

## Moldova

The country factsheet was prepared by Oleg Barcari within an institutional collaboration between the European Centre for Social Protection Policy and Research and the Central European University in April 2023. The content of the factsheet does not reflect necessarily the points of view of these institutions, nor those of the respective ministry (s).

<b>Partner name:</b> Jonah Helwig, Central European University	
<b>Policy framework</b>	<p>Constitution of the Republic of Moldova – Article 47 The right to social assistance and protection</p> <p>Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union</p> <p>Candidate status within the European Union's Eastern Partnership Initiative (EaP)</p> <p>Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova 2021-2024</p> <p>strategist National Development Strategy "Moldova 2030"</p> <p>Strategy for the digital transformation of the Republic of Moldova</p>
<b>General situation across all policy areas</b>	
The main challenge in all policy areas	<p>In 2020, 28.7% of Moldovan citizens live abroad.</p> <p>According to CEC data for the year 2025, approximately 276,000 citizens of the Republic of Moldova voted at polling stations opened abroad in the parliamentary elections, other data regarding the number of citizens Moldovans living abroad are not, so these can be somewhat interpretable, but not taken de facto.</p> <p>link- <a href="https://a.cec.md/ro/numarul-alegatorilor-inscrisi-in-registrul-de-stat-al-alegatorilor-2781-115452.html">https://a.cec.md/ro/numarul-alegatorilor-inscrisi-in-registrul-de-stat-al-alegatorilor-2781-115452.html</a>.</p> <p>Statistical data from the State Population Register regarding citizens of the Republic of Moldova who have left for permanent residence abroad (status as of October 1, 2025) - 120,279 citizens, according to ASP, link: <a href="https://www.asp.gov.md/ro/date-deschise/date-statistice/rsp-lpt">https://www.asp.gov.md/ro/date-deschise/date-statistice/rsp-lpt</a></p> <p>A fragile labor market, low wages, and an unstable political and security situation are key factors in emigration.</p> <p>The high rate of emigration and the negative population growth rate contribute to the rapid aging of the population.</p> <p>Corruption and an unstable political situation discourage local and foreign economic investment.</p> <p>By February 2023, 765,242 people fleeing the war in Ukraine had entered Moldova, of whom 108,885 refugees remain in the country. The long-term impact of this influx of refugees on Moldovan social policy remains unclear.</p> <p>The Republic of Moldova continued to provide assistance to Ukrainian citizens temporarily refugees on the territory of the country, by December 31, 2024, there were 135,861 Ukrainians on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, at the end of 2024, over 85 thousand displaced persons were pre-registered for temporary protection, and almost 67 thousand received identity documents, of which almost 17 thousand were issued for minors. From March 1, 2024, the temporary protection of displaced persons from Ukraine was extended for another year, which allows for more efficient management of migration flows and ensures refugees' access to fundamental rights (social, medical, educational assistance). On February 27, 2024, the 11th batch of humanitarian assistance was delivered to Ukraine. (According to data from the 2024 MAE Report).</p> <p>Link: <a href="https://mfa.gov.md/sites/default/files/raport_mae_2024.pdf">https://mfa.gov.md/sites/default/files/raport_mae_2024.pdf</a></p>

<p>The main APPROACH for addressing challenges from all policy areas</p>	<p>In 2022, the government and parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted the National Development Strategy "Moldova 2030 " to promote development sustainable , improve infrastructure and working conditions to strengthen market work . Prioritizing policies to increase living standards, strengthen institutions and the labor market to attract return migration.</p>

**The situation SPECIFIC POLICY sociable**

Significant social trends

The population growth rate decreased by -0.8% in 2021. According to NBS data, Final Results of the 2024 Census, the population with usual residence represents 2,409.2 thousand people, which is a decrease of 13.6% according to the 2014 census data.

Link: <https://recensamant.statistica.md/>

The emigration rate has increased in recent years, and starting with 2022 the net migration rate is estimated at -8.8 migrants/1000 inhabitants. According to NBS data, for the year 2023, they are: Immigrants, persons - 97,517; Emigrants, persons - 130,084.

Link: [https://statistica.gov.md/ro/statistic\\_indicator\\_details/34](https://statistica.gov.md/ro/statistic_indicator_details/34)

According to UNICEF, the increase in emigration has led to an increase in child separation, as emigrants often leave their children behind to be raised by other family members, such as grandparents. Children raised by other family members are highly dependent on remittances and may face psychological problems due to the absence of their parents.

In 2022, 14% of the population will be 65 years and older. By 2050, this will increase to 30% of the total population.

According to NBS data, after the 2024 Census, 18.2% of the population in the Republic of Moldova is 65 years of age and over, approximately 437,200 citizens.

Link: [https://statistica.gov.md/ro/varstnicii-in-republica-moldova-in-anul-2024-9578\\_62003.html](https://statistica.gov.md/ro/varstnicii-in-republica-moldova-in-anul-2024-9578_62003.html)

People with disabilities represent 6.7% of the total population. The employment rate among people with disabilities is 16.5%.

On January 1, 2024, according to data from the National Social Insurance House, the number of persons recognized as disabled in the Republic of Moldova amounted to 161.9 thousand people, including 11.4 thousand children aged 0-17. Persons with disabilities represented 6.7% of the population with usual residence, and children with disabilities constituted 2.2% of the total number of children (up to 18 years old) with usual residence in the Republic of Moldova.

**LABOR MARKET**

According to the Labor Force Survey data, the labor force participation rate of people with disabilities in 2023 was 17.0% compared to 49.2% for people without disabilities. Among men with disabilities, the participation rate was 16.0%, and for women 18.2%. In urban areas, the participation rate was 21.1%, and in rural areas - 15.3%. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities was 7.2% compared to 4.5% among unemployed people without disabilities. In the distribution by gender, this indicator recorded the values: 9.3% for men and 5.0% for women. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities in urban areas was higher (18.0%) compared to the rate for those in rural areas (1.0%).

Link: [https://statistica.gov.md/ro/persoonele-cu-dizabilitati-in-republica-moldova-in-anul-2023-9460\\_61550.html](https://statistica.gov.md/ro/persoonele-cu-dizabilitati-in-republica-moldova-in-anul-2023-9460_61550.html)

**LABOR MARKET FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, 2024**

<https://statbank.statistica.md/PxWeb/pxweb/ro/30%20Statistica%20soc>

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**Activity rate (proportion of people with disabilities active in the labor market)**

- Country total: 18.4% (men 19.6%, women 16.9%)
- Urban: 25.0% (men 27.4%, women 22.1%)
- Rural: 15.0% (men 15.6%, women 14.3%)

**Employment rate (proportion of people with disabilities employed)**

- Country total: 17.5% (men 18.5%, women 16.2%)
- Urban: 23.2% (men 25.1%, women 20.9%)
- Rural: 14.6% (men 15.2%, women 13.9%)

**Unemployment rate (proportion of unemployed people among active people with disabilities)**

- Country total: 4.9% (men 5.6%, women 4.0%)
- Urban: 7.2% (men 8.5%, women 5.3%)
- Rural: 3.0% (men 3.0%, women 2.9%)

**Main observations:**

- Activity and employment rates are significantly higher in urban areas than in rural areas.
- Men with disabilities have higher levels of activity and employment than women.
- Unemployment affects urban people and men more.

**FOR THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2025, THE LABOR MARKET PRESENTS THE FOLLOWING TABLE (**  
[https://statistica.gov.md/ro/forta-de-munca-ocuparea-si-somajul-in-trimestrul-ii-din-anul-2025-si-datele-revi-9430\\_62002.html](https://statistica.gov.md/ro/forta-de-munca-ocuparea-si-somajul-in-trimestrul-ii-din-anul-2025-si-datele-revi-9430_62002.html)**)**:

**2.1 Labor force**

- In Q1 2025, the labor force was 783.8 thousand people, increasing to 824.7 thousand in Q2 (+40.9 thousand; +5.2%).
- Labor force participation rate: 39.7% in Q1 and 41.8% in Q2 for the population 15+ years old.
- For 15-64 years: 49.1% in Q1 and 52.1% in Q2; for 20-64 years: 53.3% in Q1 and 56.4% in Q2.

**2.2 Occupation**

- Employed population 15+ years: 745.9 thousand in Q1 and 791.9 thousand in Q2 (+6.2%).
- Gender structure: T1 – women 50.2%, men 49.8%; T2 – men 50.9%, women 49.1%.
- Distribution by environment: urban 52.4% (T1), 51.0% (T2); rural 47.6% (T1), 49.0% (T2).
- Employment rate 15+ years: 37.8% in Q1 and 40.1% in Q2; men 41.1% / 44.6%, women 35.0% / 36.3%.
- Employment rate 15-64 years: 46.7% (Q1), 50.0% (Q2); 20-64 years: 50.6% (Q1), 54.2% (Q2).

**2.3 Unemployment**

- Number of unemployed according to the International Labor Office: 37.9 thousand in Q1 and 32.8 thousand in Q2 (-13.5%).
- Unemployment rate: 4.8% (Q1) and 4.0% (Q2); men 6.0% / 4.4%, women 3.7% / 3.6%.
- Unemployment affects men and urban areas more.

Over the past five years, the Republic of Moldova's labor market has experienced significant challenges in the context of demographic changes, the COVID-19 pandemic, and slow economic growth. These factors have exacerbated structural issues such as informal employment

and low labor force participation. At the same time, Moldova has been proactive in introducing reforms in social protection and labor market policies, with a focus on aligning with European Union standards. Informal employment affects a large portion of Moldova's workforce, particularly in agriculture and construction. Informality hinders workers' access to social protections and depresses wage levels. In 2023, 5 Decent Work Country Program REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA approximately 203,600 workers were informally employed, representing a 7 percent increase from the previous year. In addition to the prevalence of informal employment, irregular employment practices, such as "envelope wages", remain widespread. These practices persist despite government efforts to formalize the economy, which has made it difficult to accurately assess the true employment situation. The causes of informality in Moldova include a combination of economic, institutional and social factors. One major cause is weak enforcement of labor laws and regulatory compliance, which creates an environment where informality can flourish without significant penal ties. Low wages and limited job opportunities in the formal sector also drive workers towards informal employment, where they might find more flexible, albeit less secure, income sources. Further, the prevalence of family-run agricultural work, often operating outside formal frameworks, exacerbates the issue of informality in Moldova. The activity rate in Moldova remains very low, particularly among women and youth, although it increased from 40.3 per cent in 2020 to 45.1 per cent in 2023, following recovery after the pandemic-induced decline. Urban areas have higher activity rates compared to rural areas, but rural areas saw a significant improvement in 2023 attributed to better targeted active labor market programs, efforts to reduce informal employment and the reform of Social Benefits (Ajutorul Social). Gender disparities in terms of activity rate persist (8.1 per cent in 2023), with women participating less in the workforce due to traditional gender roles and greater unpaid caregiving responsibilities. Based on recent ILO research, the share of women outside the labor force due to care responsibilities was 20.3 percent in 2023, compared to 0.8 percent for men. The lack of accessible and affordable childcare services also hinders women's full participation in the workforce. The activity rate of people with disabilities in Moldova has shown a positive trend over the last two years, increasing from 14.1 per cent in 2021 to 17.0 per cent in 2023, and the employment for this group increased from 13.5 per cent in 2021 to 15.8 per cent in 2023. This upward trend may be attributed to targeted employment policies and programs aimed at improving access to the labor market for persons with disabilities. The employment rate followed a post-COVID recovery trend, rising from 38.8 per cent in 2020 to 43.1 per cent in 2023 (47.1 per cent vs. 39.7 per cent for women) with a narrowing gender employment gap.

<p>The main challenges specific to social policy</p>	<p>A large part of the working-age population has emigrated, leading to pressures on the labor market. Older people have difficulty finding suitable employment and face age discrimination, leading many to rely on remittances or informal work. People with disabilities have few employment opportunities and low state benefits, increasing the risk of poverty. In 2021, 24.5% of the population of the Republic of Moldova lived below the poverty line. Coverage of the social assistance program remains deficient, with only 26% of extremely poor families receiving social benefits. Benefits remain too small to effectively combat extreme poverty. According to NBS data, the absolute poverty rate, year 2024, Total per country -33.6%, Extreme poverty rate, year 2024, Total per country - 15.4%, which represents an increase compared to previous years. The absolute poverty rate shows how many people cannot afford a minimum decent consumption. According to this indicator, in 2024, 33.6% of the population lived below this threshold. Link : <a href="https://statistica.gov.md/ro/statistic_indicator_details/58">https://statistica.gov.md/ro/statistic_indicator_details/58</a></p>
<p>The main APPROACH for addressing social policy challenges</p>	<p>To address the challenges described, the Government The Republic of Moldova has propose saddle to attract emigrants to return by improving living standards; ensuring flexible working conditions to accommodate older people and people with disabilities in the workplace; and to protect equal access to all levels of education for people with disabilities, as well as structurally encouraging the pursuit of professional aspirations. Furthermore, in 2022, the Government of the Republic of Moldova undertook reforms to combat poverty. These reforms include increasing the minimum pension and minimum wage, increasing social assistance payments per child, and stimulating labor market participation. Law 140/2013 on the special protection of children at risk and those separated from their parents was amended in 2020 to introduce custody measures for children left behind by emigrant parents. By Law No. 256/2023, the social assistance system in the Republic of Moldova (RESTART Reform), the Restart reform in the social field was implemented, link: <a href="https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=138928&amp;lang=ro">https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=138928&amp;lang=ro</a></p> <p>The main law that provides a guaranteed level of state income for disadvantaged families through the provision of social assistance is the Law on Social Assistance <a href="#">LP133/2008</a> . The purpose of the law is to ensure a guaranteed minimum monthly income for disadvantaged families through the provision of social assistance established in accordance with the assessment of the average monthly overall income of each family and its need for social assistance. We are currently in the process of reforming social assistance, the purpose of which is to increase the share of disadvantaged families with children in the program, activate unemployed beneficiaries of benefits, implement case management, improve the identification of beneficiaries and optimize eligibility criteria. Thus, at the moment, of the total beneficiaries, the number of families with children constitutes 51%, the average benefit constitutes about 135 euros, and for families with children – 250 euros, beneficiaries from rural areas constitute 73%; Additionally, during the period 2022-2025, the population of the Republic of Moldova and the citizens of Ukraine who are refugees benefited from financial support through 4 projects financed from</p>

	external sources (Memorandum of Understanding with UN Agencies). In total, about 153,873 payments were granted to vulnerable families, as follows: 1,000 lei (50 euros) for 17,000 families, 4,900 lei (245 euros) for 55,873 families, 3,000 lei (150 euros) for 50,000 families and 2,300 (115 euros) lei for 31,000 families.
Groups aim	Elderly people, children, people with disabilities, immigrants and families

<b>Example of practice</b>	<i>The following section provides a practical example of the region under analysis.</i>
Name good PRACTICE	The program seems to be 1+1.
Policy areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy regarding EMPLOYMENT labor force and the market LABOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration and integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other, Rural development
Description of the practice	Migrant workers or first-degree relatives who wish to develop their own business by investing remittances earned while working abroad can apply for investment grants through the Pare 1+1 program. Every Moldovan leu of remittances invested in starting a small business will be matched by one leu of grant funds.
Governance and funding	The program is implemented by the Organization for the Development of the Small and Medium Enterprises Sector (ODIMM). The program is funded by the State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova, the European Union European Union (EU4Business) and the Programme United Nations for Development .
Innovation	The program attracts emigrants to return to Moldova and stimulates economic development by channeling remittances into economic investment rather than consumption. The program provides financing and training opportunities ENTREPRENEURSHIP for A attract migrants to return to start their own business .
Implementation challenges	Fear of corruption and distrust of the government discourage some immigrants from using this program. The process bureaucratic can be inconvenient and tedious , making it even more discouraging much migrants saddle participate .
Result(s) and impact	One billion lei were invested by migrants through the Pare 1+1 program. 1623 businesses were funded with Pare 1+1 grants, and 2410 returning emigrants attended entrepreneurship courses. The most popular area of investment is agriculture. Projects include growing apple orchards, cultivating vineyards, and even raising chinchillas.
The main partners / parties interest	Organization for the Development of the Small and Medium Enterprises Sector (ODIMM). program United Nations for Development European Union (EU4Business)