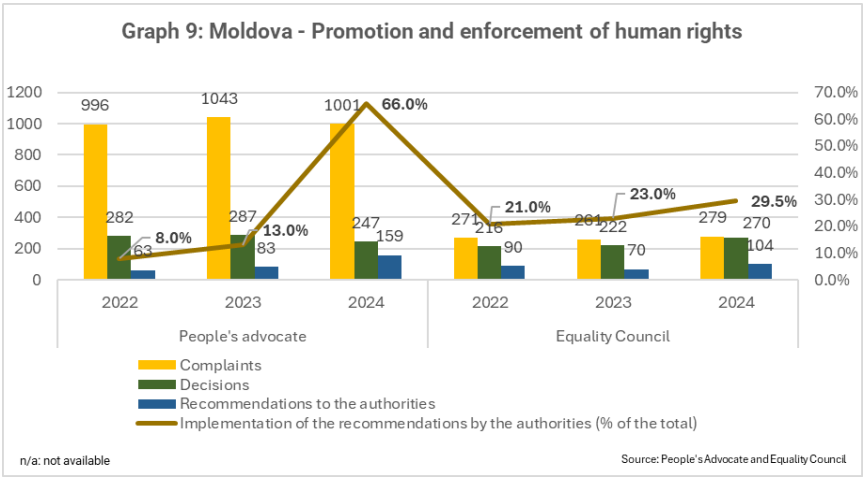
The cooperation with the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the implementation of its judgements is needs to be improved. Moldova still needs to nominate a Government Agent to the ECtHR. During the reporting period, the ECtHR delivered 33 judgements against Moldova. The Court found breaches of the European Convention on Human Rights relating mainly to respect for private and family life, the right to adequate investigation of ill treatment or of domestic violence, the lack of an effective remedy, as well as the discriminatory attitude of the authorities based on gender and disability. Currently, there are 29 cases under enhanced supervision by the Committee of Ministers related to right to a fair trial and cases of inadequate investigation of ill treatment.



Moldova needs to address systematic issues or structural issues raised by the Court, notably in the areas of detention conditions, and procedural rights.

Promotion and enforcement of human rights

The legal and institutional framework for the promotion, protection and enforcement of human rights is in place, but implementation needs to be improved.



Main themes:
People's advocate: ill-treatment, detention conditions, procedural rights, children rights.
Equality Council: discrimination based on language, sex/gender and disability.

Moldova made progress in the implementation of the national human rights action programme for 2024-2027. However, normative gaps continue to persist in some areas, including on torture and ill treatment, procedural rights and the fight against discrimination. The legislative framework still lacks a specific mechanism to assist residents from the Transnistrian region exposed to human rights violations, where the human rights situation remains a concern.

The implementation rate of the recommendations issued by the Equality Council is increasing, reaching 29% in 2024 (compared to 21% in 2023). Similarly, the implementation rate of recommendations issued by the People's Advocate and the People's Advocate for Children's Rights increased strongly to 64% in 2024 (compared to 13% in 2023). Nonetheless, both institutions reported growing interference in their work in 2025. Notable progress was also made in improving salaries of the Ombudsman's employees. However, both institutions remain understaffed.

The national legal framework does not ensure the full independence of the Equality Council and does not provide the financial resources necessary to perform all its duties effectively. Its sanctioning mechanism and competence to assist victims of discrimination should be reinforced.

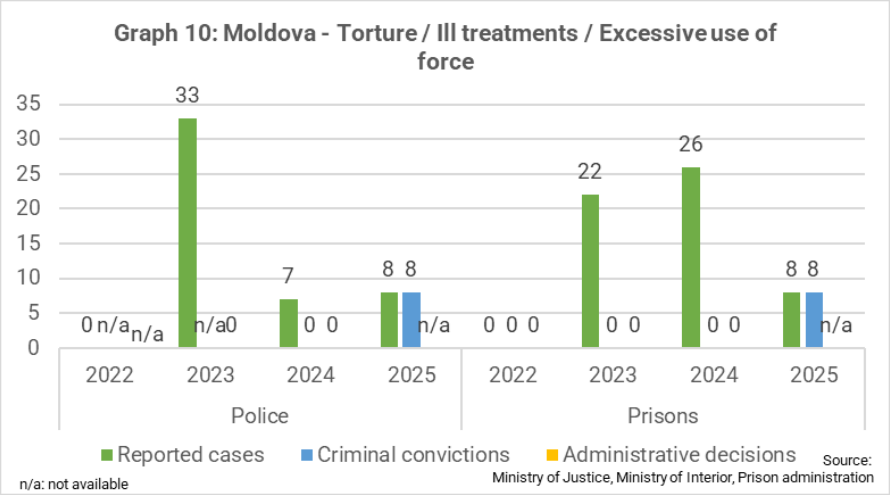
The activity of the National Human Rights Council has been limited in the reporting period.

The Law on access to information of public interest, aimed at strengthening the transparency of public sector activities, entered into force in 2024 with the People's Advocate designated as one of its monitoring authorities.

Prevention of torture and ill treatment

Moldova provides adequate legal guarantees on the prevention of torture and ill treatment. Nonetheless, the follow-up to cases is insufficient.

Ill treatment is an issue of concern. Progress in combating and investigating ill treatment and torture remains limited. Moldova's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) operates independently and monitors places of detention, issuing practical recommendations.

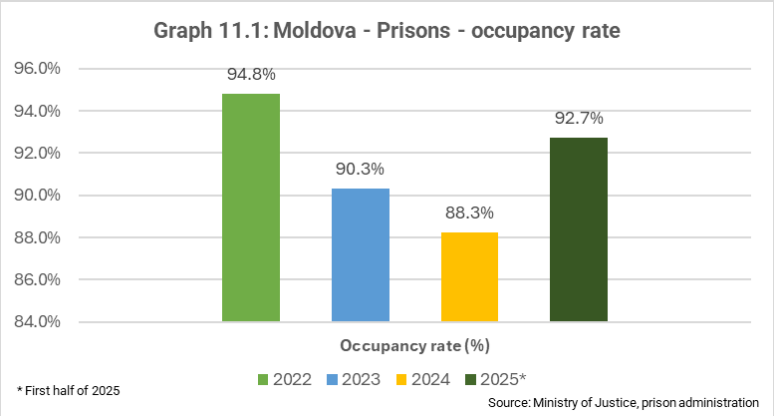


However, implementation of recommendations issued in 2023 by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture as well as those of the NPM is slow, due to limited capacity and systemic issues, especially overcrowding, inadequate medical services and precarious living conditions in prisons. Inter-prisoner violence continues to be unaddressed and is linked to an enduring informal hierarchic system. According to ECtHR case law, this could be considered as a continuing violation of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights on the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.

Recent progress includes the creation of an electronic registry to document cases of injury and ill treatment, as well as the formation of a multi-agency working group coordinated by the Section for Combating Torture.

Several cases concerning alleged ill treatment in detention facilities in Moldova are currently pending or ongoing before the ECtHR.

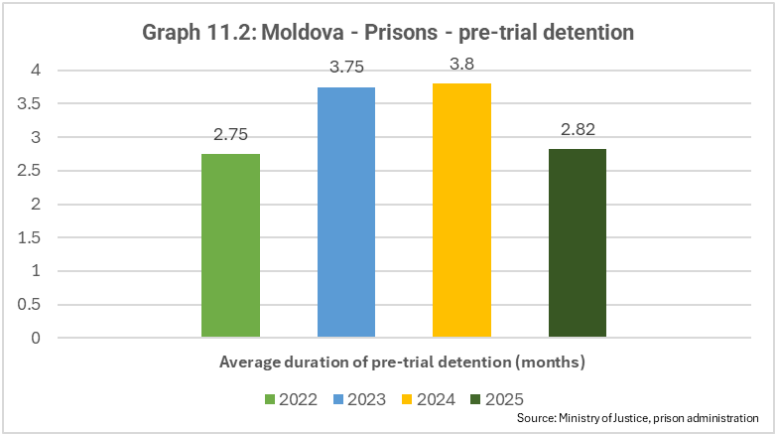
Execution of criminal sanctions



The system for execution of criminal sanctions (including probation) is inadequate. .

Moldova remains one of the countries in Europe with the highest incarceration rates (242 inmates per 100 000 inhabitants in 2024), with the number of inmates having increased for the first time in years, reaching 5 844 inmates in January 2025 (2023: 5 695). The number of people in pre-detention custody remains high.

An increasing number of prisoners have access to paid work and vocational training, particularly juveniles. The plan to replace Prison No 13 in Chișinău with a modern facility is now underway but risks being delayed by financial and procedural constraints. Further measures range from shortened detention periods for less severe crimes, to replacing parts of detention sentences with community service. Alternative probation measures, also relevant to reduce prison overcrowding, should be taken in line with international standards, avoiding rushed procedures.

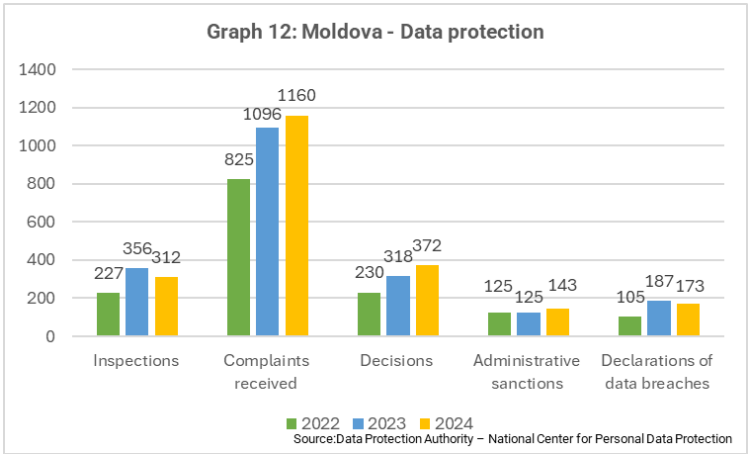


Medical services in prisons remain insufficient, despite improvements in the quantity of medical equipment and certified medical services. Staffing levels in healthcare services remain low.

Protection of personal data

The legal framework for the protection of personal data has been reinforced but the capacities of the data protection agency need to be improved.

The Law on the protection of personal data adopted in 2024 aims to align Moldova's legislation with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). It is set to take effect in August 2026. In parallel, Moldova should pursue alignment with the EU Law Enforcement Directive and ratify the second protocol of the Council of Europe



(CoE) Convention 108 and adopt the legal framework to implement EU standards on standard contractual clauses between operators and processors.

The National Centre for Personal Data Protection examined a growing number of complaints, but its capacity should be increased, especially in terms of personnel.

Freedom of religion or belief

Moldova provides adequate legal guarantees on freedom of religion or belief.

No breaches of freedom of religion or belief were reported.

Freedom of expression

Overall, legal guarantees on the freedom of expression and the enabling environment for free, independent and professional media operation needs to be further strengthened .

Intimidation of journalists

Instances of intimidation by private actors, including verbal attacks by political figures and non-state actors as well as aggressive behaviour of protesters towards journalists have increased over the reporting period, with 66 reported cases in 2024 (vs 43 cases in 2023 and 56 cases in 2022). Although authorities condemn these incidents, most reported cases remain unaddressed. No progress to support journalists to fight Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) has been made. Journalists face frequent obstructions in Gagauzia, notably through refusal of access to meetings of the Gagauz People's Assembly and threats by protesters or local public figures. Journalists from the right bank remain restricted from entering the Transnistrian region by the de facto administration and face the risk of detention.

In the context of the 2024 elections and referendum, various journalists received death threats, and the building of the public broadcaster was vandalised as part of a broader external destabilisation scheme. A massive and coordinated online defamation campaign targeted independent media in early February 2025 using the issue of foreign funding to stigmatise journalists, undermine their credibility and create an environment of fear and intimidation. Despite considerable efforts to protect the elections against information threats, the electoral campaign of 2025 was affected by disinformation.

In July 2025, Criminal Code amendments strengthened protections for journalists, imposing stricter penalties for intimidation, including online, and for violence or threats against them.

Legislative environment

While freedom of expression is generally ensured, the legislative environment still needs to be aligned with the EU *acquis* and European standards.

Recent amendments to the Audiovisual Media Service Code aim to address longstanding issues such as: market concentration, improvements to the system of appointments and dismissals of the management of the national public broadcaster and media regulator, as well as revision of the sanctioning system. Moldova should ensure alignment of the Code to EU *acquis* and follow all outstanding Venice Commission recommendations.

On 11 July Moldova adopted a legislative proposal to amend the Code and the Law on advertising. The prohibitions set under the Law on broadcasting or retransmitting programmes with informative, analytical, military, and political content still need to be aligned with the EU *acquis*.

Concerns persist regarding the provisions in the strategic investments law which allow the suspension and withdrawal of broadcasting licences on the grounds of investment irregularities with national security considerations. The current mechanism needs to be aligned with EU and international standards.

The country still lacks a regulatory framework on online and print media. The editorial independence of private media companies is generally safeguarded. New guidelines on the broadcasting of elections address the shortcomings identified by the Constitutional Court. The country lacks an anti-SLAPPs (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) legislation aligned with EU *acquis* and European standards.

Implementation of legislation/institutions

The Audiovisual Council (AC) continued to apply the provisions of the Audiovisual Media Services Code in a consistent and robust manner. Although the number of fines remains low, their application rate increased significantly, especially for fines regarding the lack of locally produced content, lack of sufficient content in Romanian, failure to respect pluralism of opinions and use of manipulative practices, messages containing discrimination, incitement to hatred, extremism and, for the first time, disinformation. Legal remedies to contest decisions of the AC are generally effective. The AC contributed to maintaining a balanced media environment during the presidential elections and the constitutional referendum in October–November 2024. In July 2025, the AC increased sanctions to media breaching provisions ensuring accurate information in electoral periods and established an Electoral Consultancy Centre to facilitate the covering of elections.

The Law on Access to Information of Public Interest entered into force in January 2024 and there was improved cooperation with the media in providing requested information.

Since the Council for the Promotion of Investment Projects of National Importance was set up in December 2023, a total of 19 broadcasting licences were suspended or withdrawn because the respective TV or the radio company relied on inappropriate financing sources. Amendments to the law on “Countering Extremist Activity” contain provisions that can allow the suspension and permanent closure of a media outlet. The clarity of definitions and proportionality of penalties should be ensured, in line with the recommendations issued by the Venice Commission.

The Criminal Code lays down criminal liability for the intentional obstruction of media activity. However, law enforcement agencies have rarely invoked this provision. The Centre for Strategic Communication and Combating Disinformation supports the interinstitutional efforts in the fight against disinformation and manipulation of information.

Public service broadcaster

With the amendments to the Audiovisual Media Service Code, the independence and financial sustainability of the public service broadcaster have improved. The procedures for appointing and dismissing the supervisory board and the Director of the AC were also reviewed to increase their autonomy from political control. Gender balance and participation of national minorities within the public broadcaster have also improved.

GRT, the regional public broadcaster of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, remains heavily influenced by the local political elites and civil society reports a lack of accurate and balanced information. The establishment of the public station Radio Moldova Comrat improves access to reliable information.

Economic factors

The Audiovisual Council in cooperation with the Competition Council made positive steps on TV and radio ownership transparency, but the Media Ownership Monitor highlights the persisting risks to media pluralism from ownership concentration. The Audiovisual Council should extend the regulation on transparency to print and online media.

A small advertisement market, lack of independent media subsidies and difficulty to address unfair advertising practices represent serious issues for independent media. In 2024, most TV media providers faced financial strain, with polarised funding models raising concerns over sustainability, independence, transparency, and compliance with local content rules. The Media Subsidy Fund of 5.5 million lei (EUR 275 000) launched a competition for granting subsidies in April 2025. This should partially mitigate financial uncertainty in the sector caused by the decrease in foreign donor funding.

Internet

Moldova's online space is largely under-regulated and heavily affected by foreign interference and information manipulation. Since November 2024, amendments to the cybercrime law empower the Ministry of Internal Affairs to combat illegal content, including illegal hate speech and child abuse. The new Code of Audiovisual Media Services extended the Audiovisual Council's authority over media service distributors and online video content. Since 2022, the Security and Intelligence Service has blocked nearly 60 websites linked to Russian propaganda or the fugitive oligarch Ilan Shor, including 12 sites blocked in late 2024. Nevertheless, the legal base for extending the suspension of websites blocked during the state of emergency and the continuous blocking of website needs further definition.

Professional organisations and working conditions

The Media Subsidy Fund and Expert Council have been put in place. Subsidies aim to indirectly address salary dumping by requiring ethical and financial compliance, though effects will take time. Meanwhile, financial sustainability remains an issue, leading to wage cuts and downsizing that are worsening job market conditions for journalists.

Freedom of assembly and association

Moldova provides adequate legal guarantees to freedom of assembly and association. The regulation of assemblies is also adequate.

The Constitution safeguards the right to freedom of assembly, which is further regulated in the Law on assemblies and on non-commercial organisations. The duties of public authorities to provide safeguards against the application of surveillance measures before and during assemblies still need to be better defined. Moldova has addressed the violations of the freedom of assembly and association highlighted in the ECtHR's judgments.

In response to evolving hybrid threats, in May 2025 Moldova adopted administrative sanctions for 'paid participation' in assemblies. Civil society organisations raised concerns about some unclear provisions of the draft Law on Public Events presented in April 2025, notably those related to the notification procedures of public events, the authorisation by courts, and the rights and responsibilities of organisers and participants. Moldova should engage with civil society to ensure that sanctions are not penalising legitimate mobilisation. Moldova should engage with civil society to ensure that sanctions are not penalising legitimate mobilisation.

The amendments to the Criminal Code criminalising 'separatism', introduced in 2023, remain in place and could have negative effects on freedom of expression and association, non-discrimination, and the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. The related OSCE/ODIHR recommendations remain unaddressed.

Property rights

The legal and institutional framework for enforcing property rights is broadly in place. Procedures for reinstating property rights remain complicated and lengthy. Moldova needs to improve enforcement of court judgments related to property rights. Out of 50 Moldovan applications communicated to the ECtHR in 2024, five concerned alleged violations of the right to protection of property in civil, administrative or criminal proceedings.

Non-discrimination

The legal and institutional framework on non-discrimination remains to be fully aligned with the EU *acquis*, including inter alia as regards the Racial Equality Directive and with the Directives on standards for equality bodies.

The implementation of the 2022 anti-discrimination legal framework is ongoing. Awareness-raising initiatives, including training for state officials, have increased. Moldova needs to consistently implement strategic measures on anti-racism, rights of LGBTIQ persons and rights of persons with disabilities.

Moldova should ratify protocol 12 to the ECHR providing a general prohibition of discrimination. Most instances of discrimination registered by the Equality Council relate to discrimination at the workplace and access to goods and services.

The legal and institutional framework on hate crime and hate speech remains to be fully aligned with the EU acquis and European standards, in particular on combating racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law. The legal definition of hate speech remains incomplete and fragmented across the national legislation. In 2024, 56 criminal cases were initiated on the basis of provisions on hatred and/or prejudice. A unified methodology for data collection on hate crime incidents, including disaggregation by bias and type of offence, needs to be put in place. Specialised trainings on documenting hate speech cases for police officers should continue.

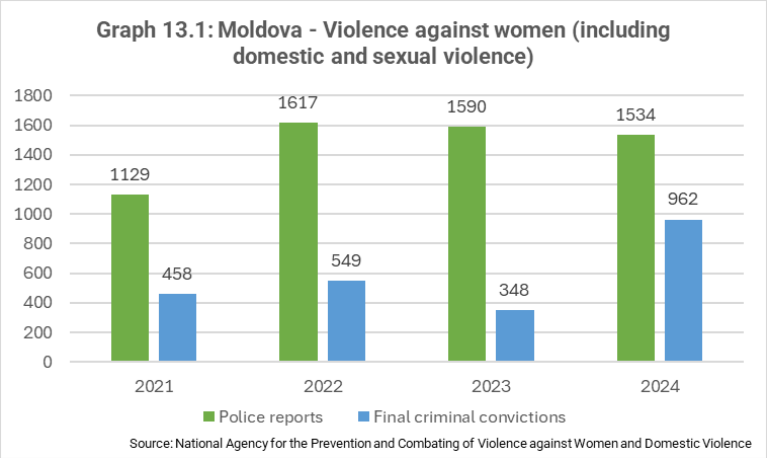
During the 2024 elections and referendum, the revised legal framework sanctioning the use of hate speech during election periods was enforced in a consistent manner. Reported cases of hate speech based on the ethnic origin of electoral candidates are concerning. The capacity to detect hate speech and/or cases of incitement in online information systems, including on social networks, remains limited.

Gender equality

The legal and institutional framework on gender equality and combating gender-based violence is partially in place, but the implementation and enforcement need to be improved. Moldova implements several national programmes in this area but the limited institutional capacity and budget hinder effective implementation, coordination, monitoring, and reporting.

Moldova continues to implement the 2023 recommendations of Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).

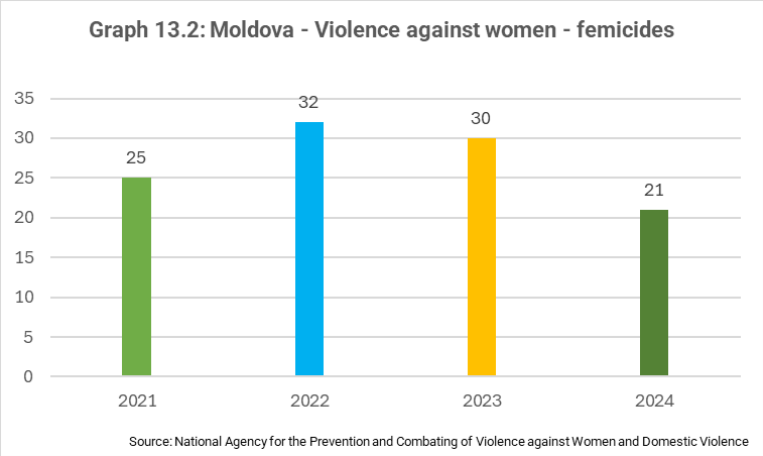
A gender equality mechanism with gender focal points and gender coordination groups designated at national and local level is in place but does not function effectively.



Integration of gender equality into strategic planning and policy development improved with the new rules for gender mainstreaming throughout public policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In July 2025, new legislation strengthened legal protections against gender-based violence and criminalised stalking, forced marriage, and digital abuse in line with the Istanbul Convention.

While reported gender-based violence (GBV) cases remain at levels similar to last year, the number of convictions has increased. Access to and trust in the legal system remains limited. Women with disabilities, Roma women and especially those with multiple vulnerabilities face higher risks of GBV and more barriers to accessing essential services.

The National Agency for the Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, and the National Coordinating Council for Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, set up in 2024 under the Prime Minister's Office, are functioning but lack capacity.



Moldova offers 10 state-funded and four CSO-contracted support services for GBV victims, but capacity is limited. Work is progressing and 200 of the 260 needed shelter places according to the Istanbul Convention are available. Access is especially difficult for women with disabilities or mental health conditions. Shelter staff need ongoing capacity building, though GBV specialists are now in place across all social protection units. With regards to sexual violence, there is only one operational Integrated Regional Service for victims of sexual violence in Ungheni, which needs to transition from donor funding to state financing.

There is no centralised GBV database for evidence-based decision making, effective case management and referrals tracking. However, a concept and regulation for an information system have been approved. It will provide data disaggregated by sex, type of violence, among other indicators. Moldova further improved access to justice for victims.

Awareness-raising efforts should focus on outreach to rural areas and women in vulnerable situations, such as women with disabilities, women belonging to ethnic and linguistic minorities, rural women and older women.

Rights of the child

The legal and institutional framework on rights of the child is in place and in line with *EU acquis* and international frameworks. but implementation and enforcement need to be improved to strengthen child protection systems and ensure effective realisation of children's rights.

In March 2025, Moldova deposited its instrument of accession to the Convention of 19 October 1996 on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement, and Cooperation in respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children. Acceding to this international convention strengthens Moldova's legal framework for cross-border protection of children, facilitating international cooperation in cases involving parental responsibility and child protection measures.

Despite progress, child protection in Moldova still faces major gaps, including on case tracking and a lack of specialised services for young children and child victims. Moldova needs to strengthen the capacities of the Child Rights Ombudsman.

In relation to child-friendly justice, there are now three centres in Chișinău and Balti providing psychological support to child victims of crimes and residents from other communities can seek assistance through the National Centre for the Prevention of Child Abuse. While these centres play a crucial role in supporting child victims, there remains a need for expanded services and recruitment of professionals to ensure comprehensive coverage across the country, including the extension of an additional centre in the southern region and the recruitment of 200 community-based specialists by 2027

Moldova should also make further progress towards the deinstitutionalisation of children with disabilities and children deprived of parental care, by closing remaining large residential institutions and transitioning to family-based and community-based care.

Persons with disabilities

The legal and institutional framework for the rights of persons with disabilities needs further alignment with EU *acquis* and relevant international standards. Implementation and enforcement is insufficient and the protection of these rights needs to be prioritised. Integration of disability inclusion into planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of governmental policies and budgets remains limited. Integration of disability inclusion into planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of governmental policies and budgets remains limited.

While de-institutionalisation continued to progress slowly, reports by civil society and investigative media highlight serious ongoing human rights violations in institutions. Apart from urgently tackling these violations, further efforts are needed to move towards independent living and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Accessibility in Moldova remains an issue and is not yet in line with the EU *acquis,* including with the European Accessibility Act. Laws mention universal design but lack enforceable standards. Public procurement and infrastructure policies omit accessibility, and many official websites are still non-compliant with accessibility requirements. Support services are insufficient; mobile teams help but need wider coverage. Despite targeted investments, the availability of assistive devices for medical and educational purposes continues to be inadequate. Data collection on persons with disabilities is insufficient and existing data quality is low.

Children with disabilities remain exposed to higher protection risks, including violence and family separation. The placement of children with intellectual disabilities in psychiatric institutions continues to be a systemic issue and a human rights violation.

LGBTIQ persons

The legal protection of the rights of LGBTIQ persons is adequate but LGBTIQ persons face discrimination.

Although negative stereotypes in Chișinău are less prevalent, the 2024 social distance index showed that LGBTIQ persons faced low acceptance levels in the society. During 2024, the Equality Council found discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation in two cases. Overall, 31 crimes motivated by prejudice based on gender identity and one crime motivated by prejudice based on sexual orientation were recorded.

Some political actors and the Moldovan Orthodox Church continue to be vocal against the LGBTIQ community. Russian-affiliated local media propagate misinformation and targeted online disinformation campaigns have multiplied. Despite a tense climate, on 15 June, the Pride proceeded without major incidents, though a brief clash occurred with clergy-led protesters. Earlier, the Chișinău Municipal Council had attempted to ban the event, and a disinformation campaign had targeted the LGBTIQ community.

Procedural rights and victims' rights

The legal framework on procedural rights is largely in place, but certain systemic issues persist and the rights of victims of crime need to be strengthened.

Systemic issues continue to affect the right to a fair trial. While the ECtHR found only three violations in 2024, several cases remain under enhanced supervision due to procedural rights concerns. Common issues include inadequate reasoning in convictions, reopening of final judgments after late appeals by prosecutors, and dismissal of revision requests in tax cases. Abuses of pre-trial detention persist. Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code in 2024 improved the rights of injured parties, ensuring equal appeal rights. Challenges remain in ensuring access to justice for persons belonging to minorities and people with disabilities. Legal aid is widely available, with increased training to improve its quality. Moldova has yet to fully align its laws with relevant EU directives on criminal procedural rights and safeguards.

Protection of minorities

The legal and institutional framework for the rights of people belonging to minorities is incomplete and people belonging to minorities are broadly integrated. Moldova needs to further enhance dialogue with ethnic and linguistic minorities. The capacity and autonomy of the Agency for Interethnic Relations require strengthening. The National programme on learning the Romanian language led to significant results, with 12 700 individuals enrolled in 2024.

Moldova has signed but not yet ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Ongoing efforts to ensure the promotion of cultural and linguistic rights of people belonging to minorities should continue. Moldova needs to draw up and implement the Multilingual education action plan (including on minority languages) in the education system and ensure sufficient budget for the implementation of the multiannual education programme. The increase of teaching hours in the Ukrainian language is a positive step, as is the publication of educational material in Gagauz, Bulgarian and Russian. Institutional

efforts to revive the use of the Gagauz language should be reinforced. Local media remain essential to foster linguistic diversity.

Following reports of irregularities during the Bashkan elections in May 2023, tensions persist between the central authorities and the elected authorities of the Gagauz Autonomous Unit.

Roma

The Roma in Moldova continue to suffer from racism and discrimination. The implementation of the 2022-2025 National Support Programme for the Roma People should be reinforced. Although 16 municipalities approved local level action plans to support the Roma, local authorities need support to build their capacity at local level. The low salaries and working conditions of state-funded Roma community mediators remain inadequate to the scope of the task.

The exceedingly low level of school attendance of Roma refugee children has slightly increased (from 1 114 pupils in 2023 to 1 645 pupils in 2024) but remains a major concern. A National Roma focal point has been appointed. An inclusive and participatory approach with meaningful participation of the Roma community should be ensured. Roma displaced persons from Ukraine face challenges in relation to housing, employment, documentation and discrimination in reception centres.

Citizenship rights

No developments were reported during the reporting period.

2.2.2 Chapter 24: Justice, freedom and security

The EU has common rules for border and migration management, visa policy, and asylum. Schengen cooperation entails the lifting of border controls inside the EU. There is also cooperation in the fight against serious and organised crime and terrorism, and judicial, police and customs cooperation, all with the support of the EU Justice and Home Affairs agencies.

Fight against serious and organised crime

The legal framework on serious and organised crime is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*.

The capacity to fight against serious and organised crime needs to be improved.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Moldova is partially aligned with the EU *acquis* in the field of police cooperation and the fight against organised crime. Moldova continued to implement its general home affairs strategy for 2022-2030 - revised in August 2025 - and its six sectoral development strategies specifically on organised crime, public order, safety, civil protection, migration and education/ ethics/ digitalisation. The sectoral development strategies are set to expire in December 2025, and Moldova should promptly develop and adopt subsequent ones covering 2026-2030.

Moldova has a national serious and organised crime threat assessment (SOCTA) to guide its operational activities, and recommendations from it have been included in the action plan of the General Police Inspectorate for 2025.

A high turnover rate and a significant number of vacancies continue to affect the operational capacity of law enforcement agencies. Moldova should ensure that institutions responsible for the fight against organised crime are equipped with adequate human and financial resources.

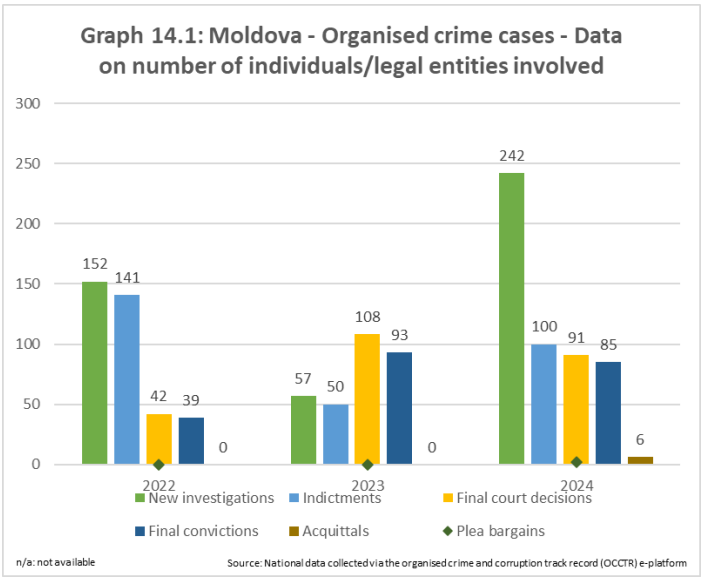
The mechanism for the confiscation of criminal assets was improved by introducing significant reforms to the normative acts in March 2025. The new legislation enhances the powers of the Criminal Asset Recovery Agency (CARA), granting it broader authority to manage confiscated assets and introducing clearer procedures for the temporary administration of seized property. A national register for seized and confiscated assets was put in place in December 2024 as a centralised database for statistics for asset recovery institutions. Therefore, increasing transparency and effective tracking of assets throughout legal proceedings is required. The reforms also clarified the roles and responsibilities of the institutions involved in the enforcement of court decisions on asset confiscation, to strengthen coordination and increase the efficiency of the asset recovery process.

Moldova has not yet developed a sectoral strategy on **cybercrime** and needs to take further steps to align with the EU *acquis* in this area. It also needs to ratify the Second Additional Protocol to the Cybercrime Convention on enhanced cooperation and disclosure of electronic evidence. The cybercrime unit under the Ministry of the Interior has a central forensic laboratory, but its capacities should be further strengthened, including on cryptocurrencies.

The criminalisation of all forms of **child sexual abuse** is pending. A draft amendment to align with the EU Directive on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, as well as child pornography has been adopted in first reading but is awaiting final approval by the Parliament. Moldova is encouraged to follow the ongoing negotiations at the EU level in the revision of this EU Directive.

The legal framework for **trafficking in human beings** is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. Moldova continues to coordinate and implement the national strategy on trafficking in human beings adopted in September 2023. Moldova should strengthen its legal framework and introduce stricter tools for public authorities to investigate and prosecute new forms of exploitation.

To combat the **trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW)**, Moldova adopted the national policy document and small arms and light weapons control for 2026-2030 in August 2025. Moldova continues to implement the objectives of the EU action plan on firearms trafficking and participates in its regional roadmap on SALW. Further efforts have been taken to operationalise the national focal point on arms in line with EU standards, in addition to receiving on-site expertise for methodological support, and these efforts should continue. Moldova needs to continue its efforts in aligning with the EU *acquis* including in respect of the Firearms Directive.



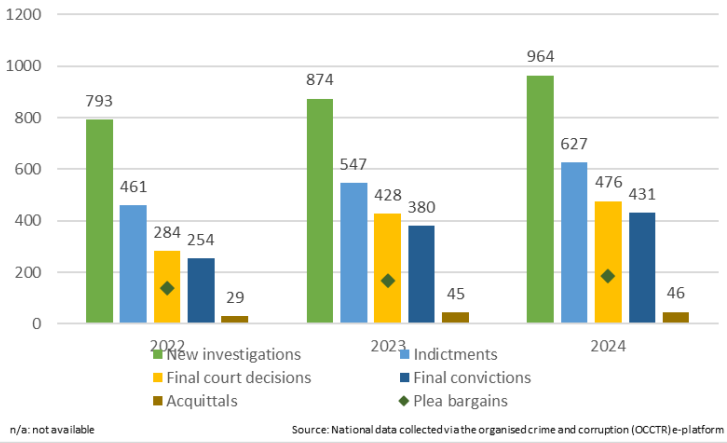
Implementation and enforcement capacity

Moldova continued its efforts to build a track record in fighting organised crime. Further work is needed to tackle complex organised crime cases, including enhancing the continuous training system of law enforcement services and

identification of their training needs. Moldova should continue to demonstrate detection, prevention and prosecution of serious and organised crime, leading to a solid track record of final convictions including in cases of trafficking in human beings, child sexual abuse, drug trafficking, cybercrime, money laundering and firearms trafficking.

On **intelligence-led policing**, further work is needed to develop efficient intelligence data collection, analysis and dissemination. Moldova should also strengthen its capacity in terms of equipment and personnel to reduce its response time in the context of cross-border organised crime investigations.

Graph 14.2: Moldova - Serious crime* cases - Data on number of individuals/legal entities involved**



n/a: not available

Source: National data collected via the organised crime and corruption (OCCTR) e-platform

* Serious crime cases stems from the aggregated data of cases of money laundering, cybercrime, production and trafficking of drugs, firearms related offenses, terrorism, trafficking in human beings, smuggling of persons. Corruption cases are showcased in Chapter 23.
** Individuals being investigated, prosecuted or convicted for several offences are counted only once.

International police cooperation, including with EU Member States and EU agencies, was further strengthened. Moldova continues its good cooperation with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) under comprehensive agreements. In April 2025, the working arrangement with CEPOL was renewed.

Europol continues to deploy guest officers to Moldova, and a Moldovan liaison officer is posted to Europol's headquarters. In 2024, border police representatives submitted 862 requests to verify information against Europol databases, marking a 247% increase compared to 2023. Moldova has stepped up its participation in the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT). It took part in 154 operational actions in the period 2024-2025, a 50% increase compared with 2023.

Moldova has rolled out SIENA (Secure Information Exchange Network Application) to several law enforcement authorities and information exchanges facilitated through the system have improved.

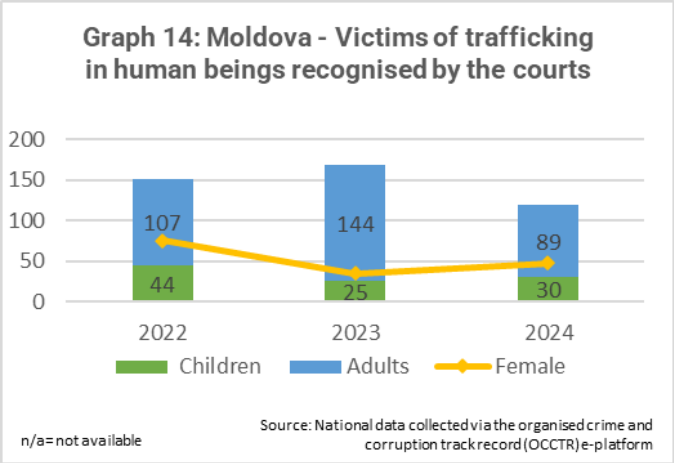
On **cybercrime**, more efforts are needed to strengthen law enforcement response focusing on the detection and traceability of cybercrime data and the prosecution of cyber criminals. In September 2025 Moldova put in place an online platform for citizens to report on cybercrime they may have been victim of.

Although Moldova has strengthened existing capacities for investigating and prosecuting **crimes against children committed through the internet**, further work is needed. Key new developments in this area include the launch of the National Centre for Child Safety and new services for child victims and offenders.

On the **fight against trafficking in human beings,** while Moldova demonstrated continued efforts through increased interinstitutional coordination and monitoring mechanisms as well as engagement with EU partners via EMPACT, it needs to strengthen law enforcement investigative capacities. Moldova should build stronger capacities to combat **online trafficking** (recruitment, advertisement and exploitation, in particular of minors). It should

also continue to address gaps in the early detection and identification of potential victims and the assistance to victims.

On the **trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW)**, Moldova continued to actively cooperate with EU agencies, as well as with the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC). Traceability markings were applied to 1 112 weapons. In March 2025, the General Police Inspectorate in cooperation with SEESAC carried out the ninth round of disposal of small arms and light weapons by melting 2 177 firearms. Physical security and stockpile safety were further strengthened through completed upgrades to SALW storage and evidence rooms.



In 2024, the General Police Inspectorate placed 14 adults and one minor in **witness protection programmes**.

Moldovan Law Enforcement authorities have made some progress in dealing with gender-based violence cases, including adopting a victim-centred approach in a more systematic manner

In 2024, the Criminal Asset Recovery Agency (CARA) continued its **asset recovery efforts**, with 102 assets frozen and approximately 112 million lei deposited to the treasury accounts. In 2024, a total of 201 control procedures were finalised, covering asset and personal interest declarations, conflicts of interest, incompatibilities, restrictions, and limitations. Despite this activity, the number of final judicial rulings confirming unjustified wealth remained low, and sanctions continue to face challenges in court due to procedural appeals.

Cooperation in the field of drugs

Cooperation in the field of drugs needs to be improved.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

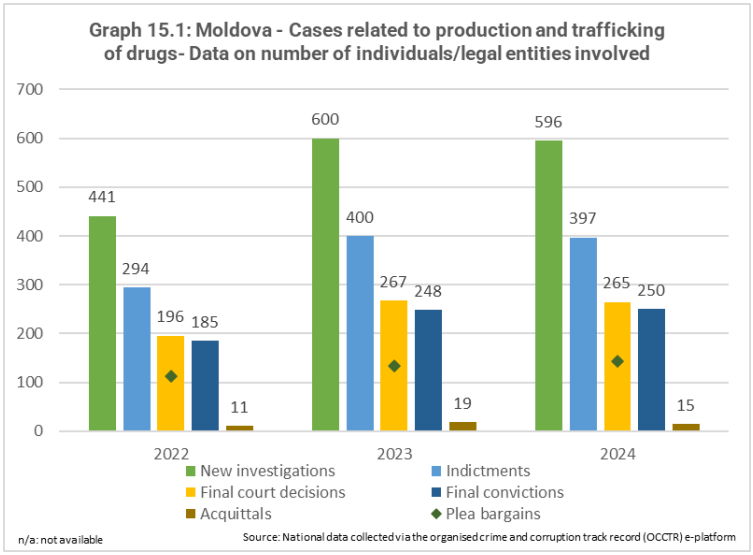
Moldova's institutional model of cooperation in the field of drugs is broadly in line with EU standards. Progress has been made to establish the legal framework for the National Early Warning System and for the National Drugs Observatory (NDO). Three working groups under the National Anti-Drug Commission are tasked with drafting the national strategic framework on drugs. Moldova still needs to adopt a national drug strategy and relevant action plans that address prevention, supply and demand reduction, as well as drug-related harm.

In 2024, following a self-assessment, the NDO drafted an action plan for strengthening its capacity for 2025-2027. Further work is necessary to fully operationalise the NDO and put in place the early warning system on the information exchange on new psychoactive substances.

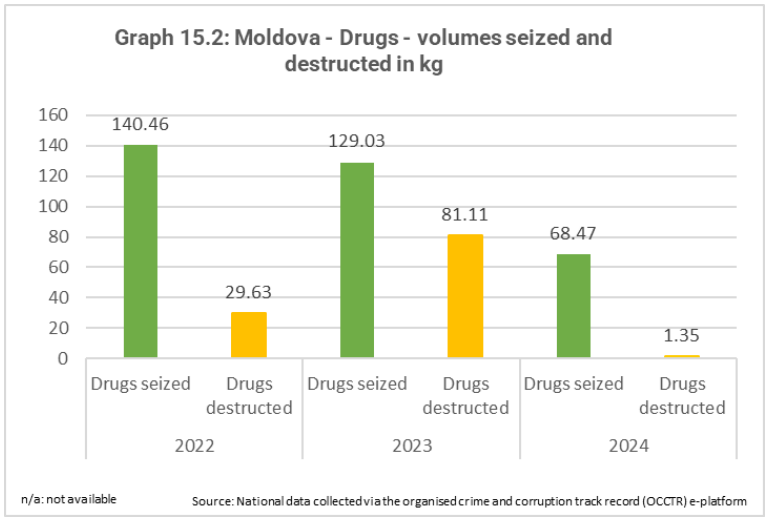
Cooperation with the EU Drugs Agency (EUDA) is good; however, the quality of data provided needs to be improved. Cooperation in this field also continues with Europol and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

Implementation and enforcement capacity

Moldova is a transit country for drugs. In 2024, it recorded a significant decrease in drug-related offences compared with previous years. In 2024, Moldova demonstrated a good level of cooperation on drug-related issues with neighbouring countries and beyond and increased the number of information exchanges via SIENA. Moldova participates in the EMPACT Operational Action Plans on Cannabis, Cocaine and Heroin and on Synthetic Drugs and new psychoactive substances (NPS). Moldova should further intensify operational cooperation to fight against drug trafficking, including within EMPACT and cooperation with Europol.



Moldova should continue to increase its forensic capacity, including that of its laboratory services to detect NPS, and enhance evidence-based interventions and awareness activities with regard to addiction, prevention, treatment risk and harm reduction, rehabilitation and social reintegration and recovery.



There are treatment centres for drug addiction in eight localities, and access to treatments is available in 13 prisons. During 2024, 139 new patients registered with the national opiate pharmacotherapy programme, bringing the total to 2 625 beneficiaries (up from 2 332 in 2022 and 2 376 in 2023).

Fight against terrorism

The legal framework for the fight against terrorism, for countering violent extremism and for critical infrastructure protection and the resilience of critical entities is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. Further improvements in these fields are needed.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Moldova's anti-terrorism legislation is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*.

The national security strategy covers the fight against terrorism and terrorist financing. The level of preparation in protecting critical infrastructure remains low. The national programme for the consolidation and realisation of anti-terrorist protection measures is not aligned with the EU *acquis* on the resilience of critical entities. These aspects should be considered by Moldova when renewing the national programme beyond 2026.

There is no national strategy in place dedicated to the fight against terrorism, nor a strategy or action plan in line with the EU policy and key principles on preventing and countering violent extremism. Moldova should also implement the Terrorist Content Online regulation.

There is no central entity in place responsible for coordinating the prevention of radicalisation. The institutional framework on this needs to be improved, including by defining competences, tasks and responsibilities for institutions working on preventing and countering radicalisation and violent extremism.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

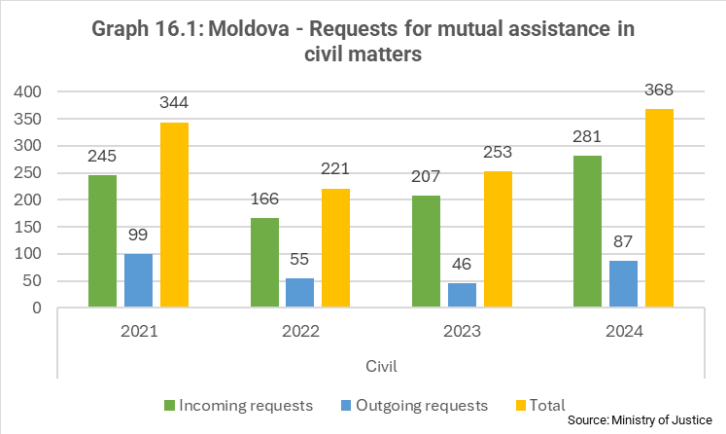
Moldova has a national terrorist alert system that is structured in four levels, currently set at a moderate threat level.

During the reporting period, one criminal case was brought against a group of individuals suspected of committing terrorist-related crimes. In the reporting period no terrorist (or terrorist-related) attacks have been committed, and no convictions have been reported. The number of persons expelled from Moldova based on national security reasons and suspicion of terrorist profiles remained stable in 2024 – 11 persons in 2024, the same as in 2023. However, the number of persons who were denied access to Moldova at the border crossings on possible extremist-violent grounds has substantially increased in 2024, reaching a total of 193 persons, compared to 35 in 2023.

Judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters

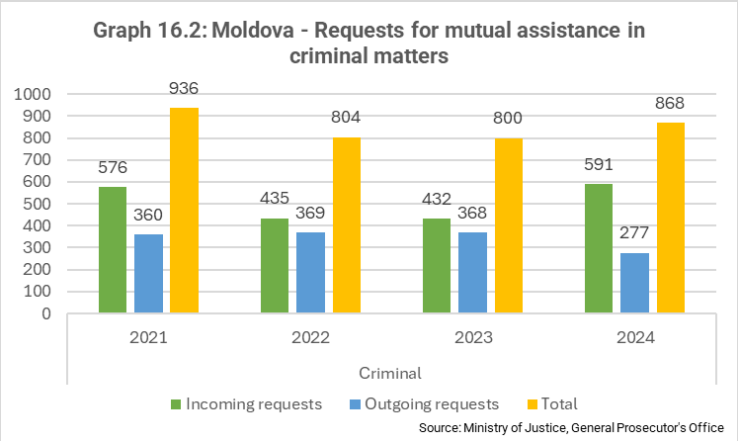
Judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters has improved but further efforts are needed.

Moldova has to accede to the 2007 Hague Child Support Convention, the 2027 Maintenance Obligations Protocol and the 2019 Hague Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Judgments in Civil or Commercial Matters.



Moldova has continued to strengthen cooperation with the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), including by concluding a working arrangement between the EPPO and the National Anti-corruption Centre (NAC) on 26 November 2024. In 2024, the EPPO sent five requests for mutual legal assistance to the Moldovan authorities.

Moldova maintained good cooperation with partners concerning mutual legal assistance (MLA) in criminal matters for the purpose of asset recovery in particular.



A part-time liaison prosecutor has been seconded to Eurojust since October 2023, and a contact point has been appointed. Between 1 March 2024 – 31 July 2025, Moldova was involved in 44 new cases at Eurojust, including in 13 joint investigation teams, most of them related to organised crime, drug trafficking and money laundering. Moldova should increase their secondment to Eurojust to full time.

Legal and irregular migration

The legal framework for management of legal and irregular migration is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*.

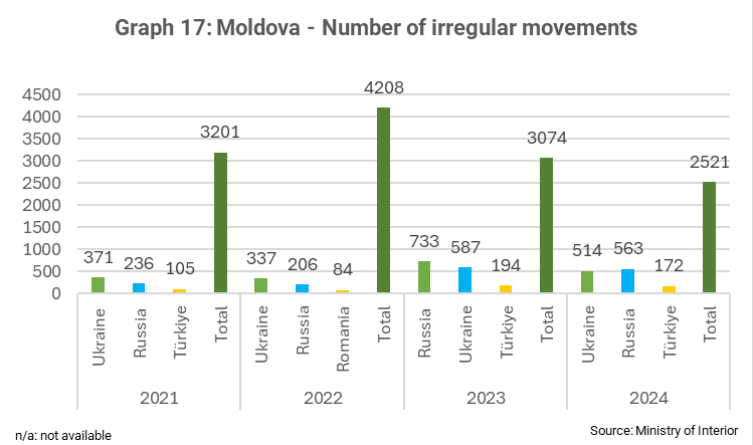
The management of legal and irregular migration needs to be improved.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Moldova continued to implement the national programme for managing migration flows, asylum and integration of foreigners for 2022-2025 and its action plan. In 2024, 48.2% of the actions from the action plan were implemented.

The regulatory framework for managing irregular migration has been updated during the reporting period. In the field of return, amendments made to the legal regime for foreigners aimed to partially align with the EU Directive on common standards and procedures for returning illegally staying third-country nationals entered into force in January 2025. In February 2025, the temporary protection granted to displaced persons from Ukraine was extended until March 2026.

Implementation and enforcement capacity



Moldova currently has enough reception capacity due to a steady decline in demand. The reception capacity is not fully used, with an occupancy rate of approximately 77% out of the overall 1 651 places. Several refugee accommodation centres (RACs) have been temporarily closed due to a fall in the number of requests and the need to reduce costs, but they could be reopened in the event of a refugee crisis.

The **EU-Moldova status agreement** entered into force on 1 November 2022. As of September 2025, there were 104 Frontex-deployed officers at Moldova's borders with Romania and Ukraine as well as its airport in Chișinău. The renewal of the Border Guard Service's working arrangement with Frontex is ongoing. The cooperation remains good.

Moldova takes part in the Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling, and is invited to renew its engagement at the occasion of the Global Alliance's second conference scheduled to take place at the end 2025.

The implementation of the EU-Moldova readmission agreement is good. There are 15 Agreements on readmission concluded and 26 Additional Protocols signed with the EU Member states and other countries of origin. Conclusion of readmission agreements with third countries and further agreements or arrangements with countries of origin should continue.

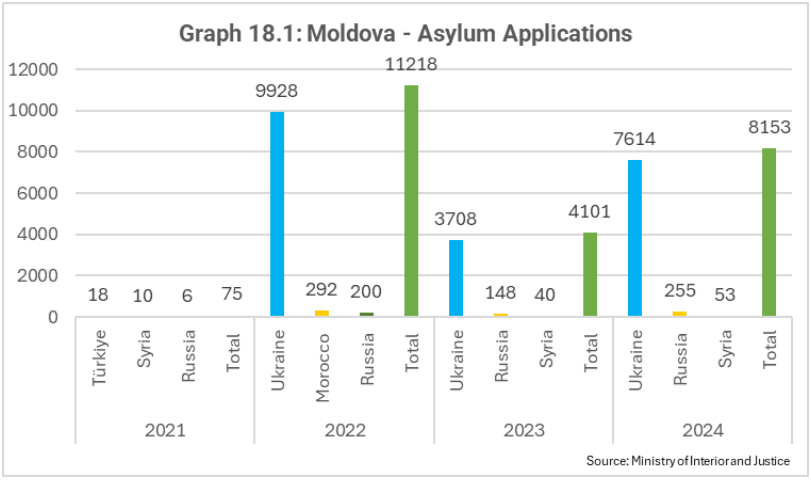
Asylum

The legal framework on asylum is largely partially aligned with the EU *acquis*.

The management of asylum is broadly satisfactory.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Moldovan legislation on asylum is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*, and the country is party to the relevant international conventions.

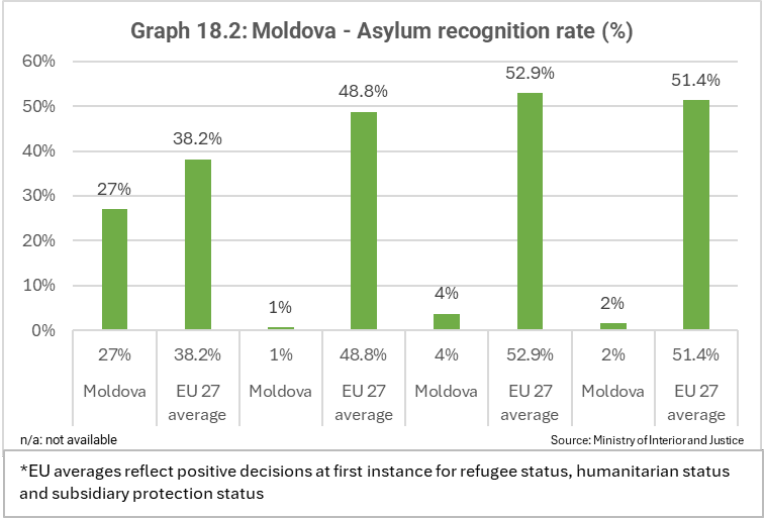


Moldova took steps to strengthen the asylum system in particular for people with special needs, to include of certain legal definitions and to put in place new rules to prevent abuse within the system. This includes the amendments to the Asylum Law that came into effect in January 2025. Moldova should revise and strengthen its national system for the referral of asylum seekers with special needs.

The temporary protection granted to displaced persons from Ukraine aligns with EU Temporary Protection providing access to the right of residence, identity documentation, the right to education, access to the labour market and healthcare. In 2025, the programme to harness the potential of foreigners – including refugees – arriving in the country for Moldova's socio-economic development while ensuring that their rights are in line with EU acquis was adopted in 2025 and will run until 2027.

From 1 March 2023 to 31 July 2025, 105 453 **displaced persons** from Ukraine have registered for temporary protection. Lack of resources remains the main challenge faced by the national authorities handling a large number of requests for protection.

Implementation and enforcement capacity



As a consequence of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Moldova has become not only a transit country but also a destination country for people fleeing the war. From 24 February 2022 to 31 July 2025, 1 155 480 Ukrainian citizens entered Moldova via the Moldova-Ukraine border. 111 034 foreign citizens who entered since the start of the full-scale war remain on the territory of Moldova. Of this, 98 329 are Ukrainian citizens and 12 705 are third-country nationals, whereas 49 955 are minors.

In 2024, Moldova received 7 922 asylum applications in comparison to 4 101 applications in 2023. The increasing number of asylum seekers continues to put national authorities under pressure. Moldovan authorities should continue the ongoing process to reform the Bureau for Asylum and Migration into the General Inspectorate for Migration and equip it with more staff and equipment, including a digitalisation system interoperable with other national systems.

Access to and provision of information on the asylum procedure need to be improved, as does access to information and legal counselling for asylum seekers at Chișinău international airport to prevent any potential cases of refoulement.

Moldova benefits from regional support provided by the European Union Agency for Asylum facilitated by the Prague Process.

Visa policy

The visa policy is not fully aligned with that of the EU, in particular the list of countries whose nationals require a visa to enter the EU. Moldova's list of visa-free countries diverges by 11 countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Qatar, Russia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu) whose nationals require a visa for short stays in the EU. The visa regime was reinstated for Cuba following an amendment that came into effect in March 2025.

Further progress on visa policy alignment is required. Pending full alignment, a more rigorous screening of visa-free arrivals of third-country nationals, particularly those from countries presenting security or irregular migration risks, is necessary.

The European Commission's seventh report under the visa suspension mechanism, published in December 2024, concluded that Moldova continues to meet the visa liberalisation benchmarks.

Schengen governance and external borders

The legislative and strategic framework for the management of external borders is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. The management of borders needs to be improved.

Legal alignment, strategic and institutional frameworks

Given the need to reinforce and establish solid foundations for the Schengen system, it is necessary to continue strengthening the national Schengen governance by establishing the Schengen Action Plan covering the whole framework.

Moldova has a national concept for European Integrated Border Management (EIBM), including a four-tier access control model, in line with the Frontex Regulation. A programme for integrated border management (2022-2025) is in place. A new Integrated Border Management Programme for 2026-2030 must be adopted, in line with the EU's multiannual strategic policy cycle for integrated border management. EIBM principles should be better reflected in national strategic documents and subsequently implemented in practice.

The new Law regarding the state border of Moldova, adopted in February 2024, entered into force on 6 January 2025 and aims to align with the EU *acquis* in this area. Moldova needs to adopt implementing legislation by operationalising the second line checks in all border crossing points. It also needs to strengthen its capacity to conduct second line checks in line with EU standards (with adequate equipment including digital, infrastructure, and dedicated/specialised personnel).

The Law on the use of the passenger's name record data entered into force in December 2024 and aims to align with the related EU Directive. Moldova should strengthen the Passenger Information Unit (PIU) with adequate personnel, equipment (including digital) and a solid legal framework. Moldova has the legal framework in place for the collection and transfer of advance passenger information (API) since 2011, but it has not implemented it yet. Full alignment with the EU API/PNR framework should be ensured.

Moldova is a member of the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network, a regional platform for information exchange and intelligence sharing. National procedures related to INTERPOL alerts are harmonised with European procedures, and a unified approach is in place.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

On **international cooperation**, Moldova continued a good cooperation with Frontex. Information exchange with Frontex takes place centrally and at joint points of contact. Cooperation with neighbouring border services in Romania and Ukraine takes place via joint patrols and joint border control measures together with customs.

Common procedure for competent authorities on API/PNR data processing was established through the interinstitutional order signed in June 2025 between relevant institutions.

Moldova has continued its efforts to train law enforcement institutions on **corruption-related measures**. In 2024, 28 employees of the Ministry of Interior were trained. Disciplinary procedures against border guards should be more systematically applied where needed. In 2024, 78 corruption cases were documented within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, compared to 43 in 2023.

Counterfeiting of the euro (criminal law aspect)

The relevant legislation on the suppression of counterfeit currency is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*.

Moldova is not party to the 1929 Geneva Convention for the suppression of counterfeiting currency. It should set up a national central office on this. The Criminal Code provides for criminal liability for counterfeiting and is partly aligned with EU *acquis*.

2.3. ECONOMIC CRITERIA

Table 19: **Moldova - Key economic figures**	**2016-21** average	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
GDP per capita (% of EU-27 in PPS)[1)]	27	28	29	30
Real GDP growth	3.7	-4.6	1.2	0.1
Activity rate of the population aged 20-64 (%), total	n/a	53.7	58.4	59.1
female	*n/a*	*50.0*	*55.3*	*57.5*
male	*n/a*	*57.8*	*61.9*	*60.9*
Unemployment rate of the population aged 20-64 (%), total	n/a	3.1	4.6	4.0
female	*n/a*	*2.6*	*4.2*	*4.1*
male	*n/a*	*3.5*	*5.0*	*3.8*
Employment of the population aged 20-64 (annual growth %)	n/a	2.0	1.8	-3.3
Nominal wages (annual growth %)	12.1	16.3	16.9	
Consumer price index (annual growth %)	5.0	28.7	13.4	4.7
Exchange rate against EUR	20.5	19.9	19.6	19.3
Current account balance (% of GDP)	-8.4	-16.6	-11.4	-16.0
Net foreign direct investment, FDI (% of GDP)	2.1	3.7	2.2	1.8
General government balance (% of GDP)	-3.4	-3.2	-5.2	-3.9
General government debt (% of GDP)	34.2	35.0	34.9	38.2

Sources: wiiw, IMF, National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance, National Bank of Moldova

2.3.1. The existence of a functioning market economy

Economic governance

The authorities are taking some steps in implementing reforms supported by international partners, but adoption of laws critical to strengthening economic governance is still outstanding. Moldova completed an EU macro-financial assistance operation worth EUR 295 million with the final disbursement in December 2024, following the successful implementation of all policy conditions. On 17 December 2024, the IMF completed the sixth review under the ECF/EFF, and the second review under the resilience and sustainability facility (RSF) with Moldova. The programme expired in October 2025 with two reviews not completed in 2025. In response to concerns about the independence of the central bank following the abrupt dismissal of the Governor of the National Bank of Moldova, additional amendments to the central bank law have been drafted to strengthen the institutional setup of the National Bank of Moldova. However, their adoption by Parliament remains pending.

Moldova participated in the economic and financial dialogue with the EU in May 2025, following the submission of its second economic reform programme. Implementation of the 2024 policy guidance was partial, with progress on fiscal consolidation, some steps taken to advance fiscal structural reforms and significant efforts in the area of monetary policy.

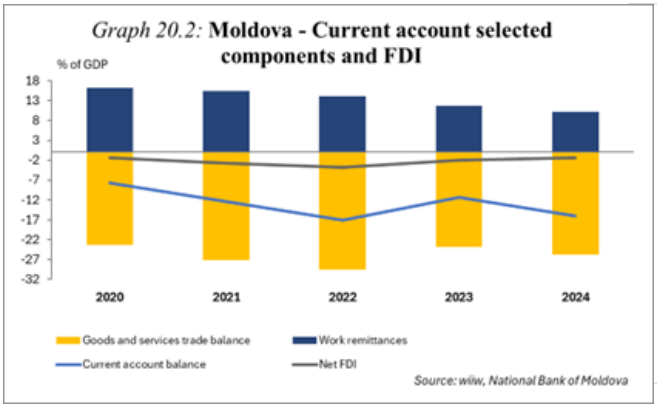
Macroeconomic stability

The economic recovery, which started in 2023, came to a halt in the second half of 2024. Real GDP growth stagnated as a result of Russia's war of aggression against neighbouring Ukraine, a sharp drop in agricultural output due to a severe drought and decline in agricultural exports and mineral re-exports. The impact remained contained thanks to a rebound in private consumption underpinned by a nearly 10% increase in real wages. Strong

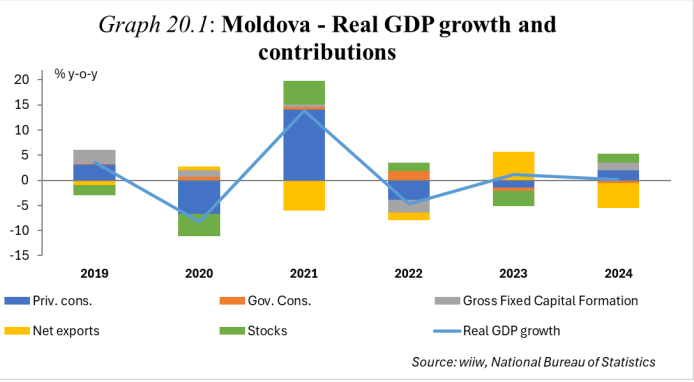
private investment growth driven by looser monetary policy in 2024 and a support programme for real estate investments also supported economic activity. Net export remained a drag on growth (down by 3.7 pps. as share of GDP), due to a decrease in exports amidst strong import growth, particularly during the second half of 2024.

Real GDP growth is set to slowly recover in 2025 and 2026 as the drag on growth stemming from the weak harvest in 2024 fades, agriculture partly recovers and domestic demand remains strong. Moldova's income per capita is just under a third of that of the EU, having increased by more than 10 percentage points over the previous decade, although the crises in recent years have slowed the pace of convergence. This trend also contributed to slower reduction in poverty levels. The recently adopted EU Reform and Growth Facility is expected to advance key structural reforms and increase much needed investment to support Moldova's economic convergence.

Graph 20.2: **Moldova - Current account selected components and FDI**



Graph 20.1: **Moldova - Real GDP growth and contributions**

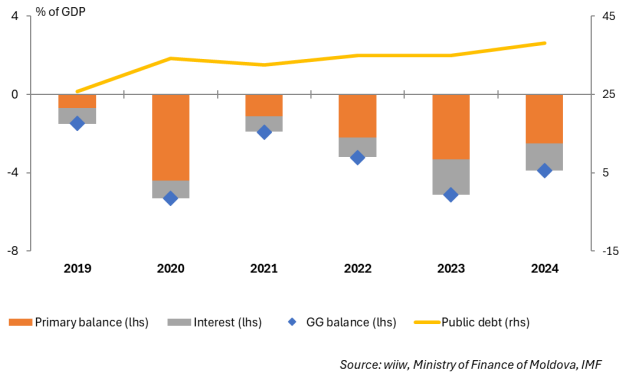


Moldova's current account balance continues to be structurally affected by its heavy reliance on volatile agricultural exports and vulnerability to imported energy price fluctuations. By end 2024, the current account deficit increased to 16% of GDP, up from 11.4% in 2023, reflecting falling re-exports to Ukraine (mostly minerals) and a sharp drop of agricultural exports – a trend that is projected to persist through 2025. While goods exports as share of GDP dropped services exports registered a modest increase., largely supported by growth in the IT sector. At the same time, imports remained strong supported by robust private consumption. The widening current account deficit has been primarily financed by net inflows of currency and deposits, as well as loans from multilateral and bilateral donors. Remittances continued to play a significant role but fell in 2024 to 10.3% of GDP. Similarly, the inflows of foreign direct investment as a share of GDP declined from 2.2% in 2023 to 1.8% in 2024 partly reflecting persistently weak investor confidence due to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

After successful disinflation following the 2022/2023 energy shock, inflation rebounded in the second half of 2024 before slightly easing in 2025. Average annual inflation dropped from 13.4% in 2023 to 4.7% in 2024, but inflationary pressures re-emerged in mid-2024 due to rising food prices partly driven by the 2025 summer drought and increased gas prices. The National Bank of Moldova paused interest rate cuts in May 2024, maintaining a 3.6% base rate while easing reserve requirements to counteract declining private consumption toward the end of 2024. However, as inflation peaked at 9.1% in January 2025 due to a sharp increase in electricity prices following the cut-off of Russian gas to the Transnistrian region, the Central Bank increased its key policy rate. The righting of monetary policy contributed to stabilising inflation at around 8% in the first half of 2025. In the summer 2025, the NBM reduced the base rate in two steps, to 6%.

Although Moldova's public debt-to-GDP ratio remains relatively low compared to regional peers, the country has run large fiscal deficits in recent years. The fiscal deficit fell to 3.9% of GDP in 2024 (compared with 5.2% of GDP in 2023), primarily due to stronger-than-expected revenues, an under-execution of public investments and improved targeting of support measures to mitigate the impact of high energy prices on households. The 2025 budget, as amended in April and June 2025, projects the deficit to widen to 5.1% of GDP, on the back of additional expenditure in road and rail infrastructure, energy efficiency and other projects for regional development and environmental protection. It also provides for other increases in current expenditure including subsidies to agricultural producers, support to SMEs, an increase in public salaries and one-off support payments to selected groups such as students and vulnerable households. This higher spending is supported by additional funding from the Reform and Growth Facility. Additional spending to mitigate the impact of higher energy prices for households, businesses and the public sector is financed by EU grant support (as part of the Energy Package). In 2024, the public debt-to-GDP ratio increased by 3.3 percentage points, reaching 38.2% of GDP by the end of the year.

Graph 21: **Moldova - Fiscal developments**



Source: wiiw, Ministry of Finance of Moldova, IMF

Moldova has made efforts in advancing fiscal structural reforms, notably through improvements of public investment management, spending efficiency, while steps have been taken to consolidate tax expenditures. Nevertheless, total public investments fell from 1.3% of GDP in 2023 to less than 1% of GDP in 2024, while steps were taken to strengthen public investment management. The single project pipeline was successfully applied to all new investment projects in the 2025 budget. The full impact of this reform will become evident over time, once the ongoing projects (not included in the pipeline) are completed. Moldova also took steps in broadening the tax base and enhancing tax compliance, with some tax expenditures eliminated. However, a cost-benefit analysis of tax expenditures did not result in a general consolidation of tax expenditures. Instead, new tax expenditures were introduced in 2025. In terms of public spending efficiency, Moldova completed a spending review in the health sector and has begun implementing its results. A spending review on social protection is underway. However, a key challenge remains the lack of a regulatory framework that makes the implementation of spending reviews a legal requirement, as well as limited capacities in the line ministries and in the Ministry of Finance to undertake such spending reviews.

The macroeconomic policy mix has contributed to sustaining macroeconomic stability amidst several crises, yet public investment levels remain low while the recent energy price increase and the 2024 drought exposed the country's vulnerability to external shocks. The government responded swiftly to rising energy prices and increased energy support spending, supported by EU grants, to mitigate the impact on businesses and households. A new electricity compensation has been put in place for 2025 to mitigate the effects of the price shock due to the abrupt transition towards market electricity prices. The package, which compensates up to 80% of average electricity consumption provides support to all households. This support is to be phased out with energy vulnerability reduction fund remaining the main instrument to support vulnerable households. Further implementation of

the public investment reform as well as improved budget planning and execution are required to increase the much needed public investments, also facilitated by the EU Reform and Growth Facility. Monetary policy remains adequate and sufficiently tight to respond to recent inflationary pressures. The key risks for macroeconomic stability include the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, further energy price hikes given the country's large dependency on energy imports, Moldova's weak export base and a low level of preparedness to adapt to climate change as well as weaker growth among key trading partners amid a volatile global trade environment.

Functioning of product markets

Business environment

Moldova has made some progress in improving its business environment but remains affected by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and structural challenges. The government adopted several deregulation packages aimed at reducing administrative costs for firms imposed by outdated or overly complex regulation. In addition, access and use of digital public services significantly increased. Despite some progress during the reporting period, weaknesses in the rule of law continue to undermine the business environment. According to the 2024 World Bank Enterprise Survey, nearly one fifth of firms identify corruption as a major or very severe constraint, slightly above the regional average. Based on the World Bank methodology, results suggests that only 43% of surveyed firms view the courts as independent and impartial in resolving commercial disputes, while slightly less than half consider alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to be reliable. Both figures are significantly below the regional average, where approximately 75% of firms report confidence in judicial independence and the reliability of alternative dispute resolution. Despite some legal amendments, weaknesses in the insolvency and bankruptcy framework persist. In addition, a shortage of both high and low-skilled labour, regulatory uncertainty and political instability remain limiting factors to the potential for entrepreneurship and FDI. Informal employment decreased slightly in 2024, largely due to a decline in agriculture[3]. The reform of the State Labour Inspectorate has yielded some positive results, with a significantly higher number of inspections and successful cases of formalized employment, though the increase remains limited given the large size of the informal economy. Furthermore, Moldova has advanced the implementation of the programme to combat undeclared work by launching an online platform that allows individuals to anonymously and formally report suspected cases of undeclared work. A review of major taxes found personal income taxpayers concentrated in low-income brackets, potentially incentivising informal employment. However, no steps were taken to address this and to identify avenues to incentivise formalisation.

State influence on product markets

State-owned enterprises (SOEs), including those with partial state ownership, continue to dominate some competitive sectors in Moldova's economy, including transport and manufacturing. While the number of SOEs has declined by around 20% since 2019, primarily due to liquidation and restructuring efforts, their productivity remains significantly lower

[3] According to World Economics (2024), which uses an average of the latest estimates from economists around the world, Moldova's informal economy represents about 37.1% of GDP, a decrease by almost 4 pps. compared to 2023. Any estimations need to be taken with caution given the variety of methodological approaches.

than that of private sector firms. Notably, around one third of SOE operations are still concentrated in competitive sectors such as transport services and manufacturing. Price controls and state production in the food sector continue to be in place, albeit for a limited range of food products. Prices of pharmaceuticals are regulated at the wholesale level. The amount of State aid granted in Moldova has been declining in recent years, reaching 1.35% of GDP in 2023 – still slightly above EU levels (1.09% in 2023). In 2024, important steps were taken to bring the regional State aid scheme in line with the EU *acquis*.

Privatisation and restructuring

Progress on the ongoing SOE reform remains limited, with the most important steps still pending implementation. In November 2024, the government adopted the programme on administration of state public property for 2024-2027, which outlines a roadmap to implement the results of the triage exercise and pursue corporate governance reform until 2027. Following the triage exercise, 5 out of the 55 SOEs identified for restructuring have been transformed into other legal forms of organisation such as public institutions. Efforts are underway to digitalise the public property register, providing more transparency and a basis for the implementation of the triage results. The number of SOEs that have adopted a corporate governance code increased by 13, reaching 43 SOEs. However, the implementation at company level often lags behind. Three SOEs set up audit committees, bringing the total number to 11; however, they do not yet publicly report on their activities Steps are being taken to amend the regulatory framework governing the management and privatisation of public property assets with the adoption by Parliament still pending.

Functioning of the financial market

The mainly foreign-owned banking sector remains stable as capital adequacy, liquidity, and profitability remained strong in 2024. In 2024, the high capital adequacy ratio decreased slightly, primarily due to increased lending activity. The liquidity coverage ratio remains well above the levels before the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and significantly exceeds the 100% regulatory threshold. The upward trend in profitability slowed in 2024 due to a lower interest income, but profitability remained strong.

Lending to households and businesses increased strongly in 2024, supported by looser monetary policy and government support programmes, but remains relatively low with credit to the economy accounting for 25.6% of GDP in 2024. Credit growth in local currency reached pre-crisis levels, at around 16% y-o-y, largely driven by higher real estate lending supported by the Prima Casă PLUS support programme and lower interest rates. This contributed to rising property prices in major cities, further driven by supply constraints and suggesting increased credit risks. Non-bank lending growth slowed due to stricter lending rules. The non-performing loans (NPL) ratio fell from 5.6% at the end of 2023 to 4.2% in December 2024. The banking sector remains relatively concentrated, with the three largest banks holding more than 60% of total assets. The government continued to support access to finance, notably through interest rate subsidies and guarantee programmes while also initiating the development of its first National Financial Inclusion Strategy. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of access to finance programmes appears to be undermined by insufficient coordination among existing programmes and a limited focus on supporting value added activities calling for enhanced monitoring and evaluation.

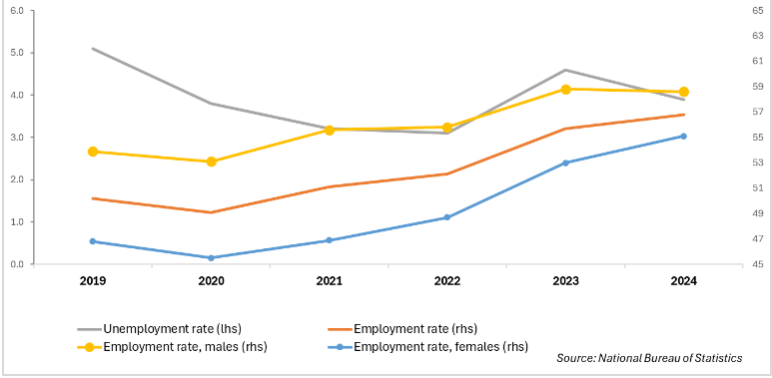
Moldova's integration into the EU financial system is progressing. On 2 January 2025, the NBM switched to using euro from US dollars as the reference currency for the official

exchange rate of the Moldovan leu, reflecting the increasing role of the euro in external trade, remittances and FDI flows.

Functioning of the labour market

Improvements in the labour market slowed down, primarily driven by the economic downturn during the second half of 2024. While both the employment and labour participation rate for men aged 20-64 years edged down in 2024, mainly in rural areas as well as industry and agriculture, female employment maintained a positive trajectory, albeit weaker than in 2023. Moldova's overall labour market participation rate increased by 0.7 in 2024 but remains significantly lower than the EU average, standing at just 59.1% compared to nearly 76% in the EU. However, at the beginning of 2025, the employment rate for both men and women (15 years and older) was significantly below the same period of the previous year. The unemployment rate decreased to 3.9% in 2024 thanks to measures such as increased vocational education and training (VET) support and higher start-up subsidies. The simultaneous decline in both unemployment and employment is likely explained by greater participation in VET, persistently high emigration rates and seasonal work abroad. The share of young people not in employment, education, or training aged 19-25 (NEET) continued its downward trend of recent years and declined by 2.1 percentage points compared to the end of 2023. This improvement likely reflects expanded active labour market measures and efforts to enhance VET. However, the NEET rate remains high at 26%, significantly above the EU average of 11.2% in 2023.

Graph 21.b: **Moldova - Labour market trends (20-64 age group)**



Source: National Bureau of Statistics

2.3.2. The capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union

Education and innovation

Despite comparatively high spending on education and some improvements to address the skills mismatch, outcomes remain low. According to the 2024 World Bank Enterprise Survey, almost 35% of firms in Moldova identified an inadequately educated workforce as a major or very severe constraint, compared to 25% on average in the region. Nevertheless, the share of employers rating graduates as well-prepared rose from 28% in 2021 to 36% in 2024 according to the annual Labour Market Survey. To address the skills mismatch, the authorities expanded dual VET, which has shown significantly better labour market outcomes compared to traditional VET programmes, and advanced the internationalisation of higher education. However, little progress was made to establish a regular dialogue between the business sector and policy makers to overcome the skills mismatch.

Moldova has stepped up efforts to strengthen research and innovation, but progress remains limited. R&D spending remains low at 0.22% of GDP in 2024. The share of firms that introduced a new product or services in the last three years or use a foreign licensed technology remains far below the regional average. In March 2025, the National Fund for Innovation and Technology Transfer was launched to support innovation and technology transfer projects between research and businesses and to attract domestic and foreign

investment under the 2024-2027 National Programme for Research and Innovation and the Smart Specialisation Strategy.

Physical capital and quality of infrastructure

Public investments as a share of GDP continue to decline, but steps are being taken to address structural gaps through strategic infrastructure projects and public investment management reform. While the average public investment in the EU stood at around 3.5% of GDP in 2024, it fell to below 1% in Moldova. Transport infrastructure remains underdeveloped, particularly in the railway sector, but the Mobility Strategy 2030 adopted in 2024 aims to modernise the network and strengthen cross-border connectivity with the EU. The country continues to make major efforts to enhance the energy infrastructure, particularly as a response to the recent energy crisis, including through investments in domestic production including for renewable energy. Moldova approved its first National Energy and Climate Plan aimed at advancing a sustainable energy transition. Work is also progressing on two key electricity interconnection projects with Romania to support the integration of Moldova's grid into the EU market and circumventing the Transnistrian region for electricity imports. Moldova's infrastructure, including transport and energy, remains highly vulnerable to climate related shocks, in particular floods and heat waves. According to the World Bank, Moldova is projected to face an average annual disaster preparedness and response funding gap of USD 146 million.

Digitalisation is steadily advancing, supported by improved access to the internet and expanded access to public e-services, while regional disparities persist. High-speed broadband coverage improved significantly, reaching 57% of the population by mid-2024. The share of public services available online significantly increased to 64% for businesses and 54% for individuals in 2024. Progress in e-commerce and digital payments, such as the expansion of online trade platforms and the launch of the Moldova Instant Payments system, is also helping lower transaction costs and support small entrepreneurs through digitalisation.

Sectoral and enterprise structure

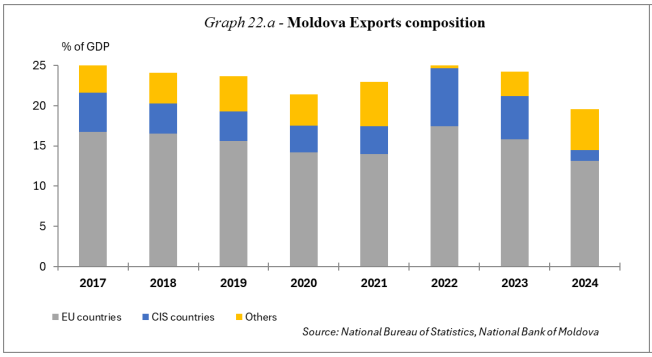
Moldova's economic structure continues to slowly shift away from agriculture, with labour gradually reallocating towards higher-productivity sectors. Agriculture's share of GDP has steadily decreased over the past decade, declining from 14.1% in 2014 to 7.1% in 2024. The ICT sector has emerged as a significant contributor, with its share in GDP increasing from 4.8% in 2018 to 7.1% in 2024, driven largely by the growth of the Moldova Innovation Technology Park, whose resident companies generate approximately 73% of the IT industry's revenue. Exports of higher value-added agricultural products have declined in 2024 due to the drought and a temporary licensing regime for grain and oilseed imports. While this measure aims to protect local farmers from low-cost competition, it has disrupted the model of importing cheap inputs for processing and exporting products such as sunflower oil and alcohol. Consequently, the export of unprocessed locally grown grain and oilseeds became more viable, reducing value added exports.

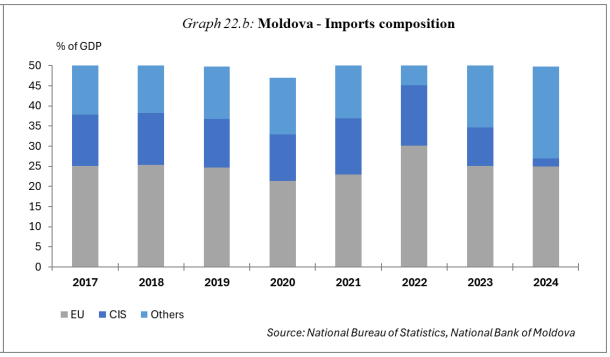
SMEs contribute over half of GDP. While a significant share continues to operate in trade, construction, and agriculture, the SME structure is gradually diversifying, supported by targeted public programmes under the National Strategy for Economic Development. About 75% of all SMEs operate in the services sector, with nearly one third active in high value-added sectors such as ICT, business services or financial services.

Economic integration with the EU and price competitiveness

Despite deeper trade integration with the EU, Moldova's trade performance continues to be affected by its narrow export base. The trade-to-GDP ratio declined in 2024, primarily due to a drop in goods exports. In 2024, the EU remained Moldova's dominant trading partner, accounting for 67.3% of total goods exports and over half of goods imports. However, trade flows continue to be heavily concentrated, with a handful of EU countries receiving most of Moldova's exports and supplying most of its imports. While the composition of exports is gradually shifting, with ICT services gaining traction, the export base still largely relies on labour-intensive, low-productivity goods from the primary and manufacturing sectors.

External price competitiveness weakened further in 2024 as the real effective exchange rate continued to appreciate over the year although at a slower pace than in 2023. In addition, real wages increased across all sectors by 9.5% in 2024. The continued erosion of





price competitiveness combined with renewed trade volatility in 2024 underscores the need for export diversification and enhanced value-added production, including in traditional sectors such as agriculture and food processing.

2.4. PUBLIC PROCUREMENT, STATISTICS; FINANCIAL CONTROL

Chapter 5 - Public procurement

EU rules ensure that the public procurement of goods, services and works in any Member State is transparent and open to all EU companies on the basis of non-discrimination and equal treatment.

Institutional setup and legal alignment

The **legal framework** on public procurement is largely aligned with the EU *acquis*. The government continued the implementation of the National Programme for Development of the Public Procurement System for 2023-2026. Progress involved professionalisation efforts, including specialist certifications. As outlined in the programme, there is work ongoing on a proposed regulation to standardise the qualifications and certification of professionals in public procurement. Additionally, the country has advanced the development of an electronic procurement system, supported by funding secured from international partners.

Legislation on concessions for works and services was adopted, ensuring a high level of alignment with EU *acquis*. A new law on public-private partnerships was adopted in February 2025, but it does not yet fully align with the EU provisions. The Public Procurement Agency has strengthened its ability to monitor compliance in low-value procurement contracts, but further progress is still required.

Implementation and enforcement capacity

The **public procurement market** accounted for 5% of GDP, maintaining the same share as in 2023. The most used procedure for public procurement in 2024 was the **open tender procedure**, with 3,432 open tenders conducted, leading to 26,535 contracts. This accounted for 78% of the total number of awarded contracts.

The institutional framework is in place, but **the capacity to manage public procurement processes** needs to be improved. During the reporting period, the Public Procurement Agency organised two online training sessions dedicated to sustainable procurement, with a total of 245 participants; other 19 online training sessions have been delivered in the framework of a World Bank project. One of the main bottlenecks in the implementation of the public procurement processes has been the electronic procurement system *MTender* which is outdated and does not allow the use of all tools set out in the legislation in force.

Regarding **prevention of corruption** in public procurement, the action plan for the implementation of the National Integrity and Anti-corruption Programme for 2024-2028 contains actions targeting this field. However, this area still remains vulnerable in terms of associated corruption risks, as evidenced in audits and monitoring carried out by the responsible institutions, as well as investigations by the press and civil society. The country should improve the transparency of the procurement system, allowing wider access to procurement documentation and especially procurement plans.

There is no efficient mechanism to monitor the application of the new rules on low-value procurement, and no data on its progress and performance.

Efficient remedy system

In terms of the **right to legal remedy**, the legislation is largely aligned with the EU *acquis*, except for a few inconsistencies regarding time limits for submitting appeals. The independent National Agency for Solving Complaints received 1 245 appeals on 933 procurement procedures (compared with 1 012 appeals in 2023), of which 89.9% were related to public procurement procedures and 10.1% were related to sectoral procurement procedures.

In March 2025, the Parliament registered a draft law to amend the legislation and introduce a fee for filling an appeal. The proposed non-reimbursable fee amounts to 1% of the estimated value of the procurement (but limited to EUR 500 /MDL 10 000).

Chapter 18 - Statistics

European statistics are developed, produced and disseminated by EU Member States, guided by the principles and quality criteria elaborated in the Regulation on European statistics, such as professional independence, impartiality, reliability, accessibility and statistical confidentiality. Common rules are provided for the methodology, production and dissemination of statistical information, which are further specified in sectoral legislation that constitute the EU acquis on statistics.

As regards the legal framework for **statistical infrastructure,** Moldova is implementing the 2023-2030 development strategy for the national statistical system as well as the 2023-2026 programme for the development of the national statistical system. Their implementation requires allocation of adequate resources and strengthening the internal capacity to deliver.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) continued to implement innovative methods like using alternative data sources and experimenting with new statistical approaches. In 2025,

new datasets were submitted through the EDAMIS platform, notably on energy, demographic healthcare (human resources and utilisation), consumer price index, and transport statistics.

On **classification and registers**, Moldova continues to implement the main classification with different degrees of compliance with the EU *acquis*.

On **macroeconomic statistics**, the National Bank of Moldova (NBM) produces financial accounts and balance sheets statistics, including quarterly data on sectoral balance sheets (stocks). Fiscal notifications for the excessive deficit procedure are still not produced. The NBS does not calculate the harmonised index of consumer prices or the house price index. The NBM has developed experimental calculations on financial accounts and published them on its website for consultation and feedback.

On the **gross national income (GNI)** resource, no progress was made during the reporting period regarding the alignment with the European System of Accounts (ESA) 2010 standards. Moldova still needs to ensure the compilation of national accounts and GNI based on ESA 2010 definitions and accounting rules.

On **business statistics**, the list of principal industrial sectors (PIS) in the field of business statistics was approved by the NBS. Since January 2025, the NBS transmits data on international trade in goods.

On **social statistics**, Moldova conducted a national population and housing census in 2024 and presented preliminary results in January 2025. Compared to the last census in 2014, coverage, public participation, and data security have all seen significant improvements. Moldova needs to further improve the collection of sex-disaggregated data and develop statistics in the areas of asylum and managed migration. In March 2025, Moldova submitted data and metadata on healthcare facilities, healthcare human resources and healthcare utilisation to Eurostat.

In the area of **agricultural statistics**, the last agricultural census was conducted in 2011. However, the population and housing census 2024 also gathered data to identify agricultural activity within households. This will help establishing an updated framework for conducting sample agriculture surveys, with the next agricultural census planned to be conducted in 2030.

Structural and short-term **energy statistics** continue to be produced and the NBS regularly provides Eurostat with monthly oil statistics, with improved methodology for calculating some of the indicators.

Chapter 32 - Financial control

The EU promotes the reform of national governance systems to improve managerial accountability, sound financial management of income and expenditure, and external audit of public funds. The financial control rules further protect the EU's financial interests against fraud in the management of EU funds and the euro against counterfeiting.

Public internal financial control

The Public Finance Management Development Strategy continues to offer a strategic framework for **public internal financial control** reforms, containing specific measures for both internal control systems and internal audits. The legal framework on internal financial control and internal audit is in place. Human capacity remains a significant challenge for the internal audit.

The **internal audit** organisational structure at the central government level was reorganised, centralising small internal audit units at the ministerial level and allocating sufficient

resources to cover all subordinated entities. These measures, combined with salary increases, have made the function more attractive. Most public bodies have developed a quality assurance and improvement programme, but the implementation of these programmes remains hampered by a lack of supervision.

Efficient implementation of **managerial accountability** continues to be a challenge for budget users at both central and local levels. Public bodies report to the Central Harmonisation Unit, which consolidates annual reports and submits them to the government for approval. The role of public internal financial control in combating corruption needs strengthening, as does cooperation with state audit institutions. The mechanism for monitoring cases investigated following internal audits should also be reinforced.

The State Financial Control Inspectorate, reporting to the Ministry of Finance, concentrates on controls using risk-based criteria and information from other sources to select institutions to be controlled.

External audit

Regarding the constitutional and legal framework, the Court of Accounts (CoA) has its role enshrined in the Constitution and is organised in accordance with a well-developed law. In 2024, steps were taken to strengthen its organisational and financial independence. The Law was amended to allow the CoA to approve its staff list independently, subject to an advisory opinion from the State Chancellery. A new organisational structure was put in place from February 2025. Legal amendments to ensure CoA budgetary independence have been prepared but their adoption is pending.

The law on the organisation and functioning of the Court has some weaknesses limiting the institution's full financial independence and control on the work programme. Implementation of the CoA's development strategy and annual action plans is ongoing. Communication efforts by the Court should be further reinforced to strengthen public trust and transparency and better follow-up of CoA recommendations.

Protection of the EU's financial interests

Legislation remains partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. Cooperation between the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and national authorities takes place on a case-by-case basis. Progress was made with the development of a draft Government Decision on the organisation and functioning of the National Anti-Fraud System, currently under consultation with public bodies and stakeholders. The draft decision designates the National Anti-Fraud Unit as the responsible body for collaboration and information exchange with OLAF and other relevant authorities. The designation of the anti-fraud coordination service (AFCOS) and the establishment of AFCOS network has been finalised and was notified to OLAF in June 2025. At the same time, Moldova continues to have very limited capacity to proactively detect and investigate financial crimes and related illegal acts affecting financial interests of Moldova and the EU.

Progress was made with the May 2025 government decision defining the organisation and functioning of the National Anti-Fraud System. It designated the State Financial Control Inspectorate as a national anti-fraud coordination service responsible for collaboration and information exchange with OLAF and other relevant authorities. The Anti-Fraud Coordination Committee, chaired by the Minister of Finance, held its inaugural meeting in June 2025.

Protection of the euro against counterfeiting

Moldova has ratified the 1929 Geneva Convention for the suppression of counterfeiting of currency. Moldova's legislation is partially aligned with EU law regarding the definition of counterfeit banknotes and coins and procedures for gathering, storing, and withdrawing counterfeit currency from circulation. The NBM continues to include information on detected counterfeiting cases in its annual report.

3. GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS AND REGIONAL COOPERATION

Moldova actively participates in various regional cooperation platforms. During the reporting period, Moldova participated in the meeting of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Central European Initiative (CEI) in Tirana, as well as the informal Meeting of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the CEI in New York. Moldova also continues to participate in the Three Seas Initiative (TSI) as an associate member, and it remains active in the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organisation (BSEC), and the Organisation for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM). Moldova continues to actively participate in the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and contributes to the Central European Free Trade Agreement.

Moldova remains committed to the Eastern Partnership format and to maintaining good relations with neighbouring EU Member States and other candidate countries.

Moldova enjoys excellent cooperation and bilateral contacts with **Romania** at all levels, with regular high-level exchanges. Romanian President Nicușor Dan's first visit abroad in June 2025 was to Moldova. Romania also co-chaired the 5th edition of the Moldova Partnership Platform along with Germany and France. Romania remains Moldova's biggest trading partner, accounting for over a third of Moldovan exports. Joint infrastructure projects continue to be implemented. As a result of Russia's weaponisation of energy since early 2025, Moldova had to cover a significantly increased part of its electricity consumption with imports from Romania.

Cooperation with **Ukraine** remains a cornerstone of Moldova's foreign policy, with both countries' candidate status providing further opportunities for cooperation and close interaction. The Moldovan government has consistently aligned with international statements condemning Russia's military aggression and shown solidarity with Ukraine. Both countries are in regular contact on regional and security issues. Over 111 034 persons fleeing Russian military aggression remain on the territory of Moldova, the highest per capita in Europe. In March 2025, the temporary protection status for Ukrainian citizens was extended for an additional year. On 18 February 2025, Moldova and Ukraine signed a Memorandum of Cooperation on European Integration and Accession Process. In January 2025, President Sandu visited Kyiv and met President Zelensky in the context of the energy crisis triggered by Russia's halting of the gas supply to the Transnistrian region of Moldova.

Trilateral cooperation with Ukraine and Romania further intensified on energy security, transport and connectivity at both technical and high level, with the latest example being the trilateral meeting focusing on energy, transport, infrastructure and combating hybrid threats and disinformation.

Moldova continues to maintain dialogue with ***Georgia***. Relations between these two candidate countries are based on mutual support for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Moldovan leadership has expressed solidarity with the Georgian people in their defence of democracy and Georgia's European path.

Moldova also maintains good relations with ***Western Balkans*** partners and especially appreciates learning from their pre-accession experiences. Although Moldova does not recognise ***Kosovo***[*], the country participates in the NATO-led and UN-mandated Kosovo Force (KFOR) peacekeeping force. In May 2025, Moldova signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in the Field of European Integration and Accession Process with Montenegro.

Moldova and ***Türkiye*** maintain regular and friendly high-level exchanges focused on trade, energy, cooperation in the Black Sea region and Turkish support for projects in Gagauzia. High-level exchanges take place regularly. The two presidents most recently met on the margins of the COP29 in Baku. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Moldova both participated in the fourth edition of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum in April 2025. Türkiye also participated in the Moldova Partnership Platform in September 2024.

4. ABILITY TO ASSUME THE OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

CLUSTER 2: INTERNAL MARKET

This cluster covers: free movement of goods (Chapter 1); freedom of movement for workers (Chapter 2); right of establishment and freedom to provide services (Chapter 3); free movement of capital (Chapter 4); company law (Chapter 6); intellectual property law (Chapter 7); competition policy (Chapter 8); financial services (Chapter 9); and consumer and health protection (Chapter 28). This cluster is key for Moldova's preparations for the requirements of the EU's internal market.

Chapter 1 - Free movement of goods

The free movement of goods ensures that many products can be traded freely across the EU based on common rules and procedures. Where products are governed by national rules, the principle of the free movement of goods prevents these rules from creating unjustified barriers to trade.

General principles

In May 2025, Moldova adopted an Action Plan for implementing the recommendations from the operational assessments of the standardisation, accreditation and conformity assessment and metrology systems.

Non-harmonised area

Moldova has now launched processes to ensure the compliance of its legislation and administrative practices with **Articles 34-36 TFEU** and relevant CJEU case law. A law designed to be aligned with the EU a*cquis* on mutual recognition was adopted in July 2025.

Harmonised area: quality infrastructure

The Institute for Standardisation (ISM) has adopted 38 107 European standards as Moldovan standards, including 100% in line with European standards of the European Standardisation Committee (CEN)/European Electrotechnical Committee for Standardisation (CENELEC) and 88.97% adoption rate of the Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI). The ISM has committed to withdraw all former Soviet GOST (*Gosudarstvennyy Standart*)standards by 1 January 2026. ISM submitted an official request to CEN-CENELEC for obtaining full membership.

[*] This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244(1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

The national **accreditation** body, MOLDAC, operates in accordance with the requirements set out in the relevant reference standard and EU *acquis,* and in line with the requirements for European and international accreditation organisations. Nonetheless, capacity building continues to be needed in the market surveillance sector.

National legislation remains partly aligned with the EU *acquis* on **market surveillance**. In 2024, a total of 1739 market surveillance inspections were ensured, of which 276 (15.8%) were non-compliant with the applicable requirements (compared to 1 499 inspected in 2023, of which 284 (19%) were non-compliant). It temporarily prohibited 47 products from being placed on the market, additional three fully and six products were withdrawn. In 135 cases sanctions were applied.

Harmonised area: sectoral legislation

In the area of '**new and global approach**', there was no further progress as Moldova already aligned with the EU 'new and global approach' legislation under the Association Agreement.

There was no progress on aligning national legislation with the EU **'old approach' product** *acquis*, including on the EU Regulation on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals, or on chemicals, classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, or on good laboratory practices.

On **procedural measures**, Moldova aligned with the EU *acquis* on crystal glass. There was no progress on alignment with the EU *acquis* on the **return of cultural goods** unlawfully removed from the territory of an EU Member State.

Chapter 2 - Freedom of movement for workers

Citizens of one Member State have the right to work in another Member State and must be given the same working and social conditions as other workers.

Regarding **access to the labour market**, in July 2025, Moldova adopted a law providing for a different regime for EU citizens wishing to work in Moldova, than other third country nationals. EU citizens still have no access to posts in public administration bodies. In 2024, 303 residence permits for work purposes were granted to EU citizens (vs 319 in 2023).

On the **European network of employment services (EURES)**, under the new structure of the National Employment Agency, in force since 1 January 2025, a Department on Labour Migration and EURES has been established. Within this department, a designated officer has been recruited and is responsible for overseeing preparatory activities to facilitate Moldova's access to EURES. Further preparatory work is required.

In September 2025, the Government approved a Decision establishing the national legal framework for EURES activities and outlining the responsibilities of the National Coordination Office.

Moldova signed in May 2025 a cooperation agreement with the **European Labour Authority**.

On **coordination of social security systems,** two agreements with Italy and France respectively were signed in October 2024 and March 2025 respectively. Negotiations of agreements with other Member States have been initiated and should continue.

There was no progress on the **European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).** No national health insurance card exists due to the absence of an integrated health information system.

Chapter 3 - Right of establishment and freedom to provide services

EU natural and legal persons have the right to establish themselves in any Member State and to

provide cross-border services. For certain regulated professions, there are rules on the mutual recognition of qualifications. EU rules on postal services focus on improving the quality of universal service, gradual market opening to competition, and the establishment of an independent regulator.

On the **right of establishment and freedom to provide services**, reforms like the adoption of the Law on the freedom of establishment of service providers and the freedom to provide services in December 2024 have helped Moldova further align its legal framework with the EU Services Directive. There are no barriers to the right of establishment by foreign people and companies, and the single contact point for companies is operational. Further progress is needed to ensure full compliance and further align sectoral legislation with the Services Directive.

Regarding **postal services**, Moldova has a high level of alignment with the EU postal *acquis*, including the Postal Services Directive and the Regulation on cross-border parcel delivery services. Work is ongoing to align remaining parts of legislation regarding financing of universal postal service. The annex of the Association Agreement (AA)/ Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) on the rules applicable to postal and courier services was updated. Moldova should continue implement the new postal market rules.

Moldova has partially aligned its legislation with the EU Directive on the **recognition of professional qualifications** and agreed to the CEFTA decision to facilitate trade in services provided by travel agencies and tour operators. In July 2025, the Government set minimum training and evaluation requirements for accreditation of key higher education and vocational programmes in health-related programmes and architecture. The Ministry of Education and Research issued 17 orders updating healthcare qualification standards in line with the National Qualifications Framework.

Chapter 4 - Free movement of capital

In the EU, capital and investments must be able to move without restrictions, with common rules for cross-border payments. Banks and other economic operators apply certain rules to support the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

On **capital movements and payments**, Moldova continued to liberalise capital outflows, but certain restrictions remain. It took some steps towards the gradual liberalisation of the capital foreign exchange operations with legal amendments adopted May and June 2025. However, restrictions on the acquisition of agricultural land remain in place. Fees for card-based payments remain high but continued to decline and since September 2025 have been capped at 0.5% for debit cards and 0.6% for credit cards.

On **payment systems**, Moldova's national legislation is largely aligned with the EU Payment Services Directive 2 (PSD2). Having undertaken the necessary alignment with the *acquis* Moldova joined the geographical scope of the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) working with payment service providers to ensure technical preparedness and with transactions through the schemes starting in October 2025.

In November 2024, Moldova adopted amendments to the AML Law, strengthening its **anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism** framework and aligning it more closely with EU standards. The law introduced stricter rules on beneficial ownership transparency, set up a Trusts Register, imposed new obligations on service providers and professionals, and enhanced reporting and verification duties for reporting entities. It also improved data retention rules and introduced protections for whistleblowers reporting money laundering suspicions, aiming to boost the effectiveness of Moldova's anti-money laundering efforts. In January 2025, the National Bank of Moldova (NBM) updated its

regulations for banks and non-bank payment providers aiming to partially align with the EU Regulation on information accompanying transfers of funds. Money laundering and terrorist financing risks stemming from virtual assets remain unregulated.

In June 2025, Moneyval upgraded Moldova's ranking for recommendations 22, 24 and 25 from partially compliant to largely compliant, following Moldova's request for six re-ratings. Moldova is now rated compliant or largely compliant on 37 out of the 40 FATF recommendations. Moldova should continue implementing Moneyval's recommendations and further strengthen its system for the detection, investigation, and prosecution of latent financial crimes, including money laundering, to ensure an effective and proactive response to financial criminality. *(for criminalisation aspects, please see chapter 24 – Justice, Freedom and Security).*

Chapter 6 - Company law

The EU has common rules on the formation, registration and disclosure requirements of a company, with complementary rules for accounting and financial reporting, and statutory audit.

In the area of **company law and corporate governance,** Moldova's legislation is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. State registration of legal persons and individual entrepreneurs is carried out by the Public Services Agency, which implemented a series of actions in line with its roadmap for strengthening administrative capacity. However, it is important to further advance the implementation of the roadmap to address the limited administrative capacity and available digitalisation resources.

Moldova made progress in aligning with certain aspects of the EU *acquis* on capital maintenance and alteration regime (e.g., on the shareholders' pre-emption rights), on single-member companies and on the corporate governance of listed companies through a series of amendments in the Corporate Governance Code. Further alignment with the EU *acquis* is still needed on cross-border operations (mergers, divisions, conversions) as well as on takeover bids, shareholder rights (SRD I), including the encouragement of long-term shareholder engagement (SRD II).

On **company reporting**, Moldova's legislation is partially aligned with the EU *acquis*. Moldova adopted a series of laws on financial reporting and audit statements, company reporting and transparency on capital markets. However, further alignment with the EU *acquis* on company reporting and transparency on capital markets is needed.

On **statutory audit**, the government continued improving the capacity and independence of the audit oversight system by adopting a regulation on external audit quality control. Moldova should ensure an independent system of oversight, investigations and penalties, with the appropriate level of administrative and financial resources.

Chapter 7 - Intellectual property law

The EU has to a large extent harmonised rules for the legal protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR), covering notably patents, biotechnological inventions and pharmaceuticals, including supplementary protection certificates (SPCs), trade marks, designs, geographical indications (GIs), including craft and industrial GIs, as well as copyright and related rights.

On **copyright and related rights**, no substantial developments have occurred during the reporting period.

A new law amending the Law on the protection of inventions aiming to create the necessary legal framework for implementing the European Patent Convention (EPC) was adopted in

January 2025. This law aligns national legislation with the *acquis* concerning the supplementary protection certificate for medicinal products and plant protection products, compulsory licensing of patents relating to the manufacture of pharmaceutical products for export to countries with public health problems and the enforcement directive (IPRED).

On **industrial property rights**, further strengthening of cooperation and coordination between the different bodies and institutions as well as training of staff, judges, and prosecutors is needed. Moldova is well advanced in the preparation for the accession to the European Patent Convention (EPC).

Regarding the number of intellectual property objects (IPO) protection activity, there is a slight upward trend in 2024 compared to 2023. With reference to the filing of IPO applications, there is an increase of about 5% compared to the indicators of 2023, with a total of more than 6 680 applications filed. This is largely due to the increase in trademark applications received from national applicants, who filed over 100 more trade mark applications in 2024 compared with 2023.

Regarding **enforcement,** Moldova needs to further improve its track record regarding the number of court cases and the number of inspections and sanctions on industrial property rights. Further improving capacities of staff, judges and prosecutors, and reinforcing human resources are key for IPR enforcement.

The number of counterfeit products identified decreased further from 51 588 counterfeit products in 2023 to 33 656 counterfeit products in 2024, as more big importers are complying with the law.

Chapter 8 - Competition policy

EU rules protect free competition. They include antitrust rules against restrictive agreements between companies and abuse of a dominant position, and also include rules on concentrations between companies which would significantly impede effective competition. EU rules also set out a system of State aid control. Governments are only allowed to grant State aid if restrictive conditions are met, with a view to preventing distortion of competition.

Antitrust and mergers

On the **legislative framework**, Moldova's legislation is broadly aligned with the EU *acquis* on antitrust and merger control. The new competition law adopted in July 2023 largely mirrors the provisions of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) on restrictive agreements and on abuse of dominant position. It also provides for *ex ante* monitoring of the effects on competition of mergers above certain turnover thresholds, largely in line with the principles of the EU Merger Regulation. Implementing legislation provides further rules, which broadly aim to follow the EU *acquis*.

On the **institutional framework**, further alignment is needed with EU competition policy, especially with regards to the dismissal of the members of the Board of the Competition Council and the level of fines which can be imposed. Furthermore, full alignment with the EU Directive 2019/1 to ensure more effective enforcement and the proper functioning of the internal market (except the cross-border aspects) to provide the competition authority with the necessary independence, resources, and powers to conduct investigations, make decisions, and impose fines remains to be achieved. On **enforcement capacity,** the Competition Council's institutional capacity needs to be further strengthened to ensure it can conduct investigations and enforce the law. On **implementation**, the Competition Council increased its activities in the reporting period.

State aid

Regarding the **legislative framework**, the Law on State aid is broadly aligned with Articles 107 and 108 TFEU. The legislation on State aid is partially aligned with the EU State aid guidelines, regulations and communications. However, certain existing State aid schemes still need to be aligned with the EU *acquis*. Moreover, aid to repair damage caused by natural disasters or exceptional occurrences is considered compatible without the need for prior notification. This is not in line with EU law, which requires such measures to be notified.

Regarding the **institutional framework**, the Competition Council also ensures consistent implementation of State aid law. The Competition Council is empowered to screen and authorise State aid measures and can order the recovery of State aid that has been unlawfully granted. It publishes reports on aid granted on its website and runs the automated State aid register information system, where measures are reported annually by grantors. In October 2024 a Twinning project started which will provide support on strengthening the institutional capacities of the Competition Council.

As regards **enforcement capacity**, the Competition Council is understaffed (out of 130 posts envisaged in the organisational chart, 70 posts are vacant, partly due to low salaries). Its administrative capacity needs to be strengthened with additional staff and relevant training.

On **implementation**, there were 18 decisions adopted in the reporting period on State aid. Moldova needs to make progress with respect to the alignment of all State aid schemes as the Association Agreement requires it to align its general State aid schemes.

Liberalisation

The Law on competition and the Law on State aid apply to public companies and companies with special or exclusive rights. The Law on state aid provides that companies entrusted with the performance of services of general economic interest will be considered when assessing the compatibility of the State aid granted to perform such services. The existing implementing legislation on various types of State aid, including horizontal aid, sectoral aid, and specific aid instruments, is only partially in line with the relevant EU legal framework.

Chapter 9 - Financial services

EU rules aim at ensuring fair competition among financial institutions, and the stability and integrity of financial markets, namely in the field of banking, insurance, supplementary pensions, investment services and securities. They include rules on the authorisation, operation and supervision of these institutions.

On **banks and financial conglomerates**, efforts are still needed to ensure that the National Bank of Moldova (NBM) and the National Committee for Financial Markets have sufficient capacity and are adequately staffed to properly carry out their responsibilities for investor protection, market integrity and financial stability. Related to banking sector regulation, some amendments aiming to align the national legislation with the EU CRD /CRR have been approved. These provisions are related to requirements on Net Stable Funding Ratio and on Liquidity Coverage Ratio, to the leverage ratio and to large exposures.

Consumer protection in financial services is not properly addressed in the legislation and additional reforms to further strengthen it will be needed. Some amendments expanding the NCFM's supervisory mandate were approved in July 2025 to strengthen consumer protection in financial services. There were limited developments on bank recovery and resolution, apart from some amendments to the Law on bank recovery and resolution which aim to further align with the EU acquis on bank recovery and resolution, including new competences for the NBM as the resolution authority as the resolution authority and

provisions on Minimum Requirements for Own Funds and Eligible Liabilities - MREL. However, the applicability of the MREL requirement has been postponed until 2030.

On **insurance and occupational pensions**, Moldova has no occupational pension funds, and the insurance market remains underdeveloped. NBM Regulations have been adopted and amended between September 2024 and July 2025 on the governance of insurance and reinsurance undertakings, aiming to align with EU and international best practice. In October 2024, the NCFM issued the first licence for a voluntary pension fund administrator. Still, there are no privately managed pension funds in Moldova. Going forward, the reform effort to develop this sector should be significantly increased.

As regards **financial market infrastructure,** Moldova remains partially aligned with EU *acquis*. There are no new developments in the reporting period and Moldova should continue alignment efforts, taking into account recent amendments in the EU acquis.

On **securities markets and investment services,** markets remain underdeveloped. In June 2025, Parliament adopted the National Capital Market Development Strategy 2025–2030. The strategy aims to broaden investor participation, diversify financial instruments (including mortgage, green and project bonds), modernise capital market infrastructure through electronic platforms and post-trade systems, and align legislation and operations with regional and EU standards. Moldova should now implement this strategy. One step on this path is the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding to improve access to capital markets via interconnection with the Bucharest Stock Exchange.

On **sustainable and digital finance**, a mission to support the development of a national Sustainable Finance Taxonomy was launched in March 2025; the first draft was completed by June and was planned to be subject to public consultation. Efforts also focused on strengthening institutional capacity and expertise to effectively integrate ESG considerations into financial decision-making.

There is still no single platform or body to coordinate the digitalisation of the financial system, and the National Bank has yet to develop a digital finance strategy. Virtual assets are not a recognised form of electronic currency under the Law on payment services and electronic money, and any activity to issue or trade them is not subject to regulation and supervision by the National Bank (see also Chapter 4). Moldova is encouraged to accelerate its efforts to align with the EU *acquis*.

Chapter 28 - Consumer and health protection

EU rules protect consumers' economic interests and also ensure product safety, prevent dangerous imitations and establish liability for defective products. The EU also guarantees a high level of protection of public health and in particular also ensures high common standards for tobacco control, blood tissues, cells and organs, and human and veterinary medicinal products. The EU also has rules for upholding patients' rights in cross-border healthcare and in preparing for and responding to serious cross-border health threats, including communicable diseases.

On general principles and non-safety issues, the Law on consumer protection was updated in February 2024 and April 2025 to align with the EU acquis on unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices, on alternative dispute resolution for consumer disputes, on certain aspects concerning contracts for the sale of goods, and on cooperation between national authorities responsible for enforcing consumer protection laws. Moldova has also adopted legislation designed to be aligned with the EU acquis concerning contracts for the supply of digital content and digital services as part of the Law on Consumer protection.

On **product safety**, Moldova's legal framework is partly aligned with the EU *acquis*. In July 2025, the national legislation on general product safety was aligned with the EU acquis. Collaboration between institutions needs to be improved, as there is no one entry point for the consumers. In January 2025 a single phone number for consumers was launched by the Government, bringing together 12 authorities with consumer protection responsibilities. In November 2024 a European Consumer Centre was officially launched in Moldova.

Public health

While the legal, policy and institutional framework for **public health** is in place, Moldova's public health sector remains fragile despite stabilisation efforts, coping with the cumulative effects of the COVID-19 aftermath, the protracted refugee response, energy insecurity, and regional instability. The quality of healthcare and the shortage of medical staff remain significant challenges. Despite healthcare workers' salaries being increased by 15% in 2025, many doctors see this as insufficient given the demands of their work and inflation. Moldova's legal framework offers little protection to health patients and continues to criminalise medical errors, yet has no malpractice law, compensation mechanisms, or proper reporting systems. Moldova's adolescent birth rate remains three times higher than the European average, with rural areas facing limited access to reproductive health services and a high unmet need for family planning, whereas maternal mortality remains high. The repeal of medical abortion via telemedicine in January 2025 is a negative step on **sexual and reproductive rights**.

While **mental health** services have been integrated into ambulatory and primary care, funding remains limited and cost standards for community-based services are absent and are very limited for children. New legislation was adopted in May 2025 on the definition of the psychologist profession, establishing the legal framework, professional standards, and organizational mechanisms for licensing, oversight, and provision of state-funded psychological assistance to vulnerable groups.

On **communicable diseases** and **cross-border health threats**, access to treatment for transmissible diseases, particularly tuberculosis and HIV was improved. A national programme for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis B, C, and D for 2024-2028 and legislation on epidemiological surveillance system were also approved. Implementation of the 2023-2028 antimicrobial resistance programme remains hindered by low funding. On **non-communicable diseases**, progress was made in stroke care through the operationalisation of a national stroke care network of 13 stroke centres and awareness-raising campaigns. On **cancer screening**, implementation of the 2016-2025 National Cancer Control Programme continued.

Moldova adopted legislation to increase its level of partial alignment with the EU *acquis* on **organ, tissue, and cells**. Moldova should prepare an action plan to align with the new acquis on substances of human origin and strengthen the administrative capacity and oversight to properly implement and enforce it.

On **e-Health,** while a legal base for the digital health HR information system and an update of national communicable disease surveillance IT system were approved, a major data breach at Moldova's largest private lab leaked thousands of patients' test results and personal data.

The new **law on medicines** was approved in June 2025 establishing a modern regulatory framework across the pharmaceutical lifecycle (authorisation, production, distribution, post-market surveillance), strengthening labelling, pharmacovigilance, and EU-aligned import rules. However, several representatives of civil society and the medical professional community voiced concerns that it favours large pharmaceutical companies over public health and that it was adopted without sufficient consultation.

The Joint Procurement Agreement with the EU on essential medical supplies was approved. Moldova adopted legislation to improve its partial alignment with the EU *acquis* on **cosmetics**.

Although increased investments in healthcare infrastructure, equipment and ambulance fleet continued, **significant health inequalities persist**, particularly in rural areas and among vulnerable groups. People with disabilities and women specifically face systemic barriers in accessing public health services, including sexual and reproductive health, as clinics lack infrastructural accessibility, sign language interpreters and essential adapted medical equipment. Healthcare services are also limited in prisons. During the reporting period, 53 pharmacies were opened in rural areas to ensure better access to compensated medicines, electronic prescriptions, and other pharmaceutical products.

New legislation was adopted in May 2025, introducing strengthened **tobacco control** measures. It expanded smoking bans to new public spaces, increased fines for smoking and illicit sales, mandated larger health warnings on packaging, and banned promotion (including in video games and TV) to align with WHO and EU standards.

There was no progress on **medicines for veterinary use**, on harmful use of **alcohol and drug abuse prevention,** on **cross-border healthcare**, on **rare diseases**, on **medical devices**, or on **health technology assessment.**

CLUSTER 3: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

This cluster covers: digital transformation and media (Chapter 10); taxation (Chapter 16); economic and monetary policy (Chapter 17); social policy and employment (Chapter 19); industrial policy (Chapter 20), science and research (Chapter 25); education and culture (Chapter 26); and the customs union (Chapter 29).

Chapter 10 - Digital transformation and media

The EU supports the smooth functioning of the internal market for electronic communications, electronic commerce and audiovisual services. The rules protect consumers and support the universal availability of modern services.

With regard to the **Digital Transformation Strategy**, tangible progress was achieved on all key performance indicators. On 28 May 2025 Moldova adopted a Programme for the Implementation of the National Digital Transformation Strategy 2025-2027.

Regarding **electronic communications**, after fulfilling all EU requirements, including as regards to alignment with the EU roaming acquis as defined in the EU-Moldova Association Agreement, Moldova will effectively join the EU Roam Like at Home area as of 1 January 2026.

Further efforts are necessary to implement the Gigabit Infrastructure Act.

On **digital services**, Moldova is not yet aligned with the Open Data Directive on the reuse of public sector information. Moldova is not aligned with the EU *acquis* on geo-blocking and platform-to-business relations (P2B) nor with Digital Markets Act (DMA). Although legislative work to align with the Digital Services Act (DSA) has started, Moldova should continue preparation of draft legislation of the DSA. There is broad alignment with the Directive on e-commerce.

On **digital trust and cybersecurity**, Moldova has fully aligned its regulatory framework in the field of electronic identification and trust services with eIDAS 1.0., with further alignment with the EU Digital identity framework (eIDAS 2.0) to follow. Moldova is part of the EU Digital Identity Cooperation Group.

A normative framework for the implementation of the cybersecurity law was approved through several Government Decisions with the objective to ensure alignment with the NIS 2 Directive. The national cybersecurity law, adopted in 2023 and in effect since January 2025, aims to strengthen the country's cyber resilience and align with the NIS 2 Directive. Progress has been made to strengthen the operational capacity of the Cybersecurity Agency, but further efforts are needed. Moldova needs to continue the implementation of the EU 5G Cybersecurity Toolbox measures, including assessing the risk profile of suppliers and putting in place appropriate restrictions and/or exclusions for high-risk suppliers.

On **artificial intelligence**, Moldova is not yet aligned with the EU's AI Act. Moldova has signed the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law. Within the National Digitalisation Council, Moldova set up a sub-council on AI and data that aims to facilitate the adoption of AI tools, and the application of the principles outlined in the National White Book on AI and data governance.

On **semiconductors**, Moldova is not yet fully aligned with the Chips Act.

On **media**, the Parliament has implemented the recommendations of the Council of Europe regarding the appointment and dismissal of the Audiovisual Council and public broadcaster (TRM) board members. The legislative package to amend the Media Services Code (AVMSC), was adopted in July 2025 and represents a positive step to enhance the independence of the Audiovisual Council (AVC) and TRM. The decision-making in the Council for the Promotion of Investment Projects of National Importance in the media sector should be aligned with international standards.

In April and July 2025, competitions were launched for granting subsidies under the Media Subsidy Fund, which aims to support media pluralism, enhance editorial and economic independence and foster investigative journalism. The Fund will allocate 25% of the national media service provider's budget annually through the state budget law.

Chapter 16 - Taxation

EU rules on taxation cover value added tax, excise duties and aspects of corporate taxation. They also cover cooperation between tax administrations, including the exchange of information to prevent tax evasion.

Moldova has made progress in further aligning the national legislation on **indirect taxation** with the EU *acquis*. In June 2025, provisions on VAT reverse charge for electricity and gas trading were introduced into the Tax Code. Upon their entry into force on 1 January 2026, the amendments will simplify operations for suppliers and traders by removing the administrative burden of VAT management. Moldova applies a standard VAT rate (20%), reduced rates (8%), and certain exemptions and refunds partially aligned with the acquis.

In the field of **excise duties**, in June 2025, Government approved a draft law to partially align with EU directives on excise duties relating to general arrangements, structure and rates on tobacco and alcohol products. Excise duty rates on tobacco products have not yet been aligned with the EU *acquis*. No progress was made in the harmonisation of excise duties on energy products. Moldova will have to align its national legislation with IT solutions necessary to implement the Excise Movement and Control System (EMCS) and the EU System for the Exchange of Excise Data (SEED), i.e., an electronic register of economic operators authorised to trade in this field. This will enhance compliance and the monitoring of excisable goods and their trade activity. The country should further engage in capacity-building activities in this field.

With regard to fight against smuggling of excisable goods, in April 2025, the Government adopted a regulation establishing a tracking and tracing system for tobacco products. The regulation is based the EU Tobacco Directive and aims to partially align with the Commission Implementing Regulation on technical norms and standards for the system. Once it enters into force in 2026, this system will provide greater opportunities for enhancing Moldova's capability in combatting illicit trade in tobacco products and in boosting revenues collection.

As regards **direct taxation**, personal income tax and corporate income tax are applied at a flat rate of 12% (general tax regime) and at 7% under special schemes (e.g., activity in the ITC park, free economic zones). Moldova still needs to align with EU directives on taxation applicable to mergers/cross-border reorganisations and parent-subsidiary companies, with their entry into force upon accession. The alignment of tax rules with the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive remains outstanding. Moldova is a member of the OECD Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS), but it has not yet implemented the global minimum level of taxation for multinational enterprise groups and large-scale domestic groups. Following an OECD-led introductory mission in December 2024, Moldova is developing a roadmap for the implementation of the BEPS Inclusive Framework.

On **administrative cooperation and mutual assistance**, Moldova has signed double taxation agreements with 26 EU Member States and has started the implementation of the Multilateral Agreement of the Competent Authorities for the Automatic Exchange of Information on Financial Accounts.

With regard to **operational capacity and digitalisation**, the tax administration has been implementing the annual Programme for the Compliance of Taxpayers 2025, targeting high-risk sectors such as trade, retail, manufacturing, and construction. Voluntary compliance has been facilitated through increased counselling visits to taxpayers and tax simplification measures. An IT Development Programme of the State Tax Service for 2025–2027 was prepared but not yet approved by the government. The programme aims at ensuring interconnection and interoperability with the EU tax systems. Development of IT infrastructure, and automation of compliance risk management systems and risk-based audits remain top priorities.

Chapter 17 - Economic and monetary policy

EU rules require the independence of central banks and prohibit them from directly financing the public sector. Member States coordinate their economic policies and are subject to fiscal, economic and financial surveillance.

On **monetary policy**, further steps are required to strengthen central bank functional, institutional, personal and financial independence, particularly, as regards institutional independence, to prevent the interference from the parliament, government and any other third party. Amendments to the NBM Law to strengthen personal independence and improving governance, transparency and accountability, in line with international best practice were approved by the government in December 2024 but parliamentary adoption remains pending. In February 2025, the member of the NBM Executive Board whose mandate expired has been replaced, leaving no remaining vacancies. Further efforts are also needed in the area of monetary financing prohibition. In 2024, the Single Central Securities Depository (SCSD) law was amended allowing the SCSD to acquire shares in the Moldova Stock Exchange. As the NBM may hold up to 100% of the SCSD, this may result in a situation where the NBM has majority ownership of the stock exchange raising concerns as regards

the compliance with Article 123 TFEU on monetary financing prohibition. In this case, this takes the form of using central bank resources to support an economic policy goal which is typically a government competence and not a central bank task. In addition, the right of NBM to hold up to 100% of the SCSD would raise concerns as regards monetary financing if, in such circumstances, the SCSD activities would involve funding public sector, providing credit to public authorities or similar activities.

On **economic policy**, Moldova has made progress in strengthening fiscal governance through the public investment management reform and is partially aligned with the EU acquis on fiscal surveillance. A 3-year medium-term budgetary framework exists, but it lacks an assessment of medium-term budgetary impacts of fiscal policy measures and will need to be further developed in the future to include a long-term debt sustainability assessment. The macroeconomic forecast used for budgetary planning does not include labour market and external sector forecasts and the budgetary calendar was not followed in 2024. Moldova's fiscal rules are partially aligned with the relevant Directive, but the numerical fiscal rule is not respected. While the conditions for activating the escape clause persist, the rule has been suspended beyond the permitted period. Moldova has not advanced in setting up the independent fiscal council.

Moldova's statistical framework is not yet aligned with ESA 2010 requirements. Notably, public non-market producers are not included in the general government sector.

Moldova is partially aligned with the requirements of the coordination and surveillance of economic policies. Its active participation in pre-accession economic surveillance has contributed to developing relevant administrative capacity. The Economic Reform Programme 2025-2027 included for the first time an alternative macroeconomic scenario and the general government structural balance. It would further benefit from analysing the budgetary impact of reforms and fiscal measures, a forecast of the external sector and labour market, long-term fiscal projections, a sensitivity analysis and assumptions on the external environment. The government consulted selected think tanks but due to delays in preparing the document, no public consultation was held.

Moldova's **statistical framework** is not yet aligned with ESA 2010 requirements. State-owned enterprises are not included in the general government sector, and there are significant operations of central government units that are not reported in the national public budget.

Moldova participates in the Economic and Financial Dialogue with the EU, having submitted its **Economic Reform Programme** (ERP) to the Commission in January 2025. The economic reform programme 2025-2027 included for the first time an alternative macroeconomic scenario and the general government structural balance. The programme could further benefit from analysing the budgetary impact of reforms and fiscal measures, a forecast of the external sector and labour market, long-term fiscal projections, a sensitivity analysis and assumptions on the external environment. The government consulted selected think tanks, but due to delays in preparing the document a wide public consultation was not held.

Chapter 19 - Social policy and employment

EU rules in the social field include minimum requirements for labour law, equality and non-discrimination, health and safety at work. They also promote social inclusion, social protection, and social dialogue at EU level.

In the area of **labour law,** from 1 January 2025, a new minimum wage was set at MDL 5500, i.e. 10 percent higher than in 2024.

In 2024, the share of informal employment decreased slightly (estimated at 14.8% compared to 16.8% in 2023) due to the drought of the previous summer and the drop of output in the agricultural sector. The sectors with the highest informality rate are agriculture (64.4%) and construction (63.3%). During the reporting period, a programme for the reduction of undeclared work 2024-2027 was approved.

In September 2024, the regulatory framework in the area of **health and safety** of workers exposed to risk related to chemical agents at work was updated, achieving a high level of alignment with two Directives on occupational exposure limit values. The number of work accidents decreased in 2024: 582 accidents were reported (603 in 2023), of which 27 were fatal (69 in 2023). The most vulnerable sectors in terms of accidents at work are construction, agriculture and industry.

The State Labour Inspectorate reported a notable rise in detecting and formalising cases of **undeclared work**. In 2024, 3 088 persons working informally have been identified, of which 2 495 (80.8%) have been subsequently registered. By September 2025, the total reached 5 020, an increase of about 63% compared to 2024. A new website of the State Labour Inspectorate was launched in November 2024 and the platform “lucrezlegal.md” to report undeclared work violations was launched in March 2025. In February 2025, legislation was adopted to amend, among others, the Law on State Control and related sectoral legislation, aiming to strengthen the powers of control bodies, including of the State Labour Inspectorate. In July 2025, Moldova adopted legislation granting the State Labour Inspectorate authority to conduct risk-based unannounced inspections when there is information or evidence of violation of the regulatory framework on occupational safety and health. These amendments will enter into force on 31 July 2026, with a transition period focused on training and capacity-building. Strengthening enforcement capacity needs to continue and the legal framework governing labour inspections remains to be fully aligned with ILO standards.

On **social dialogue,** the effectiveness of tripartite social dialogue at both national and local levels is improving, albeit important institutional capacity constraints remain, notably regarding the tripartite bodies. There is a need to strengthen capacity of social partners at all levels. In 2024, the collective bargaining coverage rate was estimated at 38.5% of the country’s total workforce.

On employment policy, the National Employment Agency is implementing performance-based management principles. In 2024, around 16 699 jobseekers were employed, representing over a 50% increase compared to 2023. The Agency has limited but improving human resources and financial capacity.

Regarding **labour force participation** and **unemployment rate** *see the statistical annex and the section on the functioning of the labour market under 2.3 Economic crite*ria.

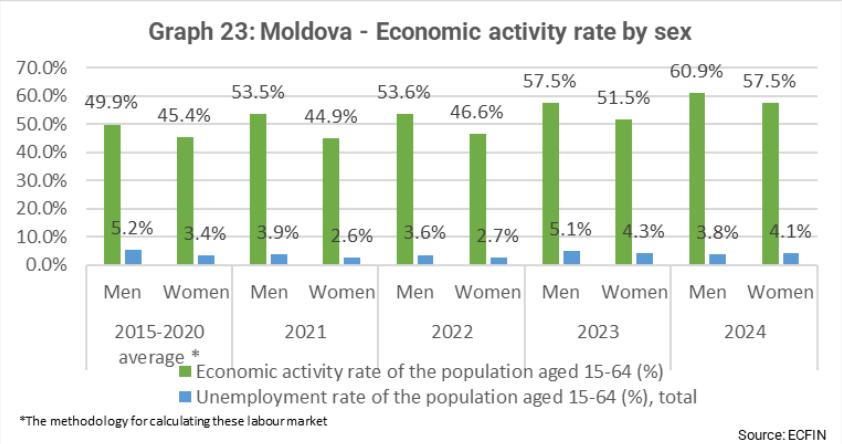
Moldova has made some progress in **social protection and inclusion** but continues to face significant social challenges, including a high poverty rate, which increased slightly from

31.1% to 31.6% in recent years. Certain groups, such as older people, people with disabilities, Roma, and those working in agriculture, remain disproportionately affected by poverty and face systemic barriers. An alarming 44.6% of children in rural areas are living in absolute poverty. To address these challenges, the government has implemented measures such as indexing pensions, increasing the minimum wage, and providing one-time payments to vulnerable families and individuals. The 'RESTART' reform 2023-2026 has progressed, with investments in social services, capacity building, and digitalisation. The number of beneficiaries of social services has increased significantly. Additionally, legislation has been adopted to strengthen community-based social assistance services and promote alternative care for children and older people. The Law on the public social security system was amended to improve access to survivor pensions for people with severe disabilities, including children. However, critical challenges remain, including suboptimal targeting, staff shortages, and unclear division of responsibilities between social assistance agencies and local authorities. De-institutionalisation efforts have also been slow, and reports of human rights violations in institutions, including physical violence and sexual abuse, are a major concern. Moldova needs to continue implementing coordinated measures to strengthen its social protection system, improve the efficiency and accessibility of social services, and ensure the protection of vulnerable populations, particularly children and people with disabilities. In July, Moldova's Ministries of Labour and Social Protection, Health, Education and Research, and Internal Affairs created joint groups to implement the European Child Guarantee (ECG). In January 2025, Moldova approved the Concept of the 'eSocial' Information System, aimed at digitizing and streamlining the administration of social benefits and services, and the implementation of social assistance programmes.

With regards to **non-discrimination in employment and social policy**, Moldova has to progress towards the alignment with the Employment Equality Directive and the Racial Equality Directive. The Equality Council noted an increase in recorded cases of discrimination, with gender identified as the most common ground for workplace discrimination. Participation of people with disabilities in the labour market also remains very limited, with 16% participation rate for men and 18.2% for women. People with disabilities face persistent employment barriers linked to poverty, bureaucratic obstacles, limited access to inclusive education, infrastructure and transportation. No progress was made towards adopting the National Social Inclusion Programme of People with Disabilities (2024-2027).

The National Roma Programme 2022-2025 includes a dedicated employment objective, but implementation has been limited.

On **equality between women and men in employment and social policy,** Moldova has made progress by adopting legislation aimed at aligning with the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation and with the Work-Life Balance Directive. However, women continue to earn on average 15.6% less than



men and the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value remains poorly enforced in Moldova. Women's labour market participation increased to 41.4%, supported by extended childcare and parental leave, yet access to early education remains limited, especially in rural areas. Moldova still has to align its legislation with the gender equality *acquis* in this Chapter, including the Work-life balance Directive, the Pay transparency Directive and the Women on Boards Directive.

Moldova is partially aligned with the EU *acquis* on the **European Social Fund.** While Moldova joined the Employment and Social Innovation strand of the European Social Fund Plus in 2024, no EaSI projects have been implemented in the country so far.

Chapter 20 - Enterprise and industrial policy

EU industrial policy strengthens competitiveness, facilitates structural change, and encourages a business-friendly environment that stimulates small and medium-sized enterprises.

On **enterprise and industrial policy principles**, the Government continued implementing the national programme for the promotion of entrepreneurship and increasing competitiveness for 2023-2027 and has started implementing the national programme for industrial development (NIPD) for 2024-2028. Limited administrative capacity and limited funding from the national budget restrain the implementation of these programmes. The NPID would benefit from an action plan with a concrete timeline for implementation and adequate budgetary provisions.

The Government approved a new state aid scheme for supporting companies which want to invest in the five priority manufacturing sectors identified in the national industrialisation programme. Since the new scheme entered into force in January 2025, more than 10 companies applied to benefit from support.

Moldova is reducing the regulatory and administrative burden on business by adopting a series of legal packages on the simplification of permits and business facilitation, which will lead to the simplification and modernisation of procedures. Once these will be in place, further outreach and awareness raising will be needed.

On **enterprise and industrial policy instruments**, the government continued implementing ongoing SME instruments while also launching three new ones: i) the Small Producers Support Programme; ii) the Programme to Increase the Competitiveness of Local Producers and Integration into Value Chains; and iii) the Fund for Entrepreneurship and Economic Growth (FACEM). The law amendment to align the SME definitions with the EU recommendation is still pending.

Moldova adopted a law on combating late payment in commercial transactions between businesses and between public authorities and businesses, aiming to align with the Directive on combating late payment in commercial transactions. Monitoring systems to assess payment performance, especially by public authorities, are needed.

In March 2025, new provisions regulating the activities of the Industrial Platforms and Specialised Parks have been introduced.

The programme on administration of state public property for 2024-2027 was approved. However, the implementation of the programme is lagging. No progress was made by the Public Property Agency during the reporting period.

In **sectoral policies**, no major developments occurred during the reporting period. Allocation of NPID support and investment incentives across the NPID priority sectors should be made publicly available.

Chapter 25 - Science and research

The EU provides significant support for research and innovation. All EU Member States, associated countries and third countries participate in the EU's research and innovation programmes, and can benefit from them, especially where there is a scientific excellence and solid investment in research and innovation.

Moldova advanced the implementation of the National Programme for **Research and Innovation** (R&I) for 2024-2027, which aims to foster national research capacities and facilitate Moldova's integration into the European Research Area. Notably, in March 2025, the government started implementing the National Programme for Smart Specialisation 2024-2027 'Smart Moldova' and set up a National Fund for Innovation and Technology Transfer with a budget of EUR 1.75 million for 2025-2026. The fund serves to strengthen collaboration between the scientific and business sectors to contribute to economic growth and innovation.

The Ministry of Education and Research (MER) and the National Agency for Research and Development (NARD) implemented several initiatives to enhance the capacities of people involved in R&I activities. For example, NARD awarded approximately 30 grants for young researchers and MER increased the monthly value of scholarships for PhD students. Also, the financial support to the Government Excellence Scholarship and to the Scholarship in Scientific Fields was increased in 2025. With a view at enhancing researchers' participation in national and international projects, the government revised the guidance for hourly rates for staff involved in R&I projects financed under competitive external or national funding sources.

The reform to integrate higher education and research institutions (launched in 2023) continued during the reporting period, leading to the merger of some institutions in the agriculture sector.

On research and innovation, the positive trend of Moldova's performance in Horizon Europe continued. Moldova participates in "DANUBIUS-RI", which has been granted the legal status of a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) in June 2025.

The Horizon Europe National Office and the network of national contact points carried out a wide range of information and awareness-raising activities related to Horizon Europe and the European Research Area. The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) has begun extending its programmes to Moldova and undertaking awareness-raising.

R&D funding in the public sector remains low, despite a slight increase of 0.7% percentage points compared to 2023. The gross domestic expenditure on R&D was 0.22% of GDP in 2024, which is below the EU-27 average of 2.24% and the EU target of 3% of GDP. However, venture capital spending on R&D has been increasing in recent years.

Moldova is among the Emerging Innovators in the 2025 European Innovation Scoreboard, with an innovation performance of 19.0% of the EU average.

Chapter 26 - Education and culture

The EU supports cooperation in education and culture by funding programmes and the coordination of Member State policy through the open method of coordination. The EU and its Member States must also prevent discrimination and ensure quality education for children of migrant workers, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

During the reporting period, Moldova's **education and training system** advanced the modernisation reforms begun in previous years. The Government efforts are focused on making systemic changes to the education system, emphasising inclusion, equity, quality, gender responsiveness and resilience, and strengthening coordination with partners and mobilisation of additional domestic and external resources. Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP in 2024 was 5.4%, which is above the EU average of 4.6% of GDP.

In the **general education** sector, the Ministry of Education and Research has prioritised the consolidation/optimisation of the school network to address the underperformance of extremely small rural schools, unequal distribution of funds and efficiency issues. A pilot initiative was launched in 2023-24, and advanced significantly in 2024-25, to modernise the learning environments in 35 'model schools' across the country and promote pupils' enrolment in schools with bigger capacity and higher quality standards. This entails renovating STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) laboratories, libraries, sports facilities, medical offices, psychologist's offices, sanitary blocks and provision of digital devices. Also, over 100 school buses have been purchased, and a school bus fleet management information system is under development to support pupils in rural areas. Additionally, a pilot system of financial incentives was introduced to encourage pupils' voluntary transfer to higher-quality schools.

The emphasis on quality education is also reflected in the progress of two other key reforms begun in the previous reporting period, namely the re-conceptualisation of the **continuous professional development of teachers and school leaders** under the auspices of the National Institute for Educational Leadership, and the comprehensive **curriculum review** to improve learning outcomes of children across primary and secondary education. Induction programmes for newly recruited teachers, in-service mentorship programmes, re-skilling training and provision of pedagogical support through lesson plans have been rolled out in 2024-25. The revision of the curriculum advanced in 2025 for all mandatory subjects to general education, and it is due to complete in 2026, with continued pedagogical support to teachers and roll out of an evidence-based monitoring and evaluation system to track students' progress. Moldova did not take part to the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS 2024) but is participating in PISA 2025.

In **digital teaching and learning**, Moldova has undertaken initiatives to foster digital skills in science and technology classes. Development of STEAM disciplines is a priority for the Government, and investments in school labs are an essential part of the ongoing school renovations under the model schools plan. A teacher training programme for digital skills was developed in 2024 based on the DigCompEdu, and a cohort of 70 national trainers of trainers has been capacitated to provide cascade IT training to teachers in Moldova from April 2025.

The Ministry of Education and Research is implementing the National Programme for the Development of **Inclusive Education** 2024-2027. Despite all dedicated efforts, children with SEN and/or disabilities, and especially those from ethnic minorities, continue to face challenges to access formal education opportunities, resulting in low enrolment rates.

Inclusion of Roma children in the education system remains challenging, with disparities between urban and rural areas. During the reporting period, the ministry removed the remaining administrative barriers for the enrolment of Ukrainian children in Moldovan schools, and with the assistance of international humanitarian actors developed a roadmap for the inclusion of refugee children in the education system by 2026.

Gender-sensitive approaches are increasingly mainstreamed in the policies of the education system in Moldova, including in the Implementation Programme of the Education Strategy 2030 for the years 2023-2025. However, violence, harassment and bullying remain issues of concern in schools and in higher education institutions. In general, the education policies in place are gender-sensitive, and the work currently ongoing in curriculum review also aims to remove the few remaining gender-related stereotypes from textbooks and teaching techniques. Institutional mechanisms to prevent and combat sexual harassment in higher education institutions are being piloted.

In **vocational education and training** (**VET)**, the reorganisation process of the VET institutions network advanced. At the beginning of the 2024-2025 academic year, the network of VET institutions consisted of 81 institutions, as opposed to 88 in the previous year. Moldova also continued the gradual introduction of a dual-VET approach, which aims to better match skills to labour market demands. However, concrete opportunities for students to gain practical experience in real work environments are scarce, due to limited collaboration between the private sector and VET institutions. VET curricula and teaching and learning resources are not yet gender sensitive in most disciplines, but this is also currently being improved. A communication campaign is already underway to fight gender-stereotypes in VET and employment.

Moldova is making progress in operationalising the national register of qualifications, and the **validation of non-formal and informal learning** continues. However, poor alignment persists between the qualification standards and the VET curricula in use in VET institutions, with many programmes failing to reflect evolving labour market demands, leaving VET graduates without the essential skills required by employers.

A roadmap for the operationalisation of the **national qualifications framework** (2023-2027) is in place. As a member of the Advisory Group of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), Moldova has started to prepare to reference its National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to the EQF.

In the field of **higher education**, the country has made significant progress on key European Higher Education Area commitments. Moldova is a member of the European Higher Education Area (Bologna process) where it continued its active participation. Further efforts are needed on the full implementation of the key commitments of the Bologna Process, especially with regards to automatic recognition and external quality assurance. There are three higher education institutions from Moldova which participate in the European Universities Alliances as associated partners.

Moldova benefits from the international dimension of the 2021-2027 Erasmus+ programme and is participating in four (out of seven in total) European Education Area working groups 2021-2025.

Several actions were taken to increase investments in **youth**. Following the launch of the National Youth Strategy 2030, the Government approved the Youth Centre Development Programme 2030, providing for an annual allocation of MDL 4.5 million / EUR 0.23 million for 2025-2030 for the expansion and modernisation of the youth centre network in Moldova.

In the area of **sport**, a new internal regulation was approved that provides a transparent and foreseeable way of allocating financial support for national sports federations. In addition, Government Decision 241/2025 amended the Regulation on the financing mechanism for performance sports, ensuring more efficient and result-based planning of public financial resources. Moldova continued to participate in the European Week of Sport.

On **culture**, the Ministry of Culture started the formulation of a comprehensive National Strategy for Culture and Heritage for the years 2025-2035, with technical assistance from UNESCO and financial support from the EU. The strategy sets out priority directions for strengthening the cultural and creative sectors, promoting cultural diversity and ensuring sustainable management of national heritage. Two rounds of consultations with sectoral stakeholders were held in the first half of 2025, and the final approval of the Strategy is slated for the end of the year 2025. Moldova has ratified the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and will, as of 2026, join the Creative Europe programme.

Chapter 29 - Customs union

All Member States are part of the EU customs union and follow the same customs rules and procedures. This requires legislative alignment as well as adequate implementing and enforcement capacity and access to and interoperability with the EU electronic customs environment.

Moldova has successfully migrated to the **New Computerised Transit System – Phase 5** (NCTS P5) nation-wide as of 1 October 2024. A monitoring mission has concluded that Moldova has demonstrated a good level of preparation for adhering to the Common Transit convention, though certain technical arrangements (ICS2, analysis of data on security and safety aspects, etc.) are pending implementation. While there is an improvement overall, efforts are needed to reinforce the IT component of the customs administration, including staffing.

Moldova has continued to implement modernised **customs legislation**, which is broadly aligned with that of the EU. The country regularly harmonises its customs tariff nomenclature with the EU combined nomenclature, and has an authorised economic operators programme with a total of 152 authorisations issued, including 49 on security/safety aspects enjoying mutual recognition with the EU Member States. Moldova has achieved substantial progress in its alignment with the EU customs code with the EU's. However, the implementation of this Customs Code is not yet fully completed as there are still transitional provisions in place. Further efforts are required to prepare the phasing out of transitional provisions in the Moldovan Customs Code as well as bringing the national legislation into full alignment with the EU customs legislation, particularly in areas such as the introduction and import of cultural goods, where transposition is either incomplete or has not yet occurred.

The Customs Service formed a dedicated working group to optimise and reform its organisational structure on 18 September 2024. This group is responsible for completing the reorganisation of customs subdivisions to enhance service efficiency and integrity.

In June 2025, the Common Transit Convention monitoring mission assessed positively Moldova's readiness for the accession to the Convention, which is expected by 1 November 2025. Moldova adopted a regulation on April 2025 putting in place a tracking and tracing system for tobacco products, pursuant to the (WHO FCTC) Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products.

Risk management was applied systematically, with the percentage of customs control (both physical and documentary control) at 16.3% for imports, and 3.3% for exports.

Moldova has not yet aligned with the Combined Transport Directive.

On **administrative and operational capacity**, there is a need to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Customs Service, promoting a higher level of integrity standards and minimising corruption risks. This requires greater automation and optimisation of internal processes for customs clearance, and wider access for traders to customs simplification and digital procedures.

Within the context of this reorganisation, there is a need to continue optimising internal procedures and ensuring adequate division of competences between central and regional customs offices under the principle of a Single Legal Entity. Actions should be taken for those customs functions most vulnerable to corruption, such as periodical rotation of staff holding sensitive posts, robust monitoring and evaluation of progress on anti-corruption measures, among others.

Moldova continued to cooperate with the EU Member States under the EU-Moldova Association Agreement Protocol III on mutual administrative assistance in customs matters, and with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) to investigate suspected cross-border customs offences and other illegal activities.

CLUSTER 4: THE GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY

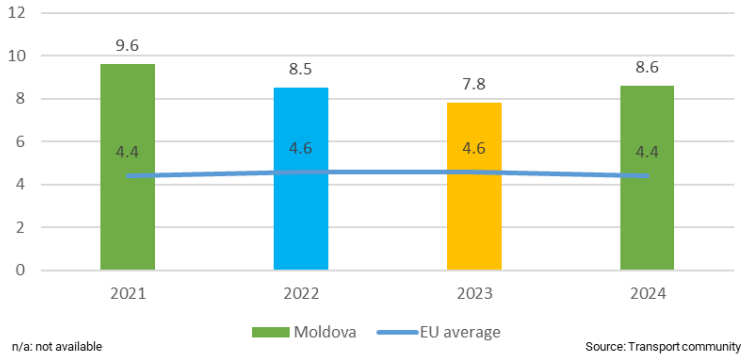
The cluster on Green Agenda and sustainable connectivity covers: transport policy (Chapter 14); energy (Chapter 15); trans-European networks (Chapter 21); and environment and climate change (Chapter 27).

Chapter 14 - Transport policy

The EU has common rules on technical and safety standards, security, social standards, State aid and market liberalisation in road transport, railways, inland waterways, multimodal transport, aviation and maritime transport.

On **general transport**, after adopting the Mobility Strategy for 2030, steps have been taken to develop the action plan for its implementation. The intelligent transport systems (ITS) strategy for all modes of transport is currently under development. As an observer, Moldova continued to actively participate in the work of the Transport Community Treaty (TCT). A Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for Soroca was approved by the Municipal Council, while in Comrat the plan is in public consultations.

Graph 24 - Road fatalities in Moldova per 100 000 inhabitants



On **road transport**, some progress was achieved. Legislation on market access, profession of road transport operators, digital tachographs and access to the haulage market is partially aligned. Furthermore, Moldova has ratified the Protocol to the Interbus Agreement regarding the international regular and special regular carriage of passengers by coach and bus, which entered into force on 1 October 2024.

National legislation is partially aligned with the EU *acquis* on road safety and Moldova has approved a road safety strategy. Further actions are needed to align with provisions related to guidelines for road safety audits/inspections of infrastructure and vehicles, and to enhance the road safety crash data system. The National Road Safety Programme for 2024-2030 is nearing finalisation, with ongoing public consultation and pending official approval from the relevant authorities. The data system for crash data collection is under development.

The agreement to temporarily liberalise bilateral and transit road transport between the EU and Moldova, signed in June 2022 was extended until March 2027.

On vehicle equipment, Moldova has partially aligned with the Directive on tyre tread depth and the Directive on speed limitation devices. Additionally, as of 1 June 2026, all relevant vehicles are required to have speed limitation devices, extending the requirement beyond just those registered after 16 September 2014.

No progress was achieved on the legislation regarding the transport of dangerous goods, which remains partially aligned with the EU *acquis*.

A comprehensive review of the national road transport framework is underway, aiming to align it with EU rules. This review will identify gaps and inconsistencies, and subsequently a new draft law or amendments will be prepared to ensure full compliance with EU social and market rules for road transport.

On **rail transport**, after the adoption of the Railway Code in 2024, steps were taken to unbundle the railway state enterprise by adopting the general conditions of the multi-annual contract for the management of railway infrastructure. At the same time, efforts need to be taken to further align the Railway Code to the EU acquis.

There are no existing regulations governing interoperability. Moldova should further pursue alignment with the fourth railway package, including adoption of the technical specifications for interoperability and the common safety methods.

On **maritime transport**, all Moldovan flag vessels remain on the blacklist of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control, due to ship inspections which took place in past years. Efforts are taken with the support of the Transport Community Secretariat to improve quality of safety, security, and environmental standards of ships flying under the Moldovan flag. Moldova still needs to fully align with the Port Services Regulation.

On **inland waterways,** Moldova still needs to align with the related acquis.

On **aviation**, the country is mostly aligned with the EU *acquis*, having implemented more than half of the legal acts listed under the EU-Moldova Common Aviation Area Agreement in its legislation. Moldova has a good level of alignment with the EU aviation rules in several key areas, including market access, safety, security, environment, social aspects, and consumer protection. However, the alignment with air navigation services rules as well as airport legislation such as airport charges and ground handling is only partial. Regarding the protection of air passenger rights, the aviation regulatory framework is partially aligned with relevant EU regulations. Moldova should address the remaining outstanding issues.

There are no legal and technical provisions on intermodal transport in Moldova. Moldova needs to apply EU passenger rights *acquis* for all modes of transport and make further progress to align with outstanding provisions regarding passenger rights, especially in bus, coach and waterborne sectors. The updates introduced to the road transport code also regulate the rights of passengers.

Chapter 15 - Energy

EU energy policy covers energy supply, infrastructure, the internal energy market, consumers, renewable energy, energy efficiency, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, radiation protection and nuclear safeguards.

On **security of supply**, Moldova managed to successfully phase out its dependency on MGRES power plant, by switching to supply of electricity from Romania. Gas stored in Ukraine and Romania was used to cover the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 winter consumption. Gas Emergency Regulation and Preventive Action Plan were approved in October 2024 and the Electricity Emergency Regulation and Preventive Action Plan were approved in December 2024, after positive assessments of the Energy Community Secretariat. There has been no progress on Oil Stocks Directive. In March 2025, the government adopted a decision to stipulate a full phase out of any form of dependence on Russian supply of energy resources.

Regarding **internal energy markets**, the Parliament approved on June 2025 the Electricity Law, aligning with the EU Package on Electricity Integration. Similarly, Moldova amended the Fiscal Code, which was harmonized with the EU VAT legislation concerning reverse charge mechanism for electricity and natural gas. An amendment to the Gas Law obliged natural gas supply entities to maintain natural gas reserves equal to at least 15% of the average annual consumption (over the past 5 years) by households and essential service providers in areas. Moreover, the framework for the gradual phase down of Public Service Obligation for large industrial gas consumers was established – based on the decision of National Agency for Energy Regulation (ANRE), has started in October and will be finalised by 1 April 2026. Progress was achieved also concerning the unbundling of the transmission networks ('Moldovagaz' and 'Moldovatransgaz'). A new deadline of 31 July 2025 was set for the complete ownership unbundling process for the transmission networks.

Moldova further progressed on **the promotion of renewable energy sources,** the Regulation on the statistical transfer of quantities of energy from renewable sources and Regulation on the calculation of energy consumption from renewable sources were approved in February 2025, while the Regulation on solid biofuels was approved in November 2024. The Ministry of Energy concluded in April 2025 a tender for large investments in solar (60 MW) and wind power (105 MW), receiving 42 bids. Moreover, in April 2025, the government developed the Action Plan for renewable energy and storage auctions in 2026, which will lead to the publication of hybrid auction for wind capacity and storage.

On **energy efficiency**, substantial progress has been achieved in institutional development. The former Energy Efficiency Agency was reorganised into the National Centre for Sustainable Energy (NCSE), with a focus on the management of energy efficiency projects in public and residential buildings in an open and transparent manner, with oversight from the donors' community. NCSE has launched the two calls for proposals for the selection of residential buildings to conduct energy audits. As the first step in the entire financing procedure, 59 energy audits have been completed, of which 10 have already been assigned to project design. Under the second financial product, NCSE has identified 180 vulnerable individual houses for future energy audits, 58 energy audits have been carried out and 120 are in preparation. 42 financing contracts have already been signed, and construction tenders will soon be launched.

In December 2024, the Regulation on energy audits of large enterprise, which impose the audit obligation to 45 large enterprises to conduct energy audit, was approved.

Following the 2023 Law on the energy performance of buildings to align with the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, in September 2024 the Energy Performance Certification Regulation and the Regulation on Energy Auditors and Installers were adopted.

On **nuclear energy, nuclear safety and radiation protection**, Moldova still needs to fully align with and implement the Euratom Directives on nuclear safety, management of spent fuels and nuclear waste, basic safety standards and drinking water. Moldova is only partially aligned with the Council Directive laying down basic safety standards for protection against the dangers arising from exposure to ionising radiation. Moldova is not yet a member of ECURIE and EURDEP systems.

On nuclear safeguards, upon EU accession, the existing systems of accountancy and control of nuclear materials in Moldova will need to be adapted to accommodate for the safeguards provisions (Chapter 7) of the Euratom Treaty.

The Law on energy was amended to align with the EU Regulation on Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action and the EU Regulation on trans-European energy infrastructure. Based on this, the National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) was drafted, revised according to the recommendations received from the Energy Community Secretariat, publicly consulted and finally approved by the Government in February 2025.

Chapter 21 - Trans-European networks

The EU promotes trans-European networks (TENs) in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy to strengthen the internal market and contribute to growth and employment.

On **transport networks**, the current strategic framework for transport infrastructure is outlined in the 2030 National Strategy for Development, which entered into force in autumn 2024. After completing a pre-feasibility study for the completion of the Chișinău ring road, a feasibility study is ongoing for identifying the most suitable axes for the future road. A corridor study for development of the TEN-T core network along the Iași - Ungheni – Chișinău – Odesa axis is also ongoing. Three other road TEN-T border infrastructure projects with Romania are delayed, mainly due to administrative procedures and adjustment of project scope with introduction of coordinated controls. The Road Fund remains the primary source of national budget funding for public road maintenance.

Regarding rail, rehabilitation works for the north-south railway corridor continue to be delayed. In terms of European standard gauge deployment in Moldova, some progress was made. Moldova is ought to receive support from Connecting Europe Facility for upgrading the rail connection between Ungheni (MD) and Iasi (RO). Authorities have kicked off the rehabilitation works and are aiming to open this branch to traffic by autumn 2025. Rehabilitation works on the Basarabeasca-Giurgiulești railway segment are currently ongoing.

On **energy networks**, infrastructure projects should be accelerated to reduce Moldova's structural vulnerability and improve its connectivity with neighbouring countries. Moldova is aligned with the former Regulation on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure but not yet aligned with the current TEN-E Regulation.

Moldova still needs to develop its regional electricity connections in line with the Central and South-Eastern Europe Energy Connectivity (CESEC) action plan on electricity and renewable energy._In particular, Moldova should advance work on its main infrastructure projects: the 400kV Vulcanesti- Chișinău power line, the 400 kV Bălți–Suceava power line, and the 330 kV Bălți - Dnestrovsc HPP-2 power line, respectively.

Chapter 27 - Environment and climate change

The EU promotes strong climate action, sustainable development and protection of the environment. EU rules contain provisions addressing climate change, water and air quality, waste management, nature protection, industrial pollution, chemicals, noise and civil protection.

Environment

On **horizontal legislation**, guidelines for the implementation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure have been adopted as implementing legislation to the Law on EIA. However, the institutional capacity of the Environmental Agency is insufficient to ensure the effective implementation of these requirements and the level of preparedness of private sector to fulfil the obligations is low. Moldova has not aligned its national legislation with the Environmental Crime Directive. On 22 June 2025, a law on environmental liability regarding the prevention and repair of environmental damage was adopted.

Alignment of **air quality standards** to the EU *acquis* has progressed. In February 2025, the government approved the establishment of the national inventory system of air pollutant emissions and the national integrated air quality monitoring system. Furthermore, Moldova initiated efforts to assess existing air quality monitoring stations and procure additional ones, while updating the Strategy for Air Quality Monitoring and Management.

The implementation of the regional solid **waste management** system is ongoing and advancing in all regions. However, addressing specific waste-streams requires further attention. The existing Extended Producer Responsibility legal framework on six waste streams has been revised and updated, and new frameworks for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes covering construction and textile waste are under development. While the Program on promotion of Green and Circular economy was adopted in 2024, the implementation of **circular economy** policies needs improvement. Domestic capacities of recycling of waste are very low and limited only to private waste recyclers. The intersectoral component of circular economy and involvement of other line ministries is at a very initial stage.

On **water management**, the Law on drinking water was amended in May 2025 to partially meet the requirements of the EU Directive on the quality of water intended for human consumption. The Methodology for the Assessment and Classification of Groundwater Bodies was approved. The development of specialised section on water and sanitation, as part of the national territorial development plan, is in progress. Moldova needs to strengthen the consistency of inter-sectoral policies and inter-institutional coordination to ensure the coherence and synergy between the water/wastewater policy and the development of the related infrastructures. Furthermore, capacity for monitoring of ground and surface water needs to be strengthened and the annual water monitoring programme should be implemented. The water laboratory needs to renew its accreditation. The Government Decision on the river basin management plan for the Nistru river (cycle II) (2025-2030) was approved in February 2025.

On **nature protection**, Moldova continues implementing the national afforestation programme. Moldova should continue the work on identifying and pre-designating sites that will be covered by the Natura 2000 network and provide for administrative capacity to manage the sites. The reform of Moldsilva (the Agency for forestry and hunting) and the establishment of an independent agency for protected areas remain pending.

On **industrial pollution control and risk management**, the Guide on procedures for the application of the Law on the control of major accident hazards was issued in April 2025. The Government approved a methodology related to environmental permits and several Eco-labelling criteria were approved by the Minister of Environment. Moldova is working on updating the existing pollutant release and transfer register (PRTR) platform. This includes revising data clusters to ensure full compliance with EU standards of pollutions data collection, monitoring and reporting requirements as well Greenhouse Gas emissions data collection and reporting requirements. However, Moldova still lacks enforcement mechanism to ensure that reporting obligations are implemented by economic actors. In this regard, Moldova would benefit from developing a coherent legal framework, strengthening institutional capacity along with methodological support mechanisms for economic actors to strengthen the private sector's capacity to understand and comply with reporting requirements.

Moldova is not aligned with the provisions on **environmental noise.**

On chemicals, Moldova is currently revising the national legislation to align with the EU REACH and CLP Regulations.

On **civil protection and disaster management**, Moldova is a full member of the UCPM since January 2024. Moldova is encouraged to improve its resilience to disasters through prevention and preparedness actions and make use, where appropriate, of the scientific partnership for natural hazards, through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre

Climate change

Moldova made good progress on climate over the reporting period, building on the adoption of a climate law in 2024, although continued efforts are required to ensure a swift alignment with the EU climate *acquis*.

On **carbon pricing**, alignment with the EU system for the monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV-A) of greenhouse gas emissions at installation level is still incomplete and requires further efforts. Building on the 2024 Climate Law, the implementing legislation for a fully functioning MRV-A system at installation level is under development and only partially adopted. The aim is to start collecting and verifying greenhouse gas emission data as of 2026. Additional work will be necessary for full alignment with the EU MRV-A system.

The National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) was adopted in February 2025. The country published a new Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement in May 2025, with a slightly enhanced emission reduction target for 2030 (-71% compared to 1990 level) and a new reduction target for 2035 (-75% compared to 1990). This means that most of the remaining mitigation efforts are postponed to after 2035. Furthermore, Moldova still lacks a long-term low-emission development strategy.

The Climate Law established a National Commission on Climate Change, which is now operational. However concrete improvements on **mainstreaming of climate** across all policies are still limited. Moldova needs to significantly reinforce administrative capacity to make progress in aligning with the EU climate *acquis* and to effectively address climate mitigation and adaptation. The ongoing institutional reforms are critical steps in this regard.

Moldova adopted a **national disaster risk reduction** strategy in December 2024, confirming a strong commitment in this area.

Moldova does not align with EU standards on **light- and heavy-duty vehicles' emissions** and neither does it implement the Carbon Capture and Storage Directive. An Article 5 Party to the Montreal Protocol, Moldova has legislation on ozone-depleting substances and fluorinated gases but is only partially aligned with EU standards in this field.

CLUSTER 5: RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE AND COHESION

This cluster covers: agriculture and rural development (Chapter 11); food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy (Chapter 12); fisheries and aquaculture (Chapter 13); regional policy and coordination of structural instruments (Chapter 22); and financial and budgetary provisions (Chapter 33).

Chapter 11 - Agriculture and rural development

The EU's common agricultural policy supports farmers and ensures Europe's food security. It helps tackle climate change and the sustainable management of natural resources; preserves rural areas and landscapes; and supports the rural economy by promoting jobs in farming, agri-food industries and related sectors. This requires robust management and control systems. There are also common EU rules for marketing standards, quality policy and organic farming.

On **horizontal issues**, a new law on financing, management and monitoring of agricultural policy was adopted and will enter into force in 2026. It will be implemented through a Strategic Plan for the period 2025-2030, currently under preparation.

Further efforts are required towards establishing the integrated administration and control system (IACS). A pilot project to establish a farm register and a land parcel identification system (LPIS) was conducted in five districts. The farm register and LPIS must be rolled out across the country. The establishment of the IACS requires substantial capacity strengthening of the Agency for Interventions and Payments in Agriculture (AIPA) and this must include the allocation of additional human resources with an effective staff retention policy. A farm sustainability data network (FSDN) remains to be set up.

The legislative framework for the Farm Advisory Service in the form of Agricultural Chambers has been approved, pending the adoption of implementing procedures, including for the creation of an **Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation System (AKIS).**

Regarding **agricultural markets - common market organisation**, efforts are needed to further develop the regulatory framework in line with the EU *acquis*. The reporting period saw progress in aligning with EU standards for fruits, vegetables and wine.

The **rural development** framework policy document is the National Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2023-2030, and the National Fund for the Development of Agriculture and the Rural Areas provides the corresponding financial support. According to the National Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development 2025-2030, Moldova will continue to implement rural development measures focused on investment and related support elements.

On **quality policy**, Moldova needs to continue to align with the latest EU acquis in the area.

In the area of **organic farming**, alignment with the EU acquis continued. Further work is required, in particular on the supervision of certification bodies and traceability of products. The system of control and enforcement should be strengthened.

During the reporting period, Moldova strengthened anti-corruption measures in agriculture through AIPA's new anti-bribery policy and an Action Plan under the National Integrity and

Anti-Corruption Programme 2024–2028. Measures focused on merit-based hiring, asset and interest declarations, conflict-of-interest monitoring, and strict gift rules. In 2024, only three criminal cases involving subsidy beneficiaries were opened, with two sent to court, while digitalizing subsidy applications remains a key future step.

Chapter 12 - Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy

The EU food acquis including hygiene rules for foodstuff production ensures a high level of food and feed safety, and a high level of protection of consumers' interests. Animal health and welfare, and the safety of food of animal origin, are safeguarded together with the quality of seeds, plant reproductive material, the protection against harmful organisms, animal nutrition and the use of plant protection products.

In the area of **general food safety,** institutional and human resource capacity was further developed within the reporting period. The Human Resources Development Strategy 2024-2027 was implemented through a training programme for central level staff and staff from territorial subdivisions (inspectors) of the National Food Safety Agency.

Moldova further strengthened its official controls oversight at various stages of the agri-food chain, including the labelling of food products, in line with EU standards, and clearly designated the responsible competent authorities. A new law on official controls was adopted, ensuring a broad alignment with the EU acquis.

New microbiological testing methods were accredited at the national reference laboratory. However, Moldova still needs a national network of laboratories, and a multiannual control plan aligned with EU acquis requirements.

On **veterinary policy**, new implementing measures on the prevention, control and eradication of transmissible diseases in animals were established, aligning national legislation with the EU Regulation on transmissible animal diseases. The country continued implementing the EU funded programmes for African swine fever, avian influenza and rabies prevention and control. The country also enhanced Avian influenza and African swine fever detection and response, learning from the 2024/2025 outbreaks.

On **animal welfare**, while some progress was made in aligning sanitary and veterinary norms related to the protection and welfare of animals during transport, the consistent implementation of animal welfare standards during transport, at farm and slaughter stages, remains a significant area for improvement in many establishments and for many operators.

On the **placing of food, feed and animal by-products on the market**, Moldova implemented its national residue monitoring plan for residues of pharmacologically active substances, pesticides and contaminants in animal and animal products. Its scope was further extended in 2025, including other eggs (quail) and pork meat (growing stage and slaughterhouse).

Capacity to sample, analyse, and report antimicrobial resistance in food-producing animals and fresh meat increased as a result of improvements to the institutional framework, laboratory infrastructure and staff training.

The traceability mechanisms of animal drugs and medicines from import of substances to farm level application was redefined and its digitalisation was launched, ensuring interoperability with the animal register and laboratory testing.

On **food safety rules**, requirements were aligned with those of the EU regarding microbiological criteria for food products and labelling of certain product categories. The implementation of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) by food operators at

all stages of production, processing and distribution remains a concern. While increasing the number of risk-based official controls obtained at the farm, production and distribution level, more awareness raising, training and investments for and by business operators are required to accelerate positive change.

On **specific rules for feed** no progress was reported.

On **phytosanitary policy**, the legislative framework for plant health and placing of plant protection products on the market was further aligned with the EU *acquis*. Market surveillance remains to be improved from marketing and circulation of plant protection products to farm level application, especially the sustainable use of pesticides, and the recovery and destruction of obsolete products.

On **genetically modified organisms**, Moldova adopted several pieces of implementing legislation on their genetically modified organisms law.

Chapter 13 - Fisheries and aquaculture

The common fisheries policy lays down rules on fisheries management, protects living resources of the sea and limits the environmental impact of fisheries. This includes setting catch quotas, managing fleet capacity, rules on control and inspection, rules on markets and aquaculture and support for fisheries and coastal communities. Further, it promotes a sustainable aquaculture.

Moldova needs to continue further aligning with the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), particularly in areas relevant to a landlocked country, focusing on the development of its aquaculture and fish processing sectors. In this regard, Moldova has advanced sector-specific legislation, including the adoption of a law on aquaculture sector policy and market organisation in December 2024. The new legislative framework is partially aligned with key EU CFP regulations and supports sustainable development, **improved market standards** and the fight against illegal fishing.

Moldova has also made progress on aligning **quality and marketing standards** with those under the EU common market organisation in fishery and aquaculture products through the adoption of new legislation on quality requirements for fishery and aquaculture products.

In the **area of inspection and control**, new legislation improves the traceability of fishery and aquaculture products and strengthens import inspections to prevent importation of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. This provides the necessary normative framework for the alignment with the EU standards and *acquis* in the field. This mechanism will complement existing controls carried out by national authorities, including the National Food Safety Agency (ANSA) and the Customs Service, which currently oversee the quality, safety, and traceability of imported fish and fishery products. The agency will also be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the new provisions for the prevention, deterrence, and elimination of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing, which will enter into force in 2027.

In the area of **structural actions**, to enhance administrative capacity and preparedness for administering future support schemes from the newly created National Fund for Support of Maritime Affairs, Fisheries, and Aquaculture and subsequently the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) once Moldova becomes an EU Member State, further development is necessary. In this context, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry has prepared a technical profile for aquaculture within its administrative structure.

Concerning **international agreements,** international cooperation activities should be further strengthened. Progress should be made in integrating international fisheries agreements into the national framework, in finalising legislation covering the definition of fishing vessels in line with international fisheries instruments, and in adopting new rules with regards to the registration and deregistration of vessels engaging in illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

As regards to the wider **blue economy**, Moldova continues to participate in the Common Maritime Agenda. It maintains a strong commitment at both the grassroots and ministerial level, with the Ministry of Environment coordinating cooperation among participating countries under the initiative during the reporting period. This positive regional cooperation should continue.

Moldova is not aligned with the *acquis* on **State aid** in the area of fisheries and aquaculture. A system for state aid control in these sectors needs to be set up.

Chapter 22 - Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments

Regional policy is the EU's main tool for reducing regional disparities and investing in sustainable and inclusive socio-economic growth. It is operating through shared management between the Commission and EU Member States. The implementation of cohesion policy programmes requires appropriate administrative capacity on programme and project level, the establishment of systems of sound financial management and control and also the fulfilment of other EU acquis elements such as environmental or public procurement legislation.
On the **legislative framework**, Moldova has in place a framework of strategic documents including the National Strategy for Regional Development (2022-2028), the National Programme for Local Development (2024-2028), and a national programme for the development of cities. The development and implementation of a dedicated legal framework for the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund is pending.

The authorities are considering available options to encourage initiatives under the European groupings of territorial cooperation (EGTC).

In April 2025, amendments to the operational framework of the National Fund for Regional and Local Development came into effect, making intermunicipal development associations eligible to apply for competitive calls for the selection of regional development projects financed from the Fund.

Efforts are underway to update the regulatory framework governing local action groups (LAGs), with the goal of bringing it in line with European standards on community-led local development. The proposed changes aim to streamline the operational processes of LAGs, clarify their roles in rural development, and enhance transparency in monitoring and supervising local partnerships, ultimately strengthening the effectiveness of local development initiatives.

The current **institutional framework** supports management of EU funds, with the State Chancellery acting as the national coordinating authority and being responsible for all five Interreg cooperation programmes in which Moldova participates. A National Working Group comprised of representatives from key ministries and government agencies oversees the management of EU funds including cross-border, transnational, and interregional cooperation programmes.

On **administrative capacity,** the concept for strengthening the capacity of local public authorities in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of projects was approved in November 2024. Moldova is also strengthening its administrative capacity to manage EU funds to ensure the efficient management of cross-border and transnational cooperation

initiatives under the Interreg umbrella. High turnover of staff is a challenge that Moldova continues to address through salary increases, improved working conditions, and enhanced training programmes, as well as a dedicated 'SPRINT' programme for civil servants. While adequate administrative capacity exists for **monitoring and evaluation** under EU indirect management, the timely integration of recommendations remains a challenge.

Multiannual **programming** takes place via the medium-term budget framework approved by the government. The current National Programme for Local Development aligns with the National Strategy for Regional Development 2022-2028 and strengthens national involvement in regional and local development initiatives.

Significant progress has been achieved in setting up two critical management systems: an information system specifically designed for managing regional and local projects was launched in July 2024 and a Register of Capital Investment Projects, which is already operational and mandatory for all large-scale investment projects.

On financial management, control and audit, Moldova's implementation of activities and the improved effectiveness of its management and control systems demonstrate its capacity for sound financial management. A nationwide management information system is being rolled out.

On **the fight against corruption** Moldova strengthened its capacity in regional policy and funds management through new risk registers and disciplinary committees, strict rules on gifts and conflicts of interest, and integrity-based hiring, with 307 civil servants recruited on merit. The National Anti-Corruption Centre also flagged procurement irregularities to OLAF.

A key gap remains the need for full digitalization of project management systems to reduce risks of favouritism and undue influence.

Chapter 33 - Financial and budgetary provisions

This chapter covers the rules governing the funding of the EU budget ('own resources'). These resources mainly consist of: (i) contributions based on the gross national income of each Member State; (ii) customs duties; (iii) the non-recycled plastic resource; and (iv) a resource based on value added tax. Member States must have the appropriate administrative capacity to adequately coordinate and ensure the correct calculation, collection, payment and control of own resources.

There was some to good progress in the underlying policy areas that indirectly affect the own resources system (*for progress in these areas, see Chapters 16 – Taxation, 17- Economic and monetary policy; 18 – Statistics, 29 – Customs union, and 32 – Financial control*).

Capacity-building activities on the EU own resources system and anti-fraud rules have intensified through in-person and online workshops.

Progress was also made towards putting in place **the necessary administrative structures**. The members of Working Group 33, who attended the capacity-building events, also function as the provisional coordinating body. According to the National Plan for Accession (NPA) 2025-2027, the official creation of a **Coordination Body for Own Resources** through an Order of the Ministry of Finance was finalised in July 2025.

On **traditional own resources**, some progress was achieved. The Customs Service, responsible for the collection of import/export duties, operates through the 'Asycuda World' integrated customs information system, which includes an 'Accounting' module for the systematic recording and monitoring of customs debt. Daily and monthly reconciliations with the State Treasury are carried out to ensure data accuracy. The system automatically

calculates duties linked to customs declarations and prevents validation if financial guarantees are missing, enhancing the integrity of customs operations. Nonetheless, Moldova needs to continue upgrading its IT infrastructure to fully meet EU requirements for a traditional own resources system.

Regarding legislative alignment, Moldova partially aligned with the provisions of the EU **Regulation** on customs duty exemptions through its **Customs Code.** Although some articles remain unaligned, significant progress was made, with national provisions covering various exemptions. Moldova must continue aligning its legislation with the EU *acquis*, especially on **VAT structure**, exemptions, deductions, special schemes, and the scope of reduced rates.

On the **gross national income (GNI)** resource, no progress was made during the reporting period regarding the alignment with the European System of Accounts (ESA) 2010 standards. Moldova still needs to ensure the compilation of national accounts and GNI based on ESA 2010 definitions and accounting rules.

Further efforts are needed to fully align legislation, strengthen anti-fraud measures, upgrade IT systems, and operationalise the own resources coordination body.

CLUSTER 6: EXTERNAL RELATIONS

There are two chapters in this cluster: External relations (Chapter 30); Foreign, security and defence policy (Chapter 31).

Chapter 30 - External relations

The EU has a common commercial policy towards third countries, based on multilateral and bilateral agreements and autonomous measures. There are also EU rules in the field of humanitarian aid and development policy.

On the **common commercial policy**, Moldova continued to coordinate its positions and align its policies closely with those of the EU, including within the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its Dispute Settlement Body. In addition, the authorities followed up on the recommendations of last year report and adjusted the legislation related to the temporary import licensing system, which had been introduced previously by the Commission for Emergency Situations (CSE). The Parliament adopted the amendments, which aligned the system with the provisions of the EU-Moldova DCFTA and WTO agreements. The amendments entered into force in February 2025.

The authorities continued the work on alignment with the EU *acquis* in the **export of dual-use items,** aligning with the EU *acquis* on setting up a Union regime for the control of exports and its annual updates as regards the list of dual-use items. The law on the control regime of trade in strategic goods entered into force in January 2025. Also in January 2025, the Government approved a decision setting out the organisation and functioning of the National Commission for the Control of Trade in Strategic Goods, as well as the mechanisms for issuing authorisations for the trade of strategic goods and related documents, the procedure for registering applicants, and the lists for controlling strategic goods. Moldova is neither a participant nor an adherent to the Australia Group and is encouraged to become an adherent and eventually a member.

On **bilateral trade agreements**, Moldova's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with EFTA states fully entered into force on 1 April 2025, following the finalisation of the ratification process by all participating countries. Moldova should continue to coordinate closely with the EU on

international trade negotiations, to ensure that, when it joins the EU, its commitments are compatible with those of the EU and ensuring the integration of an EU accession-linked expiration clause in the provisions of bilateral free trade and investment agreements.

Moldova has 41 bilateral investment treaties, of which 20 are with EU Member States covering 21 EU countries.

In April 2025, the Parliament adopted amendments to the Law on the **screening of investments** in strategic sectors. Nevertheless, the functioning of the Council for the promotion of investment projects of national importance remains to be aligned with international and EU standards.

On **development policy and humanitarian aid**, in May 2025, the Law on international cooperation aiming to reorganisation of the Ministry was approved. Moldova remains a recipient of aid rather than a donor. It does not have a development policy, nor does it provide structural technical assistance to any partner countries. Moldova should continue to build up the capacity of a new department for development cooperation within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and work further on a legal framework on international cooperation, development and **humanitarian aid** to non-EU countries, in line with EU policies and principles. Moldova has provided humanitarian aid to Ukraine in the form of both goods and supplies.

Chapter 31 - Foreign, security and defence policy

Member States must be able to conduct political dialogues in the framework of foreign, security and defence policy, align with EU statements, take part in EU action, and apply agreed sanctions and restrictive measures.

The **political dialogue** between the EU and Moldova on foreign and security policy continued intensively. In November 2024, the eighth Security and Defence Dialogue was hosted by Moldova in Chișinău.

In December 2024, the Parliament adopted a National Defence Strategy for the next decade, identifying Russia as the source of major threats to Moldova's security, and the EU accession process as strategically important for strengthening security and national resilience. The strategy is designed to guide integration into the EU's security and defence architecture and sets ambitions to align with the EU's Strategic Compass.

The institutional framework enabling Moldova's participation in common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and common security and defence policy (CSDP) is in place. In 2024, Moldova's alignment with statements by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and Council decision on sanctions was at 91%. As of 24 October 2025, its alignment rate was 88%.

On **restrictive measures**, Moldova remains aligned with individual sanctions for violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, listing numerous Russian individuals and entities, as well as with the sanctions regime targeting those seeking to destabilise Moldova. There has been good cooperation with the EU on preventing circumvention of sanctions against Russia and Belarus related to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Moldova undertook efforts to improve the implementation of sanctions, including a more centralised coordination mechanism. In 2025, Moldova also adopted the list of common high priority items to avoid the export of dual-use goods. The robustness of implementation should be further strengthened.

As a member of multiple **international organisations,** Moldova has continued to align with international and EU initiatives in support of Ukraine and supported relevant resolutions of the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Council of Europe, among others. At the UN General Assembly for example, Moldova co-sponsored the Resolution 'Advancing a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine' marking the third anniversary of the Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Moldova is party to the Rome Statue of the **International Criminal Court**.

Moldova continued to support EU measures and documents on **conflict prevention**, but its own capacity in this field remains limited. Moldova should keep measures included in its National Action Plan for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security beyond 2027.

On **disarmament and non-proliferation**, Moldova systematically aligned with EU statements in the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons (NPT), as well as other NPD fora. It participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative and The Hague Code of Conduct and is a party to the Chemical Weapons Conventions (CWC), the Biological Weapons Conventions (BWC), the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Arms Trade Treaty. In August 2025, Moldova adopted the national policy document for **small arms and light weapons** (SALW).

On **security measures,** Moldova continued to implement the agreement with the EU on security procedures for exchanging and protecting **classified information**. Moldova is gradually upgrading the existing systems to be able to proceed to a more comprehensive exchange of classified information electronically.

Cooperation in the field of **common security and defence policy** (**CSDP)** has substantially increased, under the strategic framework of the EU-Moldova Security and Defence Partnership. Moldova has been contributing to Operation EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina and continues to contribute to EUTM Somalia. At the same time, Moldova continued efforts to modernise its armed forces, using the substantial support through the European Peace Facility.

Regarding **hybrid threats**, Moldova has been implementing a range of measures to increase resilience and improve its ability to counter hybrid threats and foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI). In 2025 efforts were undertaken to increase the operational capacity of the Centre for Strategic Communications and Countering Disinformation as well as that of the National Agency for Cyber Security. Moldova has also taken additional significant steps to reduce its energy vulnerability, and it has improved crisis management structures with the EU's support. Moldova has aligned with the July 2025 Statement by the High Representative on behalf of the EU condemning Russia's persistent hybrid campaigns against the EU, its Member States and partners. The fight against FIMI and disinformation is especially crucial in rural and less developed regions that tend to be less resistant to such hybrid attacks.

ANNEX I – RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EU AND MOLDOVA

On 3 March 2022, Moldova applied for a **membership of the EU** and was granted a European perspective and candidate country status in June 2022. In December 2023, the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with the country. The first intergovernmental conference opening the negotiations took place on 25 June 2024.

Moldova continues to broadly implement its obligations under the **Association Agreement (AA). A Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA)**, which was signed in 2014 and fully entered into force in July 2016. The AA/DCFTA remains the bilateral legal instrument serving as the basis for political association and economic integration between the EU and Moldova. Regular political and economic dialogue between the EU and Moldova has continued through the AA/DCFTA structures.

The first ever EU-Moldova Summit took place on 4 July 2025. The latest EU-Moldova Association Council meeting was held in June 2025 and the latest EU-Moldova Association Committee in December 2024. The 11th meeting of the EU-Moldova Association Committee in Trade Configuration took place in November 2024, and the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Association Committee held a meeting on December 2024. Trade relations with the EU have further intensified since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU is Moldova's biggest trade partner, accounting for 54% of its total trade volume in 2024. Moldova and the EU reached an additional tariff liberalisation under Article 147 of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement on 24 July 2025, coinciding with the expiry of the autonomous trade measures granted to the country since July 2022. The Commission proposal was adopted on 28 July 2025 and approved by the Council on 18 September. The agreement was formally adopted by the EU-Moldova Association Committee in Trade Configuration on 19 September. In addition to the AA/DCFTA structures, a Human Rights Dialogue with Moldova is in place since 2010. The High-Level Energy Dialogue continued holding biannual meetings during the reporting period, and the latest High-Level Political and Security Dialogue was held in April 2024. The high-level Transport Dialogue was launched in February 2024 to further deepen cooperation on connectivity and its second meeting took place in April 2025. The EU remains fully committed to supporting a comprehensive, peaceful, and sustainable settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova within its internationally recognised borders. The DCFTA applies to the entire territory of Moldova.

Citizens of Moldova have enjoyed **visa-free travel to the Schengen area** since April 2014. As part of the visa liberalisation monitoring mechanism, the Commission has regularly assessed the progress made by the country in implementing reforms under the visa roadmap. The Commission's seventh report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism, published in October 2024, concluded that Moldova continues to take action to address the recommendations made in the previous year's report. A readmission agreement between the European Union and Moldova entered into force in January 2018. In April 2025, the Commission proposed that countries that have been granted the status of candidate country be designed as safe countries of origin at the EU level.

The EU remained deeply committed under the common foreign and security policy to deepen cooperation with Moldova in these areas. In 2024, Moldova became the first country to sign a Security and Defence Partnership with the EU. The **EU Partnership Mission in Moldova (EUPM**) continued supporting Moldovan institutions in building resilience, while the assistance to the Moldovan Armed Forces provided through the European Peace Facility

(EPF) reached EUR 197 million. In addition, the EU has kept in place a dedicated sanctions regime targeting individuals and entities who try to destabilise Moldova.

The EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Moldova. In 2021-2025, the EU allocated over EUR 1.2 billion in grants to Moldova. Since 2021, the EU has mobilised EUR 1.7 billion for projects in Moldova, together with international financial institutions. The EU has been an active member of the Moldova Partnership Platform since it was set up in 2022. To help support Moldova's integration into the EU and its reforms, the EU is providing up to EUR 1.9 billion for the period from 2025 to 2027, through the new **Moldova Growth Plan**. This is the **largest EU financial support package** since Moldova's independence and comes on top of the EU's existing support.

Bilateral annual programmes are complemented by a package of multi-country and regional programmes supporting civil society and the energy sector, strengthening border management and assisting with migration and security in a broader sense. The country also receives support from TAIEX and competitiveness programmes together with international financial institutions and international organisations.

Since its launch in 2009, Moldova has participated **in the Eastern Partnership (EaP).** This overarching framework has given a further boost to bilateral and regional relations with the EU.

Since 2014, Moldova has progressively extended its participation in **EU programmes.** It has joined the EU customs programme, Fiscalis, LIFE, EU4Health, Horizon Europe, the Connecting Europe facility (CEF), the single market programme, the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), Digital Europe, Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), the Citizen, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV), and the Justice Programme. Organisations and individuals from Moldova are also eligible for certain schemes under the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Moldova participates in several Interreg programmes and is a member of the EU macro-regional strategy for the Danube region. Moldova's participation fee for EU programmes has been waived as a result of the impact on Moldova of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. To strengthen the digital sector, to enhance access to EU initiatives and funds and to support the development of social and solidarity economy, Moldova is participating as an observer in three pilot projects under the Technical Support Instrument.

ANNEX II – STATISTICAL ANNEX

STATISTICAL DATA (as of 11/09/2025)

Basic data	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Population (thousand)		3 560 i	2 685 i	2 644 i	2 565 i	2 513 pi	2 423 pi
Total area of the country (km²)	1) 2) 3)	33 846 w	33 847 w	33 849 w	33 849 w	33 849 w	33 849 w

National accounts	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gross domestic product (GDP) (million national currency)	4)	105 480 w	199 734 w	242 079 w	274 488 w	303 554 w	323 817 pw
Gross domestic product (GDP) (million euro)	4)	6 778 w	10 116 w	11 569 w	13 795 w	15 454 w	16 819 pw
GDP per capita (euro)	4)	1 904 w	3 839 w	4 457 w	5 455 w	6 288 w	6 843 pw
GDP per capita (in purchasing power standards (PPS))	4)	5 069 w	12 989 w	16 377 w	17 461 w	20 910 w	22 634 pw
GDP per capita (in PPS), relative to the EU average (EU-27 = 100)	4)	:	:	31.5 ew	30.9 ew	34.9 ew	35.0 ew
Real GDP growth rate: change on previous year of GDP volume (%)	4)	- 0.6 w	- 8.3 w	13.9 w	- 4.6 w	1.2 w	0.1 pw
Employment growth (national accounts data), relative to the previous year (%)	4)	- 2 iw	- 4 iw	1 iw	2 iw	3 iw	- 4 piw
Labour productivity growth: growth in GDP (in volume) per person employed, relative to the previous year (%)	4)	2 w	- 4 w	13 w	- 7 w	- 2 w	4 pw
Unit labour cost growth, relative to the previous year (%)	4)	6 w	5 w	- 5 w	3 w	7 w	3 pw
*3 year change (T/T-3) in the nominal unit labour cost growth index (2015 = 100)	4)	119.3 iw	135.7 iw	123.0 iw	137.7 iw	144.9 iw	156.8 piw
Labour productivity per person employed: GDP (in PPS) per person employed relative to EU average (EU-27 = 100)	4)	:	:	46 ew	44 ew	47 ew	47 ew
Gross value added by main sectors							
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (%)	4)	12.1 w	10.8 w	12.3 w	9.4 w	7.1 w	8.2 pw
Industry (%)	4)	16.8 w	15.2 w	14.7 w	13.3 w	12.2 w	11.3 pw
Construction (%)	4)	7.9 w	11.5 w	9.3 w	8.8 w	8.3 w	8.2 pw
Services (%)	4)	63.2 w	62.5 w	63.6 w	68.4 w	71.3 w	72.3 pw
Final consumption expenditure, as a share of GDP (%)	4)	109.8 w	99.6 w	100.3 w	102.4 w	103.7 w	104.7 pw
Gross fixed capital formation, as a share of GDP (%)	4)	23.6 w	24.9 w	24.1 w	22.1 w	19.4 w	20.0 pw
Exports of goods and services, relative to GDP (%)	4)	31.1 w	27.9 w	30.6 w	41.2 w	35.1 w	31.4 pw
Imports of goods and services, relative to GDP (%)	4)	65.2 w	51.4 w	57.8 w	70.9 w	58.9 w	57.3 pw
Gross fixed capital formation by the general government sector, as a percentage of GDP (%)		:	:	:	:	:	:

Business	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Industrial production volume index (2015 = 100)		85.6 w	107.1 w	120.3 w	115.1 w	110.3 w	109.4 w
Number of active enterprises (number)		49 747 w	37 228 w	38 783 w	42 056 w	46 653 w	:
Birth rate: number of enterprise births in the reference period (t) divided by the number of enterprises active in t (%)		12.3 w	10.9 w	11.3 w	11.0 w	:	:

Death rate: number of enterprise deaths in the reference period (t) divided by the number of enterprises active in t (%)		6.4 w	7.5 w	8.6 w	5.3 w	:	:
People employed in SMEs as a share of all persons employed (within the non-financial business economy) (%)	5)	57.6 iw	69.9 iw	71.1 iw	:	:	:
Value added by SMEs (in the non-financial business economy) (EUR million)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Total value added (in the non-financial business economy) (EUR million)		:	:	:	:	:	:

Inflation rate and house prices	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Consumer price index (CPI), change relative to the previous year (%)	6)	4.6 w	3.8 w	5.1 w	28.7 w	13.4 w	4.7 w

Balance of payments	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Balance of payments: current account total (million euro)		- 500.9 w	- 777.9 w	- 1 435.7 w	- 2 358.1 w	- 1 750.4 w	- 2 695.6 pw
Balance of payments current account: trade balance (million euro)		- 2 387.6 w	- 2 714.4 w	- 3 540.6 w	- 4 933.1 w	- 4 501.6 w	- 5 193.3 pw
Balance of payments current account: net services (million euro)		84.0 w	349.2 w	399.3 w	863.0 w	827.4 w	849.1 pw
Balance of payments current account: net balance for primary income (million euro)		630.5 w	342.3 w	225.2 w	56.7 w	246.6 w	145.9 pw
Balance of payments current account: net balance for secondary income (million euro)		1 172.3 w	1 245.0 w	1 480.5 w	1 655.2 w	1 677.3 w	1 502.7 pw
Net balance for primary and secondary income: of which government transfers (million euro)		121.1 w	75.4 w	156.4 w	279.0 w	283.6 w	141.2 pw
*3 year backward moving average of the current account balance relative to GDP (%)		- 8.1 iw	- 9.3 iw	- 9.8 iw	- 12.4 iw	- 13.6 iw	- 14.8 piw
*Five year change in share of world exports of goods and services (%)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Net balance (inward - outward) of foreign direct investment (FDI) (million euro)		174.8 w	133.3 w	314.2 w	514.0 w	315.8 w	225.3 pw
Foreign direct investment (FDI) abroad (million euro)		20.7 dw	3.3 dw	12.1 dw	42.7 dw	14.4 dw	82.8 dpw
of which FDI of the reporting economy in the EU-27 countries (million euro)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Foreign direct investment (FDI) in the reporting economy (million euro)		195.5 dw	136.6 dw	326.3 dw	556.7 dw	330.2 dw	308.0 dpw
of which FDI of the EU-27 countries in the reporting economy (million euro)		:	:	:	:	:	:
*Net international investment position, relative to GDP (%)	7)	- 27.0 w	- 40.4 w	- 39.8 w	- 42.3 w	- 34.7 w	- 31.8 pw
Year on year rate of change in gross inflow of remittances (in national currency) from migrant workers (%)	4)	11.2 diw	9.2 diw	9.0 diw	8.3 diw	6.7 diw	5.7 pdiw

Public finance	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
General government deficit / surplus, relative to GDP (%)		- 1.7 ew	- 5.3 ew	- 1.9 ew	- 3.2 ew	- 5.1 ew	- 3.9 ew
General government gross debt relative to GDP (%)		19.8 ew	32.0 ew	33.9 ew	34.2 ew	35.4 ew	38.0 ew
Total government revenues, as a percentage of GDP (%)		31.8 ew	31.4 ew	32.0 ew	33.3 ew	33.4 ew	34.1 ew
Total government expenditure, as a percentage of GDP (%)		33.5 ew	36.7 ew	33.9 ew	36.5 ew	38.5 ew	37.9 ew

Financial indicators	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Gross external debt of the whole economy, relative to GDP (%)	4)	65.1 iw	65.1 iw	66.6 iw	65.3 iw	58.9 iw	58.1 piw
Gross external debt of the whole economy, relative to total exports (%)		209.2 w	233.2 w	217.7 w	158.4 w	167.8 w	185.0 pw
Money supply: M1 (banknotes, coins, overnight deposits, million euro)		1 288.2 w	2 617.3 w	3 027.9 w	3 115.9 w	4 137.3 w	4 874.9 w
Total credit by monetary financial institutions to residents (consolidated) (million euro)	8)	:	2 498.9 iw	2 873.5 iw	3 284.7 iw	3 444.2 iw	4 045.8 iw

*Annual change in financial sector liabilities (%)	8)	:	12.8 ew	8.7 ew	13.1 ew	10.6 ew	5.0 ew
*Private debt, consolidated, relative to GDP (%)	8)	:	58.1 ew	52.9 ew	51.4 ew	45.6 ew	45.9 ew
Interest rates: day-to-day money rate, per annum (%)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Euro exchange rates: average of period (1 euro = … national currency)		15.563	19.751	20.922	19.900	19.643	19.253
Trade-weighted effective exchange rate index, 42 countries (2015 = 100)	9)	109.8 w	125.1 w	123.0 w	132.4 w	146.2 w	157.1 w
*3 year change (T/T-3) in the trade-weighted effective exchange rate index, 42 countries (2015 = 100)	9)	0.0 iw	0.2 iw	0.0 iw	0.1 iw	0.2 iw	0.3 iw
Value of reserve assets (including gold) (million euro)		1 896.6 w	3 082.9 w	3 445.8 w	4 206.0 w	4 903.5 w	5 247.5 pw

External trade in goods	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Value of imports: all goods, all partners (million euro)		4 052 w	4 732 w	6 085 w	8 788 w	8 021 w	8 385 w
Value of exports: all goods, all partners (million euro)		1 681 w	2 160 w	2 670 w	4 114 w	3 746 w	3 286 w
Trade balance: all goods, all partners (million euro)		- 2 371 iw	- 2 572 iw	- 3 415 iw	- 4 673 iw	- 4 275 iw	- 5 099 iw
Terms of trade (export price index / import price index * 100) (number)		98.2 iw	113.5 iw	110.4 iw	105.4 iw	96.0 iw	:
Share of exports to EU-27 countries in value of total exports (%)		43.0 iw	66.4 iw	61.0 iw	58.4 iw	65.4 iw	67.3 iw
Share of imports from EU-27 countries in value of total imports (%)		43.5 iw	45.6 iw	43.8 iw	47.4 iw	48.3 iw	50.2 iw

Demography	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Crude rate of natural change of population (natural growth rate): number of births minus deaths (per thousand inhabitants)		0.0	- 3.7 e	- 6.2 ep	- 3.6 ep	- 3.9 ep	- 4.1 ep
Infant mortality rate deaths of children under one year of age (per thousand live births)		10.2	8.7	:	9.0 p	10.0	:
Life expectancy at birth: male (years)		67.0	:	:	:	67.5 ep	:
Life expectancy at birth: female (years)		74.9	:	:	:	76.4 ep	:

Labour market	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Economic activity rate for persons aged 20–64: proportion of the population aged 20–64 that is economically active (%)	10)	49.5 w	51.1 w	52.8 w	53.7 w	58.4 w	:
Employment rate for persons aged 20–64: proportion of the population aged 20–64 that are in employment (%)	10)	46.7 w	49.1 w	51.1 w	52.1 w	55.7 w	:
Male employment rate for persons aged 20–64 (%)	10)	47.9 w	53.1 w	55.6 w	55.8 w	58.8 w	:
Female employment rate for persons aged 20–64 (%)	10)	45.6 w	45.5 w	46.9 w	48.7 w	53.0 w	:
Employment rate for persons aged 55–64: proportion of the population aged 55–64 that are in employment (%)	10)	40.4 w	40.5 w	42.6 w	44.1 w	47.1 w	:
Employment by main sectors							
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (%)	10)	26.4 w	21.1 w	21.5 w	20.8 w	20.9 w	:
Industry (%)		13.2 w	14.6 w	14.4 w	14.8 w	14.4 w	:
Construction (%)		6.1 w	7.2 w	7.7 w	7.7 w	7.1 w	:
Services (%)		54.3 w	57.1 w	56.4 w	56.7 w	57.6 w	:
People employed in the public sector as a share of total employment, persons aged 20–64 (%)		28.1 w	29.6 w	28.6 w	28.8 w	28.5 w	:

People employed in the private sector as a share of total employment, persons aged 20–64 (%)	10)	71.9 w	70.4 w	71.4 w	71.2 w	71.5 w	:
Unemployment rate: proportion of the labour force that is unemployed (%)		5.6 w	3.8 w	3.2 w	3.1 w	4.6 w	:
Male unemployment rate (%)		6.8 w	4.3 w	3.9 w	3.6 w	5.0 w	:
Female unemployment rate (%)		4.3 w	3.3 w	2.5 w	2.6 w	4.2 w	:
Youth unemployment rate: proportion of the labour force aged 15–24 that is unemployed (%)		13.1 w	10.9 w	9.2 w	10.7 w	11.5 w	:
Long-term unemployment rate: proportion of the labour force that has been unemployed for 12 months or more (%)		1.7 w	0.7 w	0.8 w	0.7 w	0.8 w	:
Unemployment rate for persons (aged 25–64) having completed at most lower secondary education (ISCED levels 0-2) (%)		4.3 w	5.8 w	4.2 w	3.8 w	5.8 w	:
Unemployment rate for persons (aged 25–64) having completed tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-8) (%)		4.3 w	2.0 w	1.7 w	1.7 w	2.3 w	:

Social cohesion	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Average nominal monthly wages and salaries (national currency)	11)	3 386 w	7 943 w	8 980 w	10 447 w	12 209 w	:
Index of real wages and salaries (index of nominal wages and salaries divided by the inflation index) (2016 = 100)		:	133 w	143 w	129 w	133 w	:
Gini coefficient		34 w	35 w	36 w	35 w	36 w	:
Poverty gap		21.0 w	26.3 w	26.1 w	21.4 w	20.7 w	:

Standard of living	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of passenger cars relative to population size (number per thousand population)		128.0	256.0 e	279.0 e	297.0 ep	325.0 ep	354.0
Number of mobile phone subscriptions relative to population size (number per thousand population)		1 197.4 w	1 564.0 w	1 834.7 w	2 057.1 w	2 139.1 w	:
Mobile broadband penetration (per 100 inhabitants)		:	90.3 w	104.8 w	113.5 w	119.8 w	:
Fixed broadband penetration (per 100 inhabitants)		:	27 w	30 w	32 w	35 w	:

Infrastructure	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Density of railway network (lines in operation per thousand km²)	4)	34.2 iw	34.0 iw	34.0 iw	34.0 iw	34.0 iw	:
Length of motorways (kilometres)		:	0	0	0	0	:

Education, Innovation and Research	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Percentage of persons aged 30-34 with a tertiary education level (ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8)		33.2 w	31.5 w	31.8 w	31.8 w	31.3 w	:
Percentage of persons aged 30-34 with a tertiary education level (ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8), males		28.7 w	24.3 w	28.6 w	27.8 w	23.5 w	:
Percentage of persons aged 30-34 with a tertiary education level (ISCED 2011 levels 5 to 8), females		37.6 w	38.2 w	34.7 w	35.2 w	38.1 w	:
Participation in early childhood education (children aged 3 and over)		:	94.1 w	89.2 w	94.4 w	98.9 w	104.9 pw
Participation in early childhood education (children aged 3 and over), males		:	94.6 w	89.6 w	94.4 w	99.2 w	105.1 pw
Participation in early childhood education (children aged 3 and over), females		:	93.5 w	88.9 w	94.5 w	98.6 w	104.7 pw

Low achieving 15-year-olds in reading		:	:	:	:	:	:
Low achieving 15-year-olds in mathematics		:	:	:	:	:	:
Low achieving 15-year-olds in science		:	:	:	:	:	:
Early leavers from education and training: proportion of persons aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (at most ISCED 2011 level 2) who are not in further education or training		21.2 w	16.9 w	19.6 w	21.5 w	17.5 w	:
Early leavers from education and training: proportion of men aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (at most ISCED 2011 level 2) who are not in further education or training		25.8 w	20.6 w	23.1 w	24.5 w	18.6 w	:
Early leavers from education and training: proportion of women aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education (at most ISCED 2011 level 2) who are not in further education or training		16.2 w	13.1 w	16.1 w	18.7 w	16.4 w	:
Proportion of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training (last 4 weeks)		1.5 w	1.1 w	1.1 w	1.3 w	:	:
Proportion of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training (last 4 weeks), men		:	0.8 w	0.9 w	1.1 w	:	:
Proportion of persons aged 25-64 having participated in education and training (last 4 weeks), women		:	1.3 w	1.2 w	1.4 w	:	:
Exposure of vocational education and training (VET) graduates to work-based learning (% of population aged 20-34)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Share of individuals having at least basic digital skills (% of population aged 16-74)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Share of individuals having at least basic digital skills (% of population aged 16-74), males		:	:	:	:	:	:
Share of individuals having at least basic digital skills (% of population aged 16-74), females		:	:	:	:	:	:
Public expenditure on education relative to GDP (%)	4)	6.8 iw	:	:	:	:	:
Gross domestic expenditure on R&D relative to GDP (%)	4)	0.35 iw	0.24 iw	0.23 iw	0.23 iw	0.22 iw	:
Government budget appropriations or outlays on R&D (GBAORD), as a percentage of GDP (%)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Percentage of households who have internet access at home (%)		31.1 w	64.6 w	66.8 w	67.5 w	70.6 w	:

Environment	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Index of greenhouse gas emissions, CO_2 equivalent (1990 = 100)		29.2 ew	30.5 ew	32.3 ew	30.5 ew	:	:
Energy intensity of the economy (kg of oil equivalent per 1 000 euro GDP at 2015 constant prices)		174.5 w	83.6 w	73.6 w	62.8 w	49.8 w	:
Electricity generated from renewable sources relative to gross electricity consumption (%)		1.7	3.1	3.6	5.5	9.2	:
Road share of inland freight transport (based on tonne-km) (%)		:	:	:	:	:	:

Energy	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Primary production of all energy products (thousand TOE)		594	682	762	525	586	:
Primary production of crude oil (thousand TOE)		11	5	5	5	4	:
Primary production of solid fuels (thousand TOE)		0	0	0	0	0	:
Primary production of gas (thousand TOE)		0	0	0	0	0	:
Net imports of all energy products (thousand TOE)		1 928 i	2 103 i	2 306 i	2 181 i	1 944 i	:

Gross inland energy consumption (thousand TOE)		2 533	2 715	3 009	2 692	2 573	:
Gross electricity generation (GWh)		932	983	1 131	995	1 169	:

Agriculture	Note	2012	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Agricultural output volume index (at producer prices) (2015 = 100)		73.3 w	110.5 w	178.1 w	150.9 w	153.7 w	:
Utilised agricultural area (thousand hectares)		:	:	:	:	:	:
Livestock numbers: live bovine animals (thousand heads, end of period)		191.2 w	108.9 w	104.1 w	102.4 w	101.0 w	98.8 w
Livestock numbers: live swine (thousand heads, end of period)		410.4 w	339.5 w	347.9 w	340.1 w	350.7 w	379.6 w
Livestock numbers: live sheep and live goats (thousand heads, end of period)		824.0 iw	616.4 iw	573.7 iw	558.7 iw	549.9 iw	561.7 iw
Raw milk available on farms (thousand tonnes)	12	524.6 w	321.7 w	295.3 w	270.5 w	261.3 w	267.2 w
Harvested crop production: cereals (including rice) (thousand tonnes)		1 206.3 iw	1 505.3 iw	4 690.0 iw	1 784.4 iw	3 214.8 iw	:
Harvested crop production: sugar beet (thousand tonnes)		587.0 w	423.2 w	757.8 w	478.2 w	428.3 w	291.4 w
Harvested crop production: vegetables (thousand tonnes)		231.1 w	226.8 w	232.0 w	286.1 w	322.6 w	323.0 w