



FINAL REPORT

Evaluation of the Council of Europe project: "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova"

Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

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Contents of the report

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Executive summary | 2 |
| 2. Introduction..... | 5 |
| 2.1. Purpose of the evaluation..... | 5 |
| 2.2. Objectives of the evaluation | 5 |
| 2.3. Evaluation methodology | 5 |
| 2.4. Difficulties encountered during the evaluation..... | 9 |
| 3. The project and its context..... | 10 |
| 3.1. Brief description of the project..... | 10 |
| 3.2. Policy and project context | 11 |
| 4. Findings..... | 14 |
| 4.1. Relevance | 14 |
| 4.2. Effectiveness..... | 15 |
| 4.3. Sustainability..... | 18 |
| 4.4. Council of Europe added value..... | 20 |
| 5. Conclusions and recommendations..... | 22 |
| 5.1. Main conclusions and recommendations..... | 22 |
| 5.2. Other recommendations | 26 |
| Annex 1: List of participants to evaluation activities..... | 28 |
| Annex 2: Key documentation reviewed..... | 29 |
| Annex 3: Survey results (selected graphics)..... | 30 |
| Annex 4: Interview & focus group guides..... | 35 |
| Annex 5: Online survey (questionnaire in Romanian)..... | 37 |

1. Executive summary

The project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova", launched in January 2019, is implemented by the Council of Europe with funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) - in the framework of "Moldova: Fostering Active Civic Engagement" Program (FACE Program).

The project is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova over a period of four years (2019-2022) since January 2019. The objective of the project is to contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and democratic society with engaged citizens in the Republic of Moldova. The project promotes the Council of Europe approach to citizenship education: a holistic view on knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, a focus on democratic school development and an integration of young people's civic experiences in the wider community.

The project focused on a series of measures that were necessary for a quality implementation of the new civic education curriculum, its new content and in particular its new teaching and learning methods, fully aligned to the Council of Europe's Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) principles and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC).

The project evaluation was commissioned by the Council of Europe in accordance with the guidelines of the organization, and is meant to identify key lessons from the implementation of the project for a possible follow-up project and to be further used by the Council of Europe's Education Department. The purpose is to assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova".

The ultimate beneficiaries of this evaluation are the Council of Europe's Bilateral and Regional Co-operation and Capacity Building Division, the donor of the project, and project partners. The primary beneficiary is the Council of Europe as the implementor of the project. The evaluation was based on three of the six DAC/OECD criteria: relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as the additional criterion of the Council of Europe on added value. The evaluation also identified key lessons from project implementation for its possible follow-up and activities required to further consolidate results - to be used by the Council of Europe and its cooperation partners, mainly the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova (MoER).

The evaluation process included a field trip to Chişinău, Moldova where several individual and group interviews as well as focus groups have been performed with representatives of Council of Europe staff in Chişinău, donor representatives, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, national trainers and other key project stakeholders. An online beneficiary survey was prepared and launched online in order to better assess the project's progress and obtain key stakeholder input concerning the main issues of the evaluation.

The project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" continues the steps initiated in 2014 that lead to the EU/CoE Joint Program "Supporting Education Policies in Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in 6 Eastern Partnership countries". The project had to address the challenges raised by such a daring transformation (limited resources, the resistance of the system, skills, and knowledge of educational personnel, community perception, political instability etc.), as well as unexpected issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic with its implications, and the war in Ukraine.

The desk research and discussions with staff and project stakeholders revealed that planned activities have been deployed in a timely and flexible manner, adjusting to the various situations, expected or unexpected - such as the COVID-19 situation, and achieved the proposed results. This was reflected also in terms of legislation and policies (expert support provided to national education policy makers and education experts), and increased awareness of policy makers on the EDC/HRE principles and CDC framework and their application in the educational system.

The project has also been smoothly implemented, against all apparent odds: the major political shifts and political unrest, six changes of the Minister of Education, the restrictive and challenging COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, an underfunded education system, a visible and considerable lack of digital competences within the system.

The reasons for the project's success were: the commitment of the decision makers, the involvement of the technical level of the policy makers and their participation to the whole process of reform (since 2014), the involvement of experts who participated in previous programs and projects, as well as the outstanding expertise provided by the CoE.

The key factor which ensured the excellent cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Research and the project team was the strong sense of ownership, which resulted in the creation of a cluster of initiative, smooth coordination and participation, providing the necessary tools and developing the know-how for the project.

As in other similarly-implemented projects, the "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" project was strengthened by the involvement of international expertise, the CoE having the unique ability to make use of the experience from all Member States and allocating specialists from its wide pool of international experts.

The whole process and achievements are in line with Moldova's educational policies (the Education Code, Education-2020 Strategy and the National Action Plan in the field of Human Rights), the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, with the CoE Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture and subscribe to the CoE Action Plan for Moldova.

The vast majority of stakeholders consulted during the evaluation consider the toolkits (educational resources, methodological guides, teachers' guide, the descriptor-based evaluation methodology etc.) as highly relevant to their evolving needs, of good quality, and useful to both teachers and pupils.

The excellent and close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research, which reflects the new approach to curricular reform, is a key factor which would ensure sustainability of the project results. Furthermore, other aspects contribute to the project's sustainability: the good prospects to receive funding from the same donor, the favorable environment (strong interest from the authorities and the momentum gained in the education reform), the shift from classic to online education (favored also as the functional solution during the COVID-19 pandemic), and extending the practices to digital competences and the online environment.

Among the identified vulnerabilities of the process, the most important are: the limited funding for the education sector, and the dire perspective of even less funding available in the near future, the personnel turnover affecting schools, resistance of some schools' administration, parents and community.

In order to take advantage of its excellent results and remarkable achievements, the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" needs to be continued, and build on the results, outcomes and lessons learned of the project and support further the capacities of the Moldovan education system to develop competences for life in democratic and inclusive societies among learners.

For the follow up of this project, it is recommended to continue the involvement of the national trainers and consolidate the regional/local trainers' expertise through training of trainers' sessions and conducting joint training sessions (national and regional/local trainers).

The follow-up of the project should promote the integration of competencies for a democratic culture in other subjects/disciplines, and therefore address other teachers; the issue, although mentioned in the current project, would have been prematurely addressed during the first four years of the "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova".

The Council of Europe project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" is an important achievement and a huge step for the present and future reform of the educational system in Moldova, and the efforts invested in training and other support activities and materials were duly justified. It acknowledges the validity of the Council of Europe's principles and methodology defined through EDC/HRE and RFCDC.

The overall conclusion of the evaluation study is that the "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" project has been highly relevant to the needs of its target groups, as well to the educational context of the country.

The project is tackling one of the core issues faced by Moldova on its way to EU integration: strengthening the capacity of the education system to develop the knowledge and competences needed by pupils in order to become engaged citizens.

Its approach is regarded by all stakeholders as comprehensive, not only for the initial context of the project, but also from the point of view of the actual implementation (approach, methodology, results, impact), and remains highly relevant for its eventual follow-up.

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation is an end-of-project evaluation. It is commissioned by the Council of Europe in accordance with the guidelines¹ of the organization. The evaluation is meant to identify key lessons from the implementation of the project for a possible follow-up project and to be further used by the Council of Europe's Education Department. It should also provide input on how the next project phase should be structured and which activities will be recommended to further consolidate results.

The evaluation process will be guided by the CoE Evaluation Policy² and Evaluation Guidelines³ and other relevant instruments such as the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova".

2.2. Objectives of the evaluation

The evaluation objectives are to assess the following:

- has the project been implemented as planned, what obstacles were faced and how were they addressed during implementation?
- what tangible results were achieved by the project?
- what lessons can be learned from the way in which the Council of Europe managed the implementation of the project?

The ultimate beneficiaries of this evaluation are the Cooperation and Capacity Building Division of the Education Department of the Council of Europe, the donor of the Project, and project partners. The primary beneficiary is the Council of Europe as the implementor of the Project.

The scope of the evaluation covers the activities carried out by the Council of Europe within the Project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" from the project start in January 2019 and until its end in December 2022. It considers both the intended and the un-intended or spill over results of the project. Other activities carried out by the Council of Europe in Moldova in the field of education before or during the project period were not considered.

2.3. Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was based on three of the six DAC/OECD criteria⁴: relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as the additional criterion of the Council of Europe on added value - and specifically addressed the key evaluation issues presented in the terms of reference, as well as cross-cutting topics.

The evaluation also identified key lessons from project implementation for its possible follow-up and activities required to further consolidate results - to be used by the

¹ <https://rm.coe.int/coe-evaluation-guidelines-october-2020-pdf/1680a147d1>

² <https://rm.coe.int/cm-2018-159-evaluation-policy-final/1680a426a2>

³ <https://rm.coe.int/coe-evaluation-guidelines-october-2020-pdf/1680a147d1>

⁴ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

Council of Europe (CoE) and its cooperation partners, mainly the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova (MoER).

The assignment was also used as a **reflective learning exercise**, which considered the work done within the project and break it down into its most significant aspects. The consultant team thus supported an overall, institutional performance improvement by using the outcomes of this learning process to inform future practice.

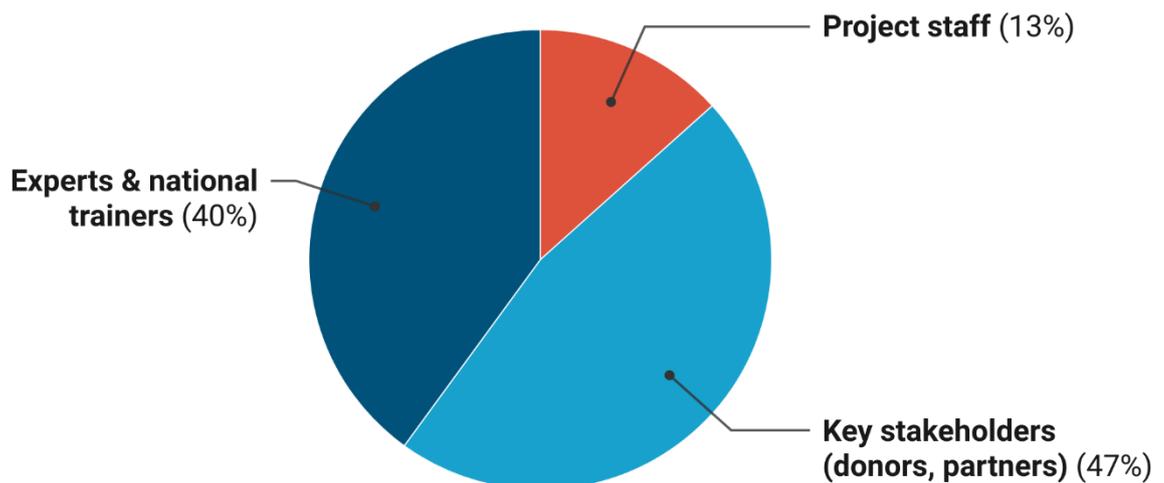
The assignment was of formative nature and performed using a mixed-methods approach to answer the evaluation questions. Data collection was structured by using an evaluation matrix (or data collection planning sheet) in order to better plan (and later analyze) the data collected through field research.

Data collection tools

Desk research (secondary data analysis): this phase included a thorough review of project documents and monitoring data: project proposal, logframe & theory of change, interim and annual reports to donor, documentation related to the new curriculum. Other sources of information have been also considered: outreach and media materials, internet-based articles (Facebook and other social media) etc.

Field / online research (primary data collection and analysis): this type of data collection focused on gathering relevant information, opinions, suggestions, and challenges faced by the stakeholders involved in the project: project staff, implementation partners, donors and other relevant stakeholders. Semi-structured, **individual/group interviews** were developed to obtain detailed and relevant information - to be further compiled, assessed, and analyzed. The consultant team analyzed the collected data using a pre-determined procedure (analytical grids for interview minutes).

Distribution of planned interviews per category of respondents



A limited number (5) of **focus groups** were also performed with a selection of key stakeholders: national trainers, school teachers and methodologists. Their use was justified in order to provide qualitative data to complement (and observe) the results of the online survey. The topics of the focus groups followed the same target issues covered by the individual interviews. Focus groups also gave the evaluation team a greater range of responses, as well as the opportunity to gather additional information

(e.g. concerning the impact of project activities at local - school - level), and helped clarify points of view, whilst offering the chance of a less informal interaction - thus allowing for a greater elaboration of conclusions.

Selection of stakeholders for the individual/group interviews was made after consultation with the Council of Europe project staff, using a **non-probability sampling method** - specifically purposive sampling⁵ (where elements are chosen based on the purpose of the research). This approach was used in order to facilitate data collection, measure the specific objectives of the study, as well as comply with the requirements in terms of duration/complexity.

The Council of Europe project staff in Chişinău greatly helped the stakeholder consultation by hosting the majority of interviews and focus groups within its office premises.

The evaluation team organized a field trip to Chişinău, Moldova between September 26-30, 2022 and had a meeting with the CoE project team at its headquarters in Chişinău; the meeting was used for a debriefing session focused on last-minute improvements of the data collection tools and beneficiary/stakeholder approach, and interviews with project staff.

During the mission, besides project staff, several individual and group interviews as well as focus groups have been performed with representatives of Council of Europe staff in Chişinău, donor representatives, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, national trainers and other key project stakeholders.

Online beneficiary survey

A beneficiary survey was prepared and launched online in order to better assess the project's progress and obtain key stakeholder input concerning the main issues of the evaluation: relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and ownership, as well as the Council of Europe's added value.

Using survey research was determined by the need to gather quantitative data, as well as a limited amount of qualitative data. The main benefits of the beneficiary survey for the evaluation study refer to the broad coverage of one of the main stakeholder categories (school teachers - whom could not be reached otherwise), its usefulness in gathering targeted results, and the small cost per respondent.

Also, the anonymity of this survey allows respondents to answer with more candid and valid answers. Surveys conducted anonymously provide an avenue for more honest and unambiguous responses than other types of research methodologies, especially since we clearly stated that survey answers will remain completely confidential.

The online survey is composed of a structured questionnaire addressing the school teachers (covering the whole country) which have been involved in project activities (trainings, meetings and other capacity building activities) and/or are presently implementing in their schools the new curriculum at grades V to XII.

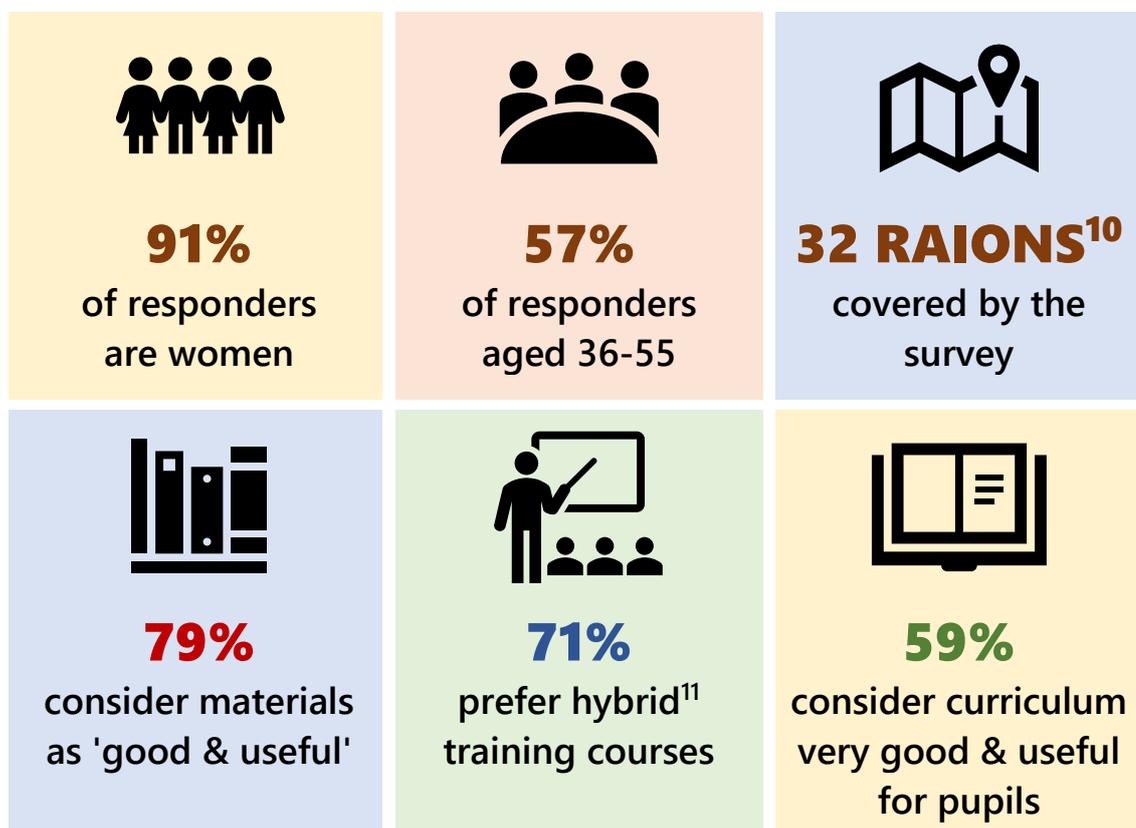
⁵ Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling, is a form of non-probability sampling in which researchers rely on their own judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in their surveys. It proves to be effective when only limited numbers of people can serve as primary data sources due to the nature of research design and aims and objectives.

In technical terms: the survey was composed of 20 questions (in both Romanian and Russian), mostly with multiple-choice answers, but also including some open-ended questions. It was hosted by Survey Legend⁶, a Swedish top survey portal, offering a user-friendly interface. The survey was open to answers from October 15 to October 31, 2022; due to a relatively low response rate⁷, the deadline was extended to November 4, 2022.

Informative e-mails have been sent using HubSpot⁸; the complete list of targeted beneficiaries included 1,424 people (as e-mail addresses), school teachers, of which 1,244 e-mails were functional. 1,184 e-mails have been successfully received, with an adjusted open rate of 27%. 692 e-mails were opened by the recipients.

The final number of (unique) responses to the survey was 90, meaning the survey had a 13% response rate.

Overview of the beneficiary survey⁹



⁶ <https://www.surveylegend.com>

⁷ Possible explanations of the low response rate, taken from informal discussions with Moldovan teachers, are: the timing of the survey (which coincided with the most demanding school months for teachers), reluctance on answering to this type of surveys, lack of the necessary equipment (laptop or smartphone) etc.

⁸ <https://www.hubspot.com>

⁹ Source: beneficiary (school teachers) survey, evaluation of the Council of Europe project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova"; Strategicus Consulting, October 2022.

¹⁰ In Moldova, raions are the administrative divisions (similar to districts or counties) of the country. Moldova is divided into 32 districts and 3 municipalities.

¹¹ Both online and offline (classic) training courses.

2.4. Difficulties encountered during the evaluation

Key stakeholders not available for face-to-face individual interviews or consultation meetings were contacted by e-mail and interviewed online. The consultant team prepared a 'replacement' list of stakeholders.

Despite the large number of stakeholders to be covered by the data collection, the Council of Europe project staff in Chişinău greatly helped the consultation by hosting the majority of interviews and focus groups within its office premises. Alongside the staff in Strasbourg, they also offered all the documentation needed in the desk research phase. Therefore, the evaluation had no issues in collecting data from primary and secondary sources.

3. The project and its context

3.1. Brief description of the project

The project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" was launched in January 2019, and is implemented by the Council of Europe with funding from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) - in the framework of "Moldova: Fostering Active Civic Engagement" Program (FACE Program), which also includes a UNFPA Moldova implemented project on non-formal civic education and youth participation.

The project is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova over a period of four years (2019-2022) since January 2019.

The objective of the project is to contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and democratic society with engaged citizens in the Republic of Moldova. The project promotes the Council of Europe approach to citizenship education: a holistic view on knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, a focus on democratic school development and an integration of young people's civic experiences in the wider community.

The main impact hypothesis is that education plays a key role in developing the knowledge and competences necessary for someone to become an engaged citizen. The project will therefore help strengthen the capacity of the Moldovan education system to fulfil this role.

In 2018, the Republic of Moldova initiated a reform of formal civic education, which resulted in the adoption of the reconceptualized civic education subject "Education for Society". The new curriculum was developed with Council of Europe expert support and is aligned to the Council of Europe's Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE)¹² and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC)¹³.

The project is a timely and strategic initiative that helps building the capacity of the national education system and education professionals to apply the new national educational standards into practice. The project helps addressing some of the most urgent needs identified in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research and other stakeholders: developing a comprehensive policy framework for the implementation of the new curriculum, including final methodological guides for teachers and a methodology of assessment after a period of testing, and training teachers on the new curriculum.

The expected results and outcomes of the project are:

- a policy framework and implementation guidelines regarding the civic education subject and the democratic governance of schools are developed in line with EDC/HRE principles and the CDC framework.
- reinforced national capacities to train teachers and support them in the implementation of the reconceptualized civic education curriculum - via revised

¹² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/edc/charter-on-education-for-democratic-citizenship-and-human-rights-education>

¹³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/reference-framework-of-competences-for-democratic-culture/home>

teacher training programs, training of national teacher trainers and multipliers, and other capacity building activities.

- children and adolescents develop the skills and acquire the knowledge to be able to participate in their schools' and communities' decision-making processes and they are offered opportunities to engage in community development activities in cooperation with the local public authorities and civil society organizations.

The project focused on a series of measures that were necessary for a quality implementation of the new civic education curriculum, its new content and in particular its new teaching and learning methods, fully aligned to the Council of Europe's Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) principles and the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC). In addition, in 2021 the piloting of the Democratic School Governance Methodological Guide has started in 49 Moldovan schools. The activities covered the following areas:

- teacher training and strengthening of national in-service teacher training capacities on the new subject, the new teaching and learning methods, and the Council of Europe tools and standards on which it is founded - EDC/HRE and RFCDC;
- development of methodological guidance for teachers;
- development of teaching guidelines and lesson plans for teachers;
- increasing awareness and understanding of the EDC/HRE principles and the RFCDC, and of the new subject and of its objectives among representatives of higher education institutions;
- developing, piloting and finalizing a methodology of democratic school governance.

3.2. Policy and project context

The level of civic engagement in Moldova is still low, as expected in a young democracy. This is confirmed by numerous studies and surveys, and reported by many interviewed stakeholders. Similarly, the engagement of children and youth is reduced, stimulated mainly by various initiatives which have developed through international cooperation. According to a study published in 2013, "(...) before 1991, there was no tradition of participation in political culture at all levels, and accordingly no child and youth participation"¹⁴.

Equipped with skills, knowledge and drive to change - acquired according to proper values - the engaged citizen makes a valuable contribution to society's development. It is critical thus to encourage active citizenship, especially among young people, given the current low levels of civic engagement and participation.

The role education plays in removing barriers to civic engagement has been acknowledged by policymakers and their development partners. They gradually made important steps in aligning the Moldovan education system with the best European practices, to make therefore schools contribute at a higher degree to the democratic society.

¹⁴ "Child and youth participation in the Republic of Moldova: A Council of Europe policy review", Council of Europe, 2013.

An article on education developments in former soviet countries, published in 2017, states: "*The [2014 Education] Code of Moldova, being the most progressive and recent legal education act of the CIS. (...) The Moldovan variant is believed to be the most concretized, but it is aimed at cooperation with the EU rather than with other CIS countries.*"¹⁵

The 2017 article makes a point: Moldova displayed (even back in 2014 - the year the Education Code came into force) its objectives in the area of education and firm steps towards achieving these goals. The last curricular reform, based on the experience gained during the Eastern Partnership cooperation, identified "*the need to transform civic education and the teaching concept, resulting in the two new disciplines: education for society and personal development*" (as stated by one of the respondents).

The curricular reforms have been following a gradual, step-by-step evolution, each step being founded on the experience gained in the implementation of the previous process. Preliminary elements of civic education have been included in the children's curricula since 2000: career guidance, economic and entrepreneurial education, human rights education, education for security, and interpersonal relationships.

The 2014 Educational Code established the premises for a new level of civic education. It outlines the new social and civic skills that today's citizens require for active engagement and the guidelines for democratic governance in schools.

The new Civic Education discipline addressed human-social beings; democratic society; life and health - personal and social values; personal development and careers guidance - at the secondary level; the law as a tool to protect the human being; life and health - personal and social values; personal growth and careers guidance at the high school level. Related content for the primary level has been (and is) moral-spiritual Education, which also includes some elements related to content such as community activity, children's rights, and responsibilities¹⁶.

Following the participation in the EU/CoE Joint Program "*Supporting Education Policies in Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in 6 Eastern Partnership countries*", the Moldovan Ministry of Education and Research acknowledged the need to transform civic education and the teaching concept, resulting in two new disciplines: "Education for society" and "Personal development".

The last curricular reform, which introduced these two disciplines, is an audacious enterprise, "Education for society" being one of the most progressives (if not the most) in Europe, fully incorporating the Council's Reference Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture (RFCDL).

The project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" continues therefore the steps initiated in 2014 that lead to the EU/CoE Joint Program "*Supporting Education Policies in Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in 6 Eastern Partnership countries*". The project had to address the challenges raised by such a daring

¹⁵ Andrei Kaliak: "[Developments in education legislation of post-Soviet countries: Republic of Moldova's Education Code and other CIS experiences](#)", The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives Vol. 16, no. 4, 2017, pp. 47-63.

¹⁶ Ralph Edward Huddleston a.o.: "[A Report on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education Policy and Practice in Six Eastern Countries](#)", 2016, Council of Europe.

transformation (limited resources, the resistance of the system, skills, and knowledge of educational personnel, community perception, political instability etc.), as well as unexpected issues, such as the COVID-19 pandemic with its implications, and the war in Ukraine.

4. Findings

4.1. Relevance

To what extent do the intervention objectives address identified needs of the target group(s)?

How far did the design of the intervention address the problems identified?

Over a significant number of years, the reform of the curricular process in Moldova followed a gradual evolution - in line with the commitments of adhering to the European educational space - which was based on consultation between the policy maker (the Ministry of Education and Research) and its long-term development partner, the Council of Europe.

Coherent actions have been conducted between 2014-2022, updated to the latest international progress on education for active citizenship (in line with the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education and close following the adoption of the Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture after its adoption in 2016).

The latest curricular development was based on the expertise of the CoE (which sets the standards in this field), and the experience of implementation of previous changes, such as the implementation of the EU/CoE Joint Program "Supporting Education Policies in Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in 6 Eastern Partnership countries", for promoting the Charter.

The latter led to the decision to seize the opportunity and continue the introduction of the full Reference Framework of Competences and its methodology in a distinct discipline, *Education for society*. Doing so, the momentum initiated during the 2013-2016 action has been preserved despite the lack of needed resources.

All reports from the interlocutors and all documents researched during the initial assessment phase lead to the conclusion that the whole process and achievements are in line with Moldova's educational policies (the Education Code, Education-2020 Strategy and the National Action Plan in the field of Human Rights), the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, with the CoE Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture and subscribe to the CoE Action Plan for Moldova.

The project is an initiative of the Ministry of Education and Research, based on the above-mentioned policies, and has been designed after gathering substantial experience on policy formulation and implementation. The commitment of partners to the proposed goal, the international expertise provided by the CoE, and the pool of local experts involved in previous programs has been instrumental for the achievement of the proposed objectives.

The SDC contribution to the four-year project ensured the much-needed resource for such an endeavor.

All surveyed stakeholders consider the project as **a valuable initiative, a highly participative process, fully integrated in Moldova's national education policies.**

Their perception of the new curriculum refers to a perfectible process which led to improvements, in consultation with the educational community, during the project implementation, with feedback collected from teachers and children.

The project also had a systemic approach, with all administrative and educational levels being targeted: starting with the Ministry of Education and Research - including its departments, continuing with school inspectorates, and finally schools. A complete normative framework has been developed by the Ministry, by responding to the teachers' opinion; teachers developed and expressed critical opinions and, in their turn, have been reactive to children's opinions.

The vast majority of stakeholders consulted during the evaluation consider the toolkits (educational resources, methodological guides, teachers' guide, the descriptor-based evaluation methodology etc.) as **highly relevant to their evolving needs**, of good quality, and useful to both teachers and pupils. They also pointed to the consistency of information and principles in all tools developed, acknowledging the involvement of Council of Europe experts and the wide consultation of the educational community.

Both national and local training events were highly appreciated by the participants (teachers from all over the country), some of them praising the ones conducted by national trainers, which ensured a more accurate exchange of information and application of principles.

Being initiated as a request for support from the Ministry of Education and Research, the project generated a strong sense of local ownership (proved also by the steps made before ensuring the necessary funding), with the Ministry showing consistency over years in pursuing active citizenship education.

The ensuing conclusion is that the project objectives and design respond to the needs, priorities and aspirations of the main project beneficiaries (teachers, pupils) and partners (Ministry of Education and Research and school inspectorates); the policies developed by the project, as well as its objectives remain relevant for its follow-up - **requiring consolidation and extension to address other disciplines**, as well as targeting additional categories of indirect beneficiaries (parents, community etc.).

4.2. Effectiveness

What has been the progress made towards achievement of the expected results?

What are the reasons for the achievement or nonachievement?

To which extent the management of the relationships among stakeholders was effective in establishing a real partnership aiming at the success of the intervention?

To what extent has the project been effective in helping the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova in implementation of the reconceptualized civic education subject?

To what extent has the project been effective in helping to strengthen the capacity of national institutions, teachers and other education professionals to develop democratic competences in learners and apply the new educational approaches in practice?

The desk research and discussions with staff and project stakeholders revealed that the planned activities have been deployed in a timely and flexible manner, adjusting to the various situations, expected or unexpected - such as the COVID-19 situation, and achieved the proposed results. This has reflected also in terms of legislation and policies (expert support provided to national education policy makers and education experts), and increased awareness of policy makers on the EDC/HRE principles and CDC framework and their application in the educational system.

During the evaluation, stakeholders praised the management of the project and the excellent and solid working relationships they had with CoE staff. They specifically highlighted the flexibility and professionalism of their counterparts, which allowed a good response to all challenges faced during project implementation. In addition to these insights, the reports and project materials show commitment and swift adaptation of the activities to the changing environment.

Furthermore, from the technical point of view, the project implementation was not affected by these challenges and the indicator values provided by progress reports concur the targets established within the logframe, many of them being actually outdone. Therefore, the close examination of the project planning and progress reports, as well as the interviews with Council of Europe staff and the concerned stakeholders, show the project implementation successfully followed the action plan and its main up-to-date achievements are impressive:

- continuous support of the development of the policy framework of the new civic education curriculum;
- strengthening the cooperation between the formal and non-formal education institutions (in cooperation with UNFPA Moldova);
- strengthening the national teacher training capacities on the new civic education curriculum in line with the EDC/HRE principles and the RFCDC (direct online training seminars to civic education teachers all-over Moldova);
- assistance in integrating EDC/HRE principles and the RFCDC in initial and continuous teacher training programs in line with the new civic education curriculum;
- providing training to a pool of national teacher trainers on the new civic education curriculum.

One of the most amazing facts observed by the evaluation team during the field mission was that the project has been (unexpectedly) smoothly implemented, against all apparent odds: the major political shifts and political unrest, six changes of the Minister of Education, the restrictive and challenging COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, an underfunded education system, a visible and considerable lack of digital competences within the system. Although most of the risks were properly identified during the planning of the project i.e. political instability, the Ministry's lack of resources etc., the major issues which affected directly or indirectly the project were impossible to predict: the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

Summarizing, the reasons for success were: the commitment of the decision makers, the involvement of the technical level of the policy makers and their participation to the whole process of reform (since 2014), the involvement of experts who participated in previous programs and projects, the well-thought mitigation measures taken, as well as the outstanding expertise provided by the CoE.

The key factor which ensured the excellent cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Research and the project team was the **strong sense of ownership**, which resulted in the creation of a cluster of initiative, smooth coordination and participation, providing the necessary tools and developing the know-how for the project. This was extended to the network of national and regional/local trainers and

teachers who all mentioned the participatory approach during the implementation phase the project.

The project had also a good visibility, which was ensured through a number of web pages on the [CoE website](#) as well as on [social networks](#). SDC support was mentioned accordingly. Materials included news items published on the website of the Education Department of the Council of Europe, video stories on topics related to civic education to be distributed on social media and public television in 2019 and 2022.

| <p style="text-align: center;">Reasons for success</p>  | <p style="text-align: center;">Difficulties in implementation</p>  |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Commitment of decision-makers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Involvement of technical level of policy-makers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Experts from previous programs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Good mitigation measures.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Outstanding expertise provided by CoE.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Hostile teaching environment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Lack of digital competences within the educational system.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The war in Ukraine.</p> |

There have been difficulties in implementation, one of the most significant being the hostile teaching environment to change. The partners addressed these with appropriate measures (several workshops have been organized), but this requires further attention for the continuation of the project, particular attention being needed to the school administration, and more awareness needs to be raised - to address parents and the community in general.

The war in Ukraine brought up concerns and also challenges for the whole education system, that strained the already limited resources: integration of the displaced children, as well as issues that needed to be addressed in the class (Moldovan schools are multi-ethnic, with classes that include Russian and Ukrainian children). This is actually a test for the schools in Moldova, and the teachers reported that they have been equipped to pass it - and the project was of great help in this respect.

The COVID-19 pandemic created many obvious difficulties (online vs. on site meetings), but also acted as a catalyst for increasing digital literacy and made budgetary savings - the financial advantages being impossible to ignore. It also ensured a more accurate transmission of expertise from the national trainers. Considering both the advantages and drawbacks, the **teachers prefer a mix of online-onsite trainings** for the continuation of the project.

In fact, the online sessions have reached more participants from the regions than planned, and therefore had the opportunity to meet the experts. Additionally, the guides are much easier to distribute and feedback is received through established channels. The downsides of online sessions have been pointed out by the experts, and refer to the methodological difficulties when addressing a large group, and when conducting interactive and group activities.

What is perhaps equally important - many teachers adhered to the curriculum and their enthusiasm should be preserved by **building a stronger capacity of the knowledge network**.

4.3. Sustainability

To which extent are the outcomes of the project likely to continue producing effects after the end of its funding?

What are the factors that hampered the impact and sustainability of the assistance?

In Moldova, the Ministry of Education and Research's commitment to implementing reforms and developing policies in education to support active citizenship, even following political shifts, clearly demonstrate the intent to continue the process.

However, the country's growth is affected in these last 5 years, by many negative shockwaves which have severely affected the economy and subsequently all the other sectors: the COVID-19 pandemic, the looming energy crisis and the continuous flow of refugees entering the country as a consequence of the Russian full-scale war against Ukraine.

Therefore, although seemingly overcoming some of the stages of these problems, the government could not launch sustainable projects to reform various fields - with some exceptions. One of these exceptions is a vital area: education.

In this context, the reform needs to be perceived as an endeavor with exact final goals, as well as with connections to all areas of activity. The "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" project, as a robust contributor to these goals, has the elements which favor lasting effects:

- the decision-makers' proven willingness to continue the process, and cooperate substantially in this respect with the Council of Europe;
- the coherent policies which have been developed during the years following the project inception and development;
- the pool of experts trained at national and regional/local level, which ensures available expertise for the following period;
- the new curriculum for civic education, part of the overall reform, that has been adopted, and is presently implemented (the subject being mandatory);
- the high percentage of trained teachers (close to 100%).

Teachers' accreditation process for "Education for society" discipline has been established and denotes an important step for motivation and sustainability of the process.

Initial and continuous education has been adapted, although many interviewed teachers suggested modules should be included for all teachers, to support integration in other disciplines.

Since the activities of the project are deeply integrated within the educational system, and the experts and collaborators (national/local trainers) are basically working at system level, the best approach for a sustainable follow-up is to continue investing in these national capacities and end-products (curriculum documentation etc.). The Council of Europe's approach is observing (and using) national capacities in order to provide expertise and support, and the fruits of this investment will be integrated as well into the system. Cooperation with pedagogical universities and faculties in this respect is key to further strengthen these capacities.

The excellent and close cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research, which reflects the new approach to curricular reform, is also a key factor which would ensure sustainability of the project results.

Most stakeholders, and particularly school teachers, have frequently mentioned the need to continue the project activities, considering the following aspects:

- the good prospects to receive funding from the same donor (which would allow the follow-up to be naturally integrated into SDG's FACE Program);
- the need to further strengthen national teacher education capacities and their competences, with good practices already in place and able to be replicated;
- supporting the integration of European democratic citizenship education standards in the primary cycle and in upper secondary technical education (VET) - as already mentioned in the project progress reports;
- taking advantage of the favorable environment, strong interest from the authorities and the momentum gained in the education reform;
- also taking advantage from the shift from classic to online education (favored also as the functional solution during the COVID-19 pandemic), and extending the practices to digital competences and the online environment.

Among the **vulnerabilities of the process** (enumerated along a selection of solutions suggested by stakeholders), the most important are:

- the limited funding for the education sector, and the dire perspective of even less funding available in the near future (considering the challenges at the Moldovan borders, the large influx of displaced persons, the energy shortage etc.);
- the personnel turnover affecting schools: a larger pool of skilled teachers would be able to ensure at least a general introduction on the subject to all teachers (initial and continuous education), as well as a consolidated capacity of the regional experts (with appropriate motivation); the natural course of action would be maintaining an active interest of the education community (through various communication means), and focusing on a selection of other key discipline teachers;
- resistance of some schools' administration, which could be overcome by increasing awareness of principals on the process and its achieved and expected results;
- the inconsistencies between the "Education for society" discipline and other disciplines' approach - could be approached through initial and continuous training which include basic modules for all disciplines;

- resistance from parents and community, which could be overcome through awareness actions addressing these two categories and their further involvement in joint or collateral projects.

The Council of Europe project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" is an important achievement and a huge step for the present and future reform of the educational system in Moldova, and the efforts invested in training and other support activities and materials were duly justified. It acknowledges the validity of the Council of Europe's principles and methodology defined through EDC/HRE and RFCDC.

The Council of Europe's involvement is also a pledge to ensuring further sustainable support to the continuation of the project, as well as to the overall reform.

4.4. Council of Europe added value

How did the implementation of the project ensure complementarities and generate synergies with other programs at national and European level?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of having the Council of Europe implement the project?

The educational system in Moldova is directly targeted by few institutional actors or donors - mainly UNDP Moldova and a couple of spin-off World Bank projects - and therefore the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" liaises with UNFPA (which focuses on Youth Work), and the Zurich University of Teacher Education.

To produce a clear, significant impact, the processes which started along the current project **need continuity**, as the expected effects within the Moldovan society require time (estimated by some of the interviewees to at least eight to ten years) - the education for society needing resilience and further consolidation.

The Council of Europe built the implementation of the project on two assumptions: (1) it is perceived as a friendly and generous partner, who responds to the partners' needs and (2) it is capable to mobilize local and international expertise and resources.

As in other similarly-implemented projects, the "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" project was strengthened by the **involvement of international expertise**, the CoE having the unique ability to make use of the experience from all Member States and allocating specialists from its **wide pool of international experts**.

The project stakeholders see the Council of Europe as an unbiased and qualified partner, as opposed to a conventional donor or a typical development partner. This reputation was achieved as a result of its long-term working relationship with the Republic of Moldova. Stakeholders stated that the Council of Europe offered full, continuous, efficient and praised expertise and support, throughout the whole duration of the project.

Furthermore, the project benefited from continuous and efficient communication and participation at all levels, another feature of the CoE support being the high degree of participatory input.

Funding for the project was obtained by the Council of Europe, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Research, from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), and allowed the provision of training and assistance on long-term (benefitting of extended support for the new curricula).

Additionally, CoE managed to ensure synergy with the other component funded by SDC: the "Fostering Active Civic Engagement" project on non-formal civic education and youth participation (implemented by UNFPA Moldova), through promoting the understanding of the same RFCDC approaches and principles to teenagers and young people by cooperating with youth centres.

The EDC/HRE Charter and the CoE Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture have also been integrated in the "Personal development" discipline, as a result of a project implemented by Zurich University of Teacher Education in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research.

Coordinating with the two above-mentioned components, the "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" project **ensured complementarity, harmonization of concepts and principles, and added value** to creating premises for a potentially significant impact.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1. Main conclusions and recommendations

- 5.1.1. The overall conclusion of the evaluation study is that **the "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" project has been highly relevant to the needs of its target groups, as well to the educational context of the country.** Its focus and priorities are a result of an extensive process of consultation between the implementing agency (Council of Europe) and project stakeholders and institutional partners. The project is tackling one of the core issues faced by Moldova on its way to EU integration: strengthening the capacity of the education system to develop the knowledge and competences needed by pupils to become engaged citizens. Its approach is **regarded by all stakeholders as comprehensive**, not only for the initial context of the project, but also from the point of view of the actual implementation (approach, methodology, results, impact) and remains highly relevant for its ensuing follow-up.

Recommendation:

*In order to take advantage of its excellent results and remarkable achievements, the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" **needs to be continued.** The subsequent initiative should clearly build on the results, outcomes and lessons learned of the project and support further the capacities of the Moldovan education system to develop competences for life in democratic and inclusive societies among learners.*

*Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER.
Priority: high.*

- 5.1.2. The involvement and interest of the beneficiaries of project activities (school teachers), as well as the use of local expertise, **contributed to a high level of ownership of project achievements**, which was key to ensuring the projects' success. All stakeholders consulted during the evaluation mentioned being involved, in one way or another, in different feedback procedures, some of them confirming their (capacity building or resource-based) needs were incorporated into the project approach.

Recommendation:

*As capacity building activities developed within the project are also perceived as a necessary process for increasing sustainability - most respondents are aware of **the need for further and diversified training and technical assistance**, which is crucial to the consolidation process.*

Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER, school teachers.

Priority: medium.

- 5.1.3. Access to technology is necessary, however not sufficient: **many teachers urgently need training in digital pedagogy.**

Besides dramatically impacting our societies, the pandemic had also positive effects, such as speeding up the digital alphabetization, and the adaptation of the educational and training system to the digital age.

Recommendation:

*There is a consensus, to a large extent, among researchers that training approaches need to promote a set of skills often called "twenty-first century skills" which make teaching and learning more connected to the real world in the new era¹⁷. In this respect, all trained teachers **need to find ways to navigate through learning activities and solve problems** as the learning experience unfolds. Teachers agree that there are significant competencies, skills, and abilities' discrepancies between them, even with equal access to technology.*

Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, project experts, partners at MoER, school principals and teachers.

Priority: high.

- 5.1.4. Many programs implemented at national level - especially involving cooperation with national and local administration - encountered serious challenges, to say the least, as a result of political shifts or frequent changes of the decision-makers. The "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" project encountered both - power shifts and no less than six education ministers since 2019. Nevertheless, the project has been smoothly implemented, taking advantage of the long working relationship between the Ministry of Education and Research and the Council of Europe and the long-term continuity of the technical staff in the Ministry.
- 5.1.5. The main asset of the Council of Europe is its **acknowledged expertise** - highly valued by the large majority of those interviewed, including experts, representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, donors etc. - and therefore it should capitalize more on its valued expertise and on its excellent connections and become more influential in the areas covered by the 2021-2024 Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova.

Key lesson: targeting the technical level in an institution and a long-term collaboration is **vital in building a successful strategy**.

Recommendation:

*The discipline "Education for society" **requires further support**, as the key subject fully integrates the CoE's Reference Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture (RFCDC), as well as to preserve the momentum. This is a new approach, requiring more teachers and other educational specialists to familiarize themselves with the tools and principles of the RFCDC, so that they may be integrated with other disciplines and ensure an even approach despite the personnel turnover.*

*A larger and more uniform understanding of the RFCDC, as well as building the sustainability of the approach and methodology, may be achieved by **integrating it within the teachers' training curricula** in the initial and continuous education systems.*

Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER.

Priority: high.

¹⁷ John Larmer, John Mergendoller, Suzie Boss: "[Setting the Standard for Project Based Learning](#)", ACSD, 2015

- 5.1.6. The main target group of the project is composed of the teachers who implement the new curriculum, and they are obviously key in the success of the project. The new learning and assessment methods have been quite challenging for most of them, and **trainings were extremely useful in acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills**. The excellent quality of these sessions is reflected in the high level of appreciation showed by the teachers during the evaluation - during interviews and the online survey.
- 5.1.7. All through the evaluation, all stakeholder categories noticed the teachers' visible progress (training sessions being repeated even four or five times), and teachers at their turn observed pupils' progress. An interesting issue has been reported several times during interviews: the progress registered by the project has not been extended over other disciplines. During the initial and consolidation stages, direct assistance from national and regional experts has been and remains instrumental; teachers consider that support from other teachers is the best possible support, allowing them to benefit from the knowledge of more experienced colleagues. The flow of information between peers also encourages debate, sharing, and developing best practices.

Key lesson: The project experience shows that **the best external support for teachers comes from other teachers**.

Recommendation:

*Elements and methods specific to the "Education for society" discipline **should be included - at a certain degree - within other disciplines' curricula**, a transdisciplinary approach being recommended (including the 20 competencies for democratic culture in all other subjects). New thematic areas could include: digital democratic citizenship, anti-corruption, integrity in the education sector. As the curricular reform is currently in the spotlight, this is an opportunity which should not be missed.*

However, the ultimate beneficiaries of the project are pupils (school children), and their feedback and reactions to the new discipline and assessment methodology should be collected and followed closely. The impact of the project at macro level depends very much if not entirely on their attitude to the new content and didactical methods and on their behavior outside school.

Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER, school teachers.

Priority: medium.

- 5.1.8. Online learning has **reduced financial costs and is far more affordable** as compared to physical learning, as it eliminates the cost of transportation and accommodation. Additionally, all the study materials are available electronically and online. However, the absence of a consistent internet connection and of better equipment (laptops with webcams and speakers instead of phones or tablets) could be detrimental to the education process since sometimes teachers must use school resources (which are poor or nonexistent) in order to follow online courses.

Key lesson: Online trainings have **proven efficiency**, since teachers do not have to spend resources and/or travel to join the sessions. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between participants.

Recommendation:

It is important to support schools and invest in the teachers' training with the latest technology updates so that they can follow (and later conduct) their online training seamlessly.

*Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER.
Priority: high.*

- 5.1.9. Currently, with the emergence of new tools, methods, and learning environments, modern modes of education are forming and this is one of the positive outcomes of the project. The learning quantity and quality, as well as the effective and efficient use of different learning equipment **depends on the teacher's amount of activity, attitude, and skills** which have been greatly supported by the project.

Key lesson: Children will better assimilate the subject when **the learning environment is similar with other teachers/disciplines**.

Recommendation:

*Continuation of the project needs to **integrate competencies for a democratic culture in other subjects/disciplines**, and other teachers should be part of the process.*

Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER, national and local trainers.

Priority: high.

- 5.1.10. Training events followed by piloting guidelines and lesson plans during the school year is **a very efficient method to put into practice the curriculum**. This allows for an amount of time for teachers to become familiar with the routines and instructional objectives of both documents, as well as to clarify which aspects should be improved.

Recommendation:

*Creating **review criteria in advance** (that will be used to evaluate the guidelines and lesson plans) would certainly help the process. Teachers should also be aware this is an opportunity to create early 'buy-in' amongst pupils by engaging them with the new content in the pilot process.*

Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER, national trainers.

Priority: medium.

- 5.1.11. The **reflection workshops** on "Education for society" are a viable initiative which increases communication with teachers, and maintain a live, stable, and constant interest of the teaching community (meetings, reflection workshops on various subjects).
- 5.1.12. One of the issues mentioned by teachers and national/local trainers is the constant staff (teachers and other types of personnel) turnover in schools, as well

as the lack of motivation and sometimes resources to follow training and methodological activities - due to the low salary levels. This means schools **need regularly to hire teachers and there is a permanent need for re-training**. Since there is no way in which this project or similar projects could influence this situation, it is important to consider appropriate strategies in this matter, taking into account also the difficult times ahead.

5.2. Other recommendations

- 5.2.1. The follow-up of the project should **promote the integration of competencies for a democratic culture in other subjects/disciplines**, and therefore address other teachers; the issue, although mentioned in the current project, would have been prematurely addressed during the first four years of the "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova".
Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER.
Priority: high.
- 5.2.2. A voluntary **transdisciplinary approach to involve teachers of other curricular domains** (through training and developing resources together) could also be initiated. The interest of these teachers may be stimulated through participation in the elaboration of didactic materials, publication in a Ministry journal etc.
Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER, national trainers, school principals and teachers.
Priority: high.
- 5.2.3. Another recommendation - which takes into account the previous experience of the evaluation team - would be to **extend the RFCDC approach and principles to the primary level and initiate/continue cooperation with youth centres**. These measures would ensure an even approach, continuity at all educational levels and the benefits for the communities would be more visible.
Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg.
Priority: medium.
- 5.2.4. Through the transdisciplinary approach (mentioned above - integrating elements and methodology in various disciplines), "Education for society" could be **extended at the primary level**. This is a critical issue, since children would start the discipline after four years spent in a different system (seven if considering the kindergarten).
Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER.
Priority: medium.
- 5.2.5. The evaluation of the "Education for society" teachers should be observed through the whole educational environment, and **school inspectorates be involved at a much higher degree**. Early 2022, the Ministry of Education and Research had an initiative for the evaluation, the evaluation criteria being designed by the Council of Europe.
Responsible for implementation: partners at MoER, school inspectorates.
Priority: medium.

- 5.2.6. **Peer exchange should be stimulated** and include other teachers aside those teaching "Education for society", particularly those educating children on topics that are essential for a democratic culture i.e. Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian language and literature, history, personal development etc. Peer exchange would provide an excellent opportunity for teachers and other educational practitioners to gather and share knowledge, as well as discuss various themes and subjects, revise tools, enhance their expertise and therefore keeping alive the interest of the educational community. It may also be a valuable countermeasure to fight against teachers' resistance.
- Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER.*
Priority: medium.
- 5.2.7. Cooperation between schools and youth centres in developing competencies for democratic culture in young people should continue; these centres play an important role in developing competencies for democratic culture, and cooperation would ensure that the **same competencies, values and attitudes are shared** in the educational process.
- Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg.*
Priority: medium.
- 5.2.8. Training of teachers should be conducted through a **mix of online/offline meetings**, both having their advantages and disadvantages. The sessions should include practical classes conducted together (by both trainer and trainees). Quality of the educational performance is expected to significantly increase with smaller groups (should the resources would allow this). Also, the teachers' training and support should focus on beginner EFS teachers, for ensuring an even understanding.
- Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER, national trainers.*
Priority: medium.
- 5.2.9. Awareness communication about "Education for society" and its non-formal education approaches and tools should increase to address the whole educational community environment, with **special targets on parents, school directors, school inspectors and methodists** and other discipline teachers.
- Responsible for implementation: staff in Chişinău and Strasbourg, partners at MoER.*
Priority: medium.
- 5.2.10. **Digitalization of schools (including IT training) should be addressed at a higher pace**, as an essential tool of growing importance in the current changing environment.
- Responsible for implementation: partners at MoER.*
Priority: medium.
- 5.2.11. At school level, teachers and principals should be encouraged to **transform the classroom into a more adequate, non-formal space** for the subject. This could be achieved with local resources.
- Responsible for implementation: partners at MoER, school teachers.*
Priority: medium.

Annex 1: List of participants to evaluation activities

| NO. | NAME AND SURNAME | POSITION | TYPE OF ACTIVITY |
|-----|----------------------|--|------------------|
| 1 | Margareta Platon | Senior Project Officer, Strasbourg | Online interview |
| 2 | Giulia Re | Deputy Head of Office, Chişinău | Interview |
| 3 | Dumitru Lazur | Senior Project Officer, Chişinău | Interview |
| 4 | Petru Golban | National trainer | Group interview |
| 5 | Violeta Terguță | National trainer | Group interview |
| 6 | Arina Zîcu | Program coordinator, Child Rights Information Center Moldova | Interview |
| 7 | Valentina Ursu | Teacher, State University "Ion Creangă" | Group interview |
| 8 | Larisa Noroc | Teacher, State University "Ion Creangă" | Group interview |
| 9 | Valentina Samoilenco | Teacher, State University "Ion Creangă" | Group interview |
| 10 | Viorel Bolduma | Teacher, State University "Ion Creangă" | Group interview |
| 11 | Olga Elpujan | National trainer | Group interview |
| 12 | Diana Galanton | National trainer | Group interview |
| 13 | Natalia Cebotar | National trainer | Group interview |
| 14 | Corina Lungu | Consultant, Ministry of Education and Research | Interview |
| 15 | Nicolae Musteață | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 16 | Galina Cereteu | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 17 | Eugenia Nastas | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 18 | Elena Zaporajan | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 19 | Gabriela Garaba | Specialist, local education dept. | Focus group |
| 20 | Rodica Antocica | Specialist, local education dept. | Focus group |
| 21 | Valentina Sînchetru | Specialist, local education dept. | Focus group |
| 22 | Natalia Petrea | Specialist, local education dept. | Focus group |
| 23 | Olesea Ionescu | Specialist, local education dept. | Focus group |
| 24 | Silvia Lezinschi | Specialist, local education dept. | Focus group |
| 25 | Tamara Costin | Specialist, local education dept. | Focus group |
| 26 | Ion Căciulă | Local trainer | Group interview |
| 27 | Lilia Samoilă | Local trainer | Group interview |
| 28 | Olga Pîrâu | Local trainer | Group interview |
| 29 | Ludmila Afteni | Local trainer | Group interview |
| 30 | Lucia Bricicaru | Local trainer | Group interview |
| 31 | Radu Danii | National Program Officer, Swiss Cooperation Office | Interview |
| 32 | Anna Ciuntu | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 33 | Viorica Ciobanu | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 34 | Maria Costovici | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 35 | Ghenadie Bodeanu | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 36 | Angela Brumă | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 37 | Dorin Gerbuz | Teacher of "Education for society" | Focus group |
| 38 | Iosif Moldovanu | Senior national trainer | Online interview |

Annex 2: Key documentation reviewed

Project description (application)

Project logframe

Interim narrative report 2019

Interim narrative report 2020

Interim narrative report 2021

Brief progress report 2022 (PPT)

Interim financial report 2019-2021

Activity reports:

- assessment (national/local trainers)
- Training of Trainers (national/local)
- workshops
- mentoring
- coaching

Evaluation methodologies: descriptors, content.

Highschool Curriculum Guide (2018) lower secondary school (gymnasium)

Highschool Curriculum Guide (2018) high school

Democratic Governance in Schools Guide

Report on Council of Europe: "Moldova Action Plan"

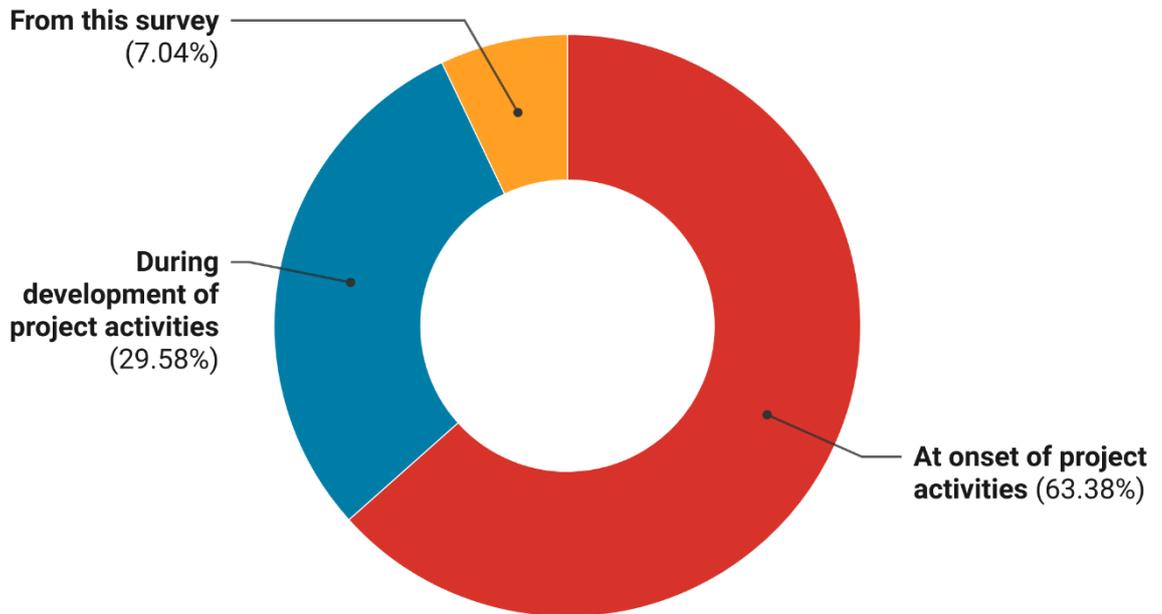
Swiss FACE Program Description

Project website

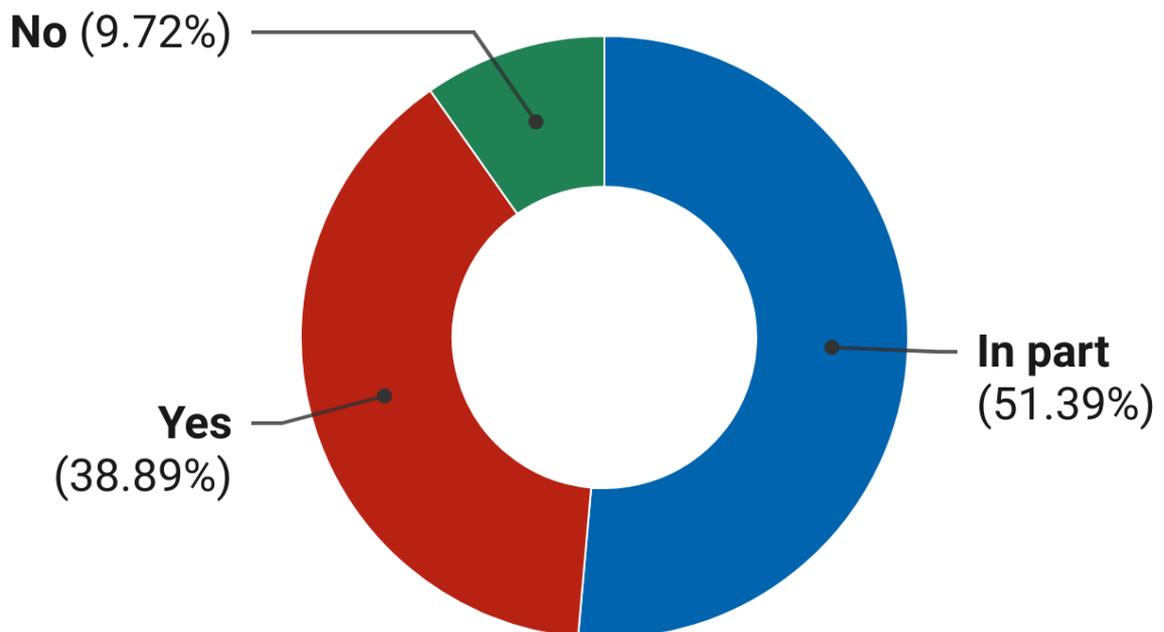
Project social networks pages (Facebook)

Annex 3: Survey results¹⁸ (selected graphics)

When did you receive information about the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova"

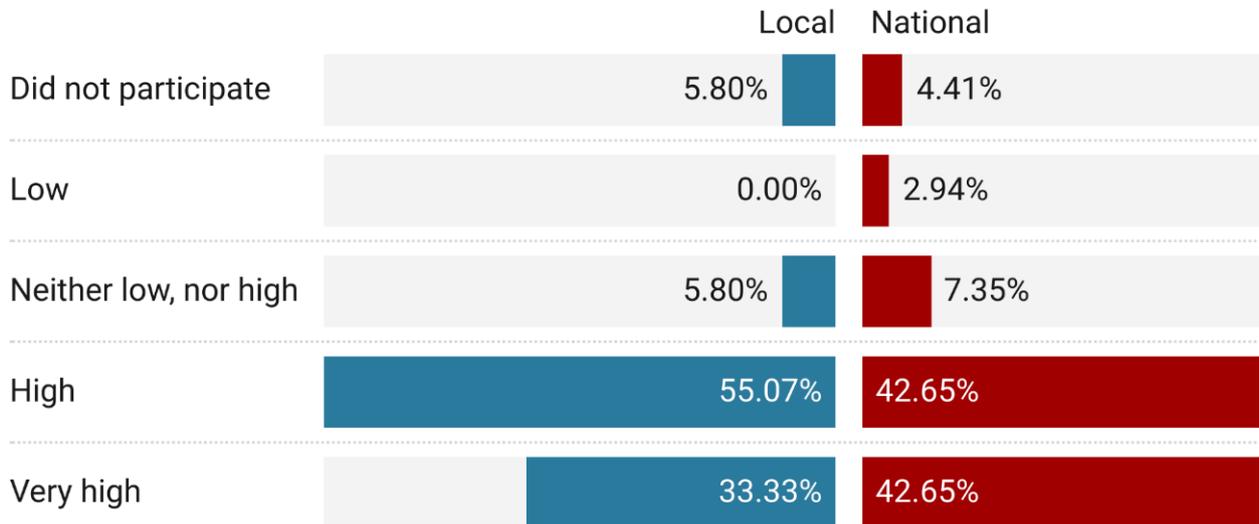


Do you know about other initiatives supported or funded by the Council of Europe in Moldova?

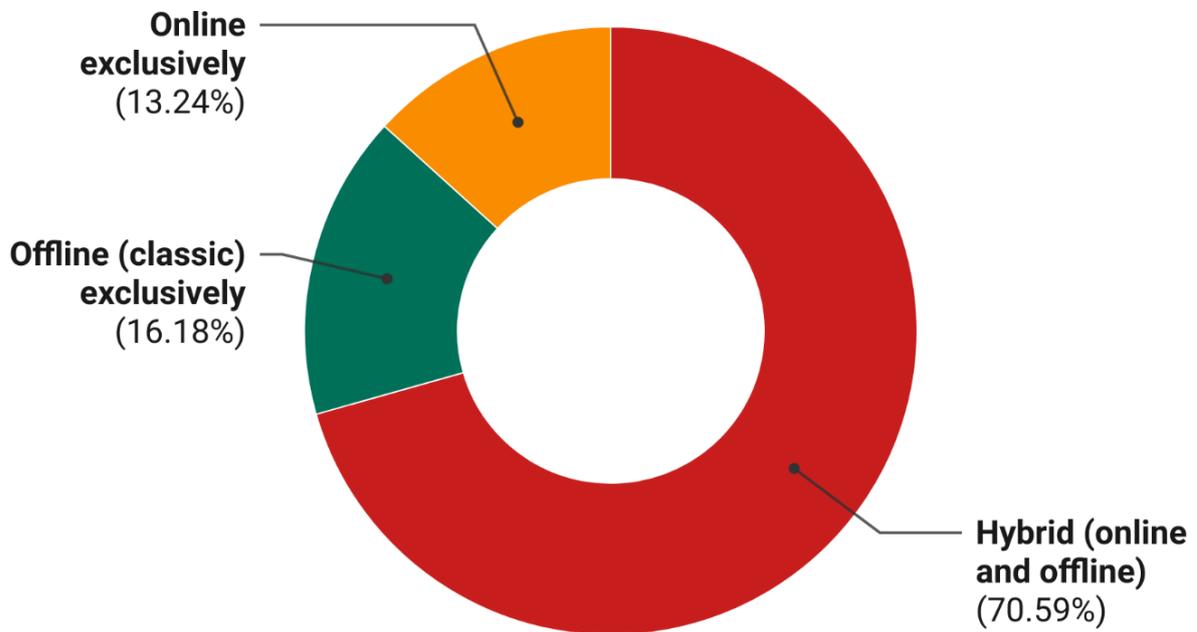


¹⁸ Source: beneficiary (school teachers) survey, evaluation of the Council of Europe project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova"; Strategicus Consulting, October 2022.

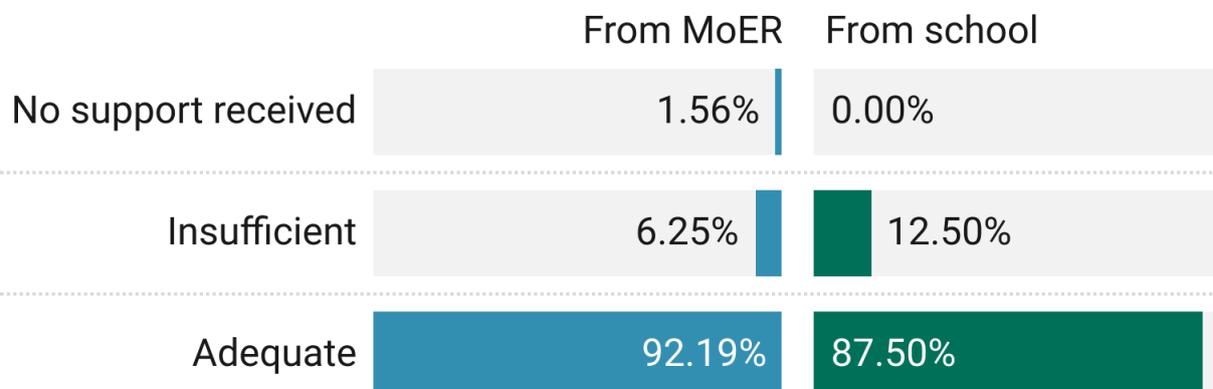
Overall quality level for teachers' trainings with national and local trainers



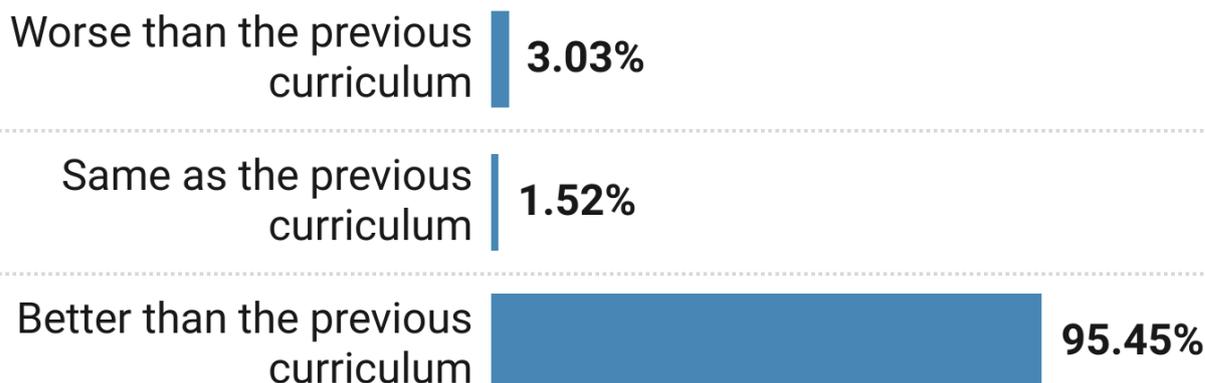
Teachers' preferences for training sessions



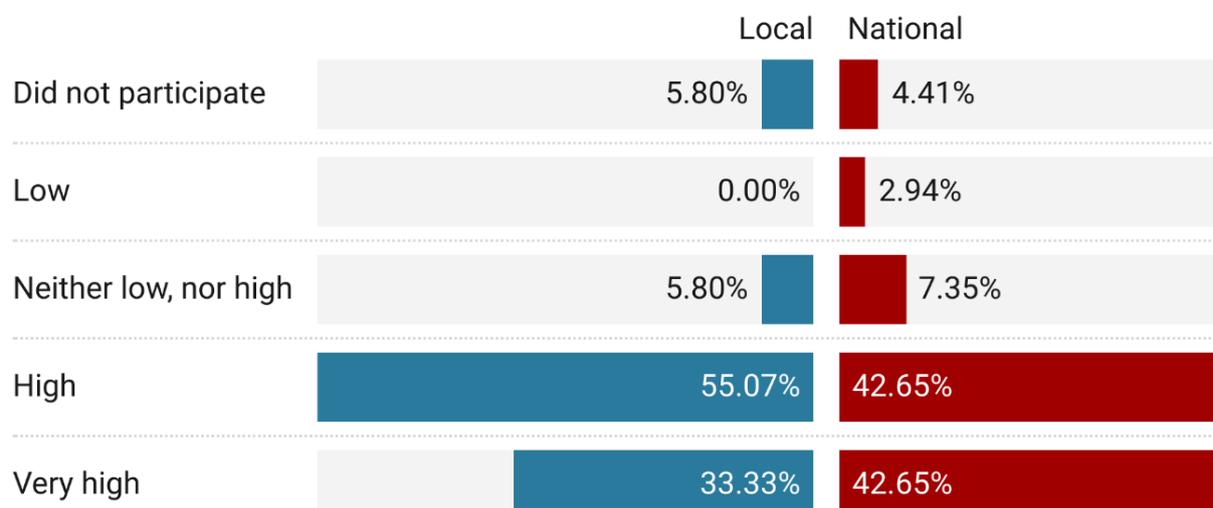
Comparison of support received by teachers from the Ministry of Education and Research (MoER) and schools



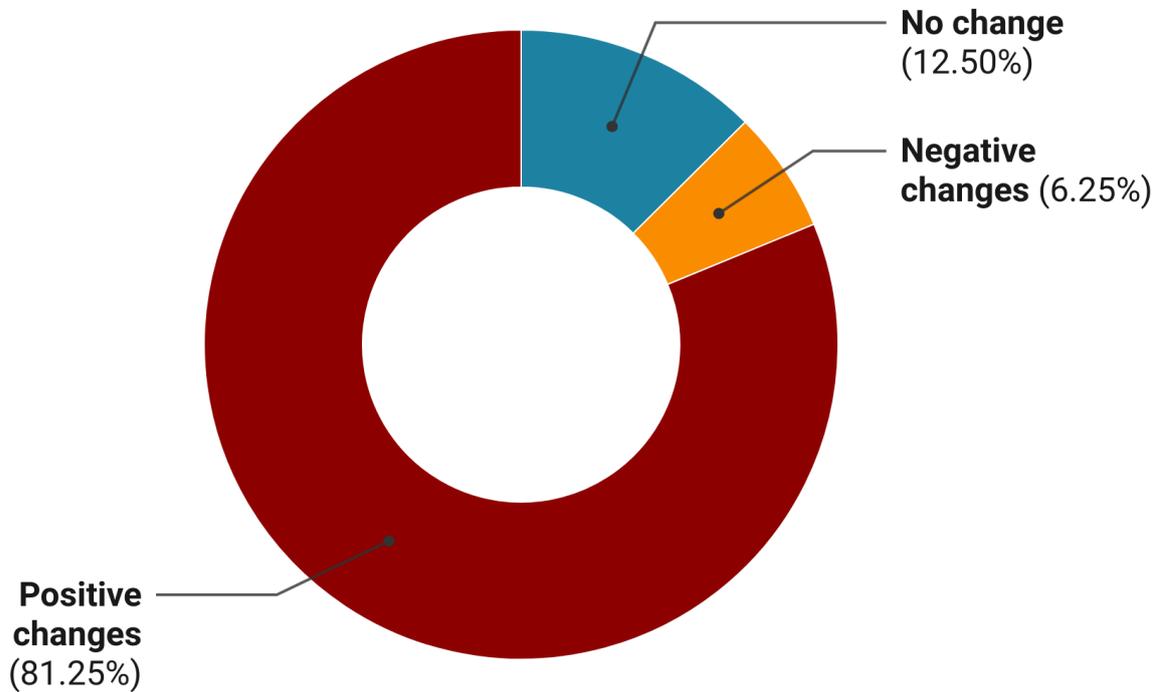
Comparison between the previous and new civic education curriculum



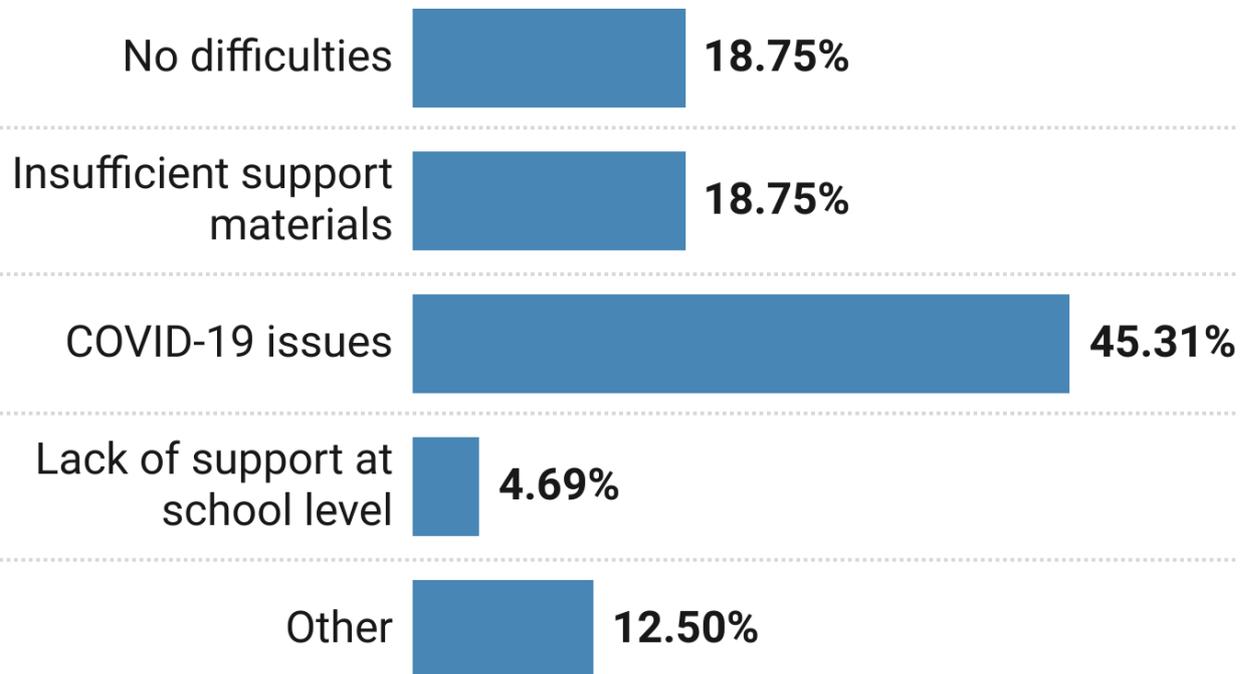
Overall quality level for teachers' trainings with national and local trainers



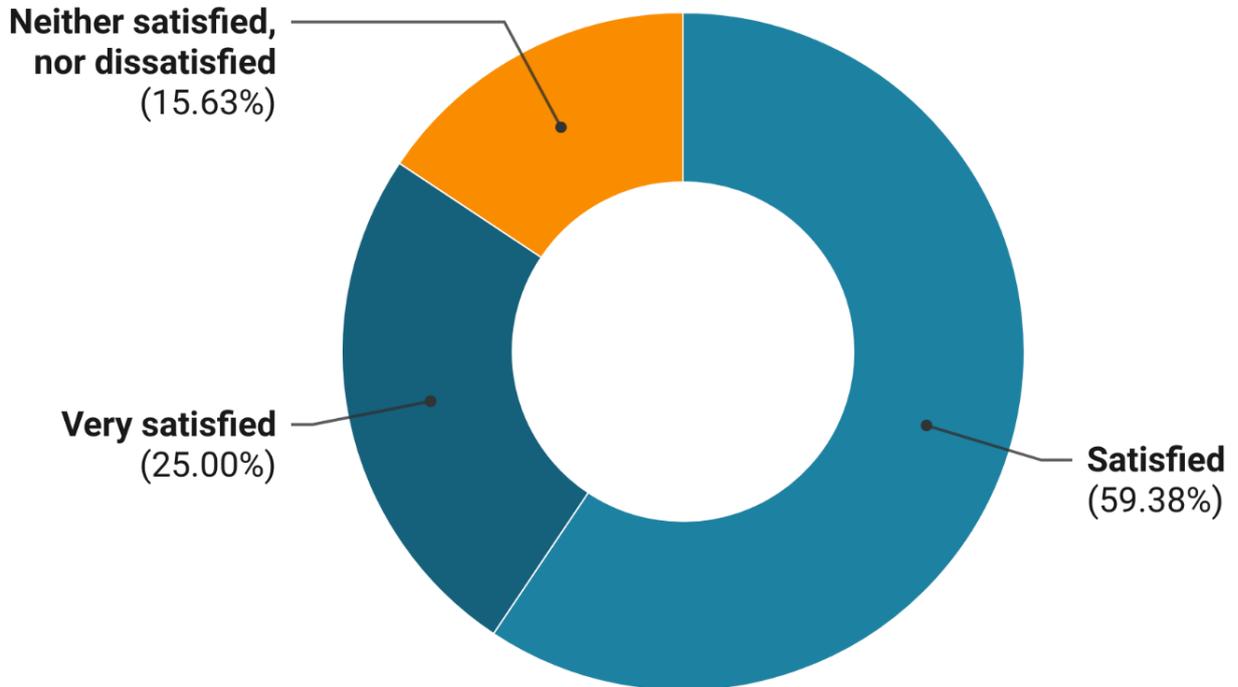
Perception of changes observed among pupils since the introduction of the new civic education curriculum



Significant difficulties encountered in planning and implementing "Education for society" lessons at schools



How satisfied were the teachers by the implementation of the new civic education curriculum?



Annex 4: Interview & focus group guides

INTERVIEW GUIDE

STAKEHOLDERS / PARTENERS / DONORS / EXPERTS

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Please describe briefly how your organization relates to the "Education for Democracy" project. |
| 2 | From your point of view, how does the "Education for Democracy" project address the educational priorities of the Republic of Moldova? In your opinion, how is the approach of this project different from other similar initiatives? |
| 3 | Please describe the information/consultation/reporting mechanisms used by the Council of Europe regarding the "Education for Democracy" project in relation to your institution. |
| 4 | What are, in your opinion, the most notable results obtained within the "Education for Democracy" project? |
| 5 | How do you assess the results achieved by the project in terms of impact and sustainability, and what suggestions do you have for them to remain viable? |
| 6 | What are your expectations regarding the future of this project and the activities initiated by it, after the end of SDC funding? What sources of funding are realistic to ensure the continuation of project activities? |

INTERVIEW GUIDE

NATIONAL TRAINERS

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Please describe briefly how your organization relates to the "Education for Democracy" project. |
| 2 | From your point of view, how does the "Education for Democracy" project address the educational priorities of the Republic of Moldova? In your opinion, how is the approach of this project different from other similar initiatives? |
| 3 | Please describe the information/consultation/reporting mechanisms used by the Council of Europe regarding the "Education for Democracy" project in relation to your institution. |
| 4 | What are, in your opinion, the most notable results obtained within the "Education for Democracy" project? |
| 5 | How do you assess the results achieved by the project in terms of impact and sustainability, and what suggestions do you have for them to remain viable? |
| 6 | What are your expectations regarding the future of this project and the activities initiated by it, after the end of SDC funding? What sources of funding are realistic to ensure the continuation of project activities? |

INTERVIEW GUIDE

COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROJECT STAFF

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | <p>Please describe the project and its components. What are the needs addressed by this project at national level? What major changes have occurred in the needs <i>initially</i> addressed by the project?</p> <p>How did the project components cover the identified needs?</p> |
| 2 | <p>From your point of view, how does the "Education for Democracy" project address the educational priorities of the Republic of Moldova?</p> <p>In your opinion, how is the approach of this project different to other similar initiatives?</p> |
| 3 | <p>What are, in your opinion, the most notable results obtained within the "Education for Democracy" project? How were the project results generally measured? What obstacles or difficulties have you encountered in carrying out your activities and how have they been overcome?</p> <p>To what extent has the project been able to develop competences at teacher level and capacities at school level and other educational partners? What positive changes has it generated at ministry level?</p> |
| 4 | <p>How effective was the project in implementing the changes at the school level? How did the collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Research go?</p> <p>How can the performance achieved by the project be improved? What measures have been taken to improve performance?</p> |
| 5 | <p>How do you comment on the level of involvement in the project of the other partners? Has the involvement of the relevant educational actors in the partnerships been ensured?</p> |
| 6 | <p>Please describe the information/consultation/reporting mechanisms used by the Council of Europe on the "Education for Democracy" project in relation to its partners (including donors).</p> |
| 7 | <p>How do you assess the results achieved by the project in terms of impact and sustainability, and what suggestions do you have for them to remain viable? What are the risk factors you identified?</p> |
| 8 | <p>What are your expectations regarding the future of this project and the activities initiated by it, after the end of the SDC funding?</p> <p>What sources of funding are realistic to ensure the continuation of the project activities and which of these have already been addressed?</p> |
| 9 | <p>If this is the case - what are the most important lessons learned at this stage of the project? How has the project been integrated into the other complementary initiatives at national and European level?</p> |

Annex 5: Online survey¹⁹ (questionnaire in Romanian)

Introducere

În perioada august - decembrie 2022, Strategicus Consulting desfășoară evaluarea finală a proiectului "Educație pentru democrație în Republica Moldova", derulat de Consiliul Europei și finanțat de Agenția Elvețiană pentru Dezvoltare și Cooperare. Proiectul sprijină implementarea noului curriculum de educație civică (disciplina "Educație pentru societate" pentru clasele V-XII) care introduce noi abordări de predare, învățare și evaluare în școlile din Republica Moldova.

Scopul principal al evaluării este examinarea rezultatelor obținute de proiect în vederea atingerii obiectivelor propuse de acesta, precum și pentru a valida relevanța, eficacitatea și durabilitatea acestuia.

În acest context, vă rugăm să **completați cu atenție formularul ce urmează** și să răspundeți cât mai precis la întrebările acestuia.

Întrebările din formular sunt legate de experiența pe care ați avut-o în legătură cu acest proiect iar răspunsurile Dvs. sunt esențiale pentru identificarea corectă și înțelegerea rezultatelor obținute și a impactului produs de acestea. De asemenea, propunerile și opiniile exprimate în formular vor fi luate în considerare de către echipa de evaluatori.

Data-limită de completare a formularului este: 25 octombrie 2022, orele 23:59.

Formularul este anonim, iar informațiile obținute prin intermediul acestuia vor fi strict confidențiale și utilizate exclusiv pentru raportul de evaluare. Datele obținute ca urmare a acestui studiu vor fi analizate de o echipă de experți și raportate finanțatorilor. Raportul de evaluare nu va fi făcut public și va fi prezentat exclusiv în întâlniri interne și distribuit partenerilor de proiect. Toate materialele asociate raportului vor fi stocate și arhivate într-o locație sigură, iar accesul la aceasta restricționat.

Evaluarea finală a proiectului "Educație pentru democrație în Republica Moldova" este realizată de Strategicus Consulting SRL (București, România). Orice întrebări legate de completarea acestui formular de evaluare pot fi adresate la tel.: +40 737 502289 sau la adresa de e-mail: office@strategicus.ro.

Informații generale

Genul Dvs.:

- Feminin
- Masculin
- Nu doresc să răspund

Vârsta Dvs.:

- 18-25 ani
- 26-35 ani
- 36-55 ani
- 56-65 ani
- Peste 65 ani
- Nu doresc să răspund

¹⁹ The survey was available in both Romanian and Russian languages.

Raionul în care vă desfășurați activitatea:

[Drop-down list cu lista de raioane]: Anenii Noi, Basarabeasca, municipiul Bălți, Briceni, Cahul, Cantemir, Călărași, Căușeni, municipiul Chișinău, Cimișlia, Criuleni, Dondușeni, Drochia, Dubăsari, Edineț, Fălești, Florești, Glodeni, Hîncești, Ialoveni, Leova, Nisporeni, Ocnița, Orhei, Rezina, Rîșcani, Sîngerei, Soroca, Strășeni, Șoldănești, Ștefan Vodă, Taraclia, Telenești, Ungheni.

Informații despre proiect

Vă rugăm să precizați cât de bine ați fost informat(ă) cu privire la derularea acestui proiect și sprijinul acordat de Consiliul Europei în procesul de implementare a noului curriculum de educație civică:

- Am fost informat(ă) încă de la prima activitate în care am fost implicat(ă)
- Am fost informat(ă) pe parcursul derulării activităților în care am fost implicat(ă)
- Am fost informat(ă) cu ocazia acestui chestionar

Cunoașteți și alte inițiative sprijinite sau finanțate de Consiliul Europei în Republica Moldova?

- Da
- Parțial
- Nu

Vă rugăm să apreciați nivelul general de calitate (organizare, formatori, materiale utilizate etc.) al sesiunilor de formare desfășurate **la nivel local** (cu formatori locali):

- Nu am participat la astfel de sesiuni de formare
- Foarte scăzut
- Scăzut
- Nici scăzut, nici ridicat
- Ridicat
- Foarte ridicat

[spațiu pentru comentarii]

Vă rugăm să apreciați nivelul general de calitate (organizare, formatori, materiale utilizate etc.) al sesiunilor de formare desfășurate **la nivel național** (cu formatori naționali):

- Nu am participat la astfel de sesiuni de formare
- Foarte scăzut
- Scăzut
- Nici scăzut, nici ridicat
- Ridicat
- Foarte ridicat

[spațiu pentru comentarii]

În acest moment, după derularea sesiunilor de formare, cum apreciați nivelul Dvs. de pregătire pentru implementarea noului curriculum de educație civică și disciplinei "Educație pentru societate" pentru clasele V-XII?

- Foarte slab
- Slab
- Nici slab, nici bun
- Bun
- Foarte bun
- Nu știu/nu-mi dau seama

[spațiu pentru comentarii]

Ținând cont de experiența Dvs. anterioară, vă rugăm să menționați care este - în opinia Dvs. - modalitatea cea mai potrivită pentru desfășurarea activităților de formare a profesorilor (cursuri, ateliere etc.):

- Activități desfășurate exclusiv online
- Activități desfășurate exclusiv cu prezență fizică (clasice)
- Activități desfășurate atât online, cât și cu prezență fizică
- Nu-mi dau seama

Vă rugăm să apreciați noul curriculum de educație civică și disciplina "Educație pentru societate" pentru clasele V-XII:

- Slabe, au nevoie de îmbunătățiri majore
- Acceptabile, dar trebuie îmbunătățite
- Foarte bune și utile pentru elevi
- Nu știu / nu-mi dau seama

Vă rugăm să apreciați noul curriculum de educație civică și disciplina "Educație pentru societate" pentru clasele V-XII **comparativ cu cele anterioare**:

- Mai slabe în comparație cu curriculumul și disciplina anterioare
- Nu aduc nimic nou față de curriculumul și disciplina anterioare
- Mai bune în comparație cu curriculumul și disciplina anterioare

Vă rugăm să apreciați materialele elaborate pentru profesori în cadrul proiectului (ex.: "Ghidul profesorului", planuri de lecții etc.):

- Slabe, au nevoie de îmbunătățiri majore
- Acceptabile, însă trebuie îmbunătățite
- Bune și utile
- Nu știu: le-am primit, dar nu le-am utilizat
- Nu știu: nu le-am primit

Vă rugăm să apreciați metodologia de evaluare cu descriptori:

- Dificilă/complicată/greu de utilizat
- Acceptabilă, însă trebuie îmbunătățită
- Bună și utilă
- Nu știu: nu am utilizat-o încă

Vă rugăm să menționați care au fost cele mai semnificative obstacole/dificultăți cu care v-ați confruntat în planificarea, organizarea și derularea lecțiilor de "Educație pentru societate":

- Nu am întâmpinat nici o dificultate
- Materiale de sprijin insuficiente
- Pandemia COVID-19 și restricțiile cauzate de aceasta
- Lipsa sprijinului la nivel de școală
- Altele (vă rugăm menționați): [spațiu pentru text]

Vă rugăm să apreciați sprijinul oferit de Ministerul Educației și Cercetării în aplicarea curriculumului de educație civică și disciplinei "Educație pentru societate" pentru clasele V-XII:

- Inexistent
- Insuficient
- Suficient

Nu știu

Cum sunteți sprijinit(ă) în aplicarea curriculumului de educație civică de către școala în care predați?

- Deloc
- Insuficient
- Suficient
- În totalitate

Vă rugăm să apreciați modul în care ați fost sprijinit(ă) **în general** în aplicarea curriculumului de educație civică și disciplinei "Educație pentru societate" pentru clasele V-XII:

- Total nemulțumit
- Nemulțumit
- Nici nemulțumit, nici mulțumit
- Mulțumit
- Foarte mulțumit

[spațiu pentru comentarii]

Ce schimbări ați observat în rândul elevilor Dvs. de când a fost introdus noul curriculum de educație civică și disciplina "Educație pentru societate"?

- Nici o schimbare
- Schimbări negative:

[spațiu pentru text]

- Schimbări pozitive:

[spațiu pentru text]

În încheiere, vă rugăm să menționați așteptările, recomandările și sugestiile Dvs. pentru îmbunătățirea activităților ulterioare ale proiectului:

[spațiu pentru text]

Vă mulțumim pentru participarea la acest sondaj!

Evaluarea finală a proiectului "Educație pentru democrație în Republica Moldova" este realizată de Strategicus Consulting SRL (București, România). Orice întrebări legate de completarea acestui formular de evaluare pot fi adresate la tel.: +40 737 502289 sau la adresa de e-mail: office@strategicus.ro.

Annex 6: Terms of reference



External evaluation of the Council of Europe project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova"

The Council of Europe is currently implementing until 31 December 2022 the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova and with funding by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The project aims to contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and democratic society with engaged citizens in the Republic of Moldova. The project helps strengthen the capacity of the Moldovan formal education system to develop the knowledge and competences necessary for someone to become an engaged citizen. In that context, it is looking for a Provider for the provision of services for an external final evaluation of the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova".

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of contract ▶ | One-off contract |
| Duration ▶ | Until complete execution of the obligations of the parties (see Article 2 of the Legal conditions as reproduced in the Act of Engagement) |
| Deadline for submission of tenders/offers ▶ | 28 July 2022 |
| Email for submission of tenders/offers ▶ | dumitru.lazur@coe.int |
| Email for questions ▶ | dumitru.lazur@coe.int |
| Expected starting date of execution ▶ | 08 August 2022 |

PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The present Terms of Reference (ToR) provide background information about the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova". Additionally, the ToR describe the purpose of the evaluation, its objectives and scope, the evaluation questions, methodology as well as qualifications and selection criteria for the evaluator.

1. About the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova"

The project "[Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova](#)" is being implemented over 48 months: from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2022. The total budget for the project is 1,080,000 Euros. It is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in the framework of "Moldova: Fostering Active Civic Engagement" Program. The project is implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova. The project is part of 2017-2020 Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova and 2021-2024 Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova.

The Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova has developed a new curriculum for the "Education for Society" subject for grades V to XII which was introduced in grades V and X in September 2018. The new curriculum is largely based on the Council of Europe standards – the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) and the Council of Europe Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture and has been developed with Council of Europe expert support.

This ambitious curriculum reform and its alignment to Council of Europe standards are part of the broader process of modernization and transition to a competence-based approach to education in which Moldova has been engaged over the past few years. The reform will impact not only the educational input or the content of school subjects, but also, and importantly, the educational

practices: teaching and learning methods, assessment, school governance, etc. It requires a real change of educational paradigm in the Republic of Moldova, which can be very challenging to implement.

The **project aims** to contribute to an inclusive, peaceful and democratic society in the Republic of Moldova by helping strengthen the capacity of the Moldovan education system to develop the knowledge and competences that schoolchildren need in order to become engaged citizens. The project promotes the Council of Europe approach to citizenship education: a holistic view on knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, a focus on democratic school development and an integration of young people's civic experiences in the wider community.

The project supports the on-going reform process lead by the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, and helps:

- Further develop the policy and methodological framework for the reconceptualized civic education subject "Education for Society" in line with the Council of Europe standards;
- Promote the integration of competences for a democratic culture in other subjects;
- Strengthen the capacity of national institutions, teachers and other education professionals to develop democratic competences in learners and apply the new educational approaches in practice;
- Develop a methodology for democratic school governance and pilot it in schools;
- Develop and publish information and methodological materials for education decision makers and practitioners;
- Raise awareness and understanding of the role of citizenship education in the wider society.

To achieve this, the project has organized a series of professional development activities for teachers, school directors, national and local teacher trainers, developed and published teacher's guides for the Education for Society subject for grades V to XII, developed jointly with the Ministry of Education and Research a series of policy and methodological documents on the subject, developed and piloted in schools' methodological guidelines on the democratic school governance.

2. Purpose, objectives and scope

Evaluation purpose

The evaluation is an end-of-project evaluation. It is commissioned by the Council of Europe in accordance with the [guidelines](#) of the organization. The evaluation should identify key lessons from the implementation of the project for a possible follow-up project and to be further used by the Council of Europe's Education Department. It should also provide input on how the next project phase should be structured and which activities will be recommended to further consolidate results.

The evaluation process will be guided by the CoE [Evaluation Policy](#) and [Evaluation Guidelines](#) and other relevant instruments such as the Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova".

The objectives and scope of the evaluation

The evaluation objectives are to assess the following:

- Has the project been implemented as planned, what obstacles were faced and how were they addressed during implementation?
- What tangible results were achieved by the project?
- What lessons can be learned from the way in which the Council of Europe managed the implementation of the project?

The ultimate beneficiaries of this evaluation are the Council of Europe's Bilateral and Regional Co-operation and Capacity Building Division, the donor of the Project, and project partners. The primary beneficiary is the Council of Europe as the implementor of the Project.

The scope of the evaluation will cover the activities carried out by the Council of Europe within the Project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova" from the project start in January 2019 and until its end in December 2022. It will consider both the intended and the un-intended or spill over results of the project. Other activities carried out by the Council of Europe in Moldova in the field of education before or during the project period will not be considered.

Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation questions will be based on three of the six criteria endorsed by the OECD-DAC: relevance, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as the additional criterion of the Council of Europe on added value. An indicative list of the questions is provided below. The evaluation questions can be further refined by the Provider.

Relevance

- To what extent do the intervention objectives address identified needs of the target group(s)?
- How far did the design of the intervention address the problems identified?

Effectiveness

- What has been the progress made towards achievement of the expected results?
- What are the reasons for the achievement or nonachievement?
- To which extent the management of the relationships among stakeholders was effective in establishing a real partnership aiming at the success of the intervention?
- To what extent has the project been effective in helping the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova in implementation of the reconceptualized civic education subject?
- To what extent has the project been effective in helping to strengthen the capacity of national institutions, teachers and other education professionals to develop democratic competences in learners and apply the new educational approaches in practice?

Sustainability and ownership

- To which extent are the outcomes of the project likely to continue producing effects after the end of its funding?
- What are the factors that hampered the impact and sustainability of the assistance?

Council of Europe added Value

- How did the implementation of the project ensure complementarities and generate synergies with other programs at national and European level?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of having the Council of Europe implement the project?

The evaluation questions and methodology for this assignment may need to be further elaborated by the Provider in the [Evaluation Matrix](#). The Provider may suggest additional questions and should indicate success criteria, relevant indicators and the sources for the indicators/methodology for gathering necessary evidence.

Evaluation methodology

Apart from comparing actual results to initially planned ones, to the possible extent looking at relevant indicators set out at the design stage, as described in the project description and logframe, the assessment has to provide concrete qualitative indications of the impact brought about by Council of Europe assistance, to the extent possible.

The evaluation methodology will include documents review, surveys and semi-structured interviews with the Council of Europe staff in Strasbourg and Chisinau as well as co-operation partners and the donor.

The evaluation will rely on data collected by the Provider. Further information on the project activities' implementation, available in the Project Management IT tool of the Council of Europe and collected by the project staff (such as media/social media outreach) will be made available. The Provider is to propose other means of collecting information such as, but not limited to, focus groups, questionnaires, online surveys.

Expected deliverables

The deliverables that the evaluator(s) will be accountable for producing are:

Deliverable 1: A short concept note containing the draft methodology, phases, etc., and including the schedule with key dates and related details, the proposed data collection methods and data sources to be used for answering each evaluation question (i.e. in form of an evaluation matrix, if feasible). Deadline: 8 August 2022

Deliverable 2: A draft final evaluation report which should be delivered with adequate time to allow discussion of the findings and formulation of comments. Deadline: 1 November 2022

Deliverable 3: The final evaluation report should contain a methodologically sound response to the evaluation questions in the Terms of Reference. The recommendations should be supported by the findings and conclusions and their implementation should be feasible. The final evaluation report should be logically structured, containing evidence-based findings, conclusions, recommendations and - if applicable - lessons learned, and should be free of information that is not relevant to the overall analysis. The report should be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. The report should meet the standards listed in [Appendix 3 Quality Assurance Checklist for Final report](#). Deadline: 20 November 2022

A tentative outline of the evaluation report could include the following:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
 - Purpose of the evaluation
 - Description of the objectives of the evaluation
 - Evaluation methodology
 - Difficulties encountered during the evaluation
- Findings
 - Findings related to evaluation questions
 - Additional relevant findings
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Lessons learnt
- Annexes (including list of interviews, questionnaires and documents reviewed, etc.)

The timeframe for the deliverables will be confirmed during the first meeting between the selected Provider(s) and the project team.

All the reports and expected outputs shall be produced in English, using the appropriate style and structuring the text in a clear and concise way. All draft reports will be submitted to the project management in electronic form by e-mail and in a format compatible with MS Office software. The Council of Europe may request additional revisions of the reports in order to address any factual errors and quality control requirements. The final report should be usable for publication.

Qualifications of the Consultant

- University degree in social sciences;
- Minimum 10 years' experience in designing, managing and leading evaluations in the context of international cooperation;
- Previous experience in evaluating international projects/programs in the education field, preferably in the Republic of Moldova or another Eastern Partnership country;
- Extensive knowledge of, and experience in, applying internationally-recognized evaluation standards (UNEG, OECD-DAC);
- Proficiency in English.

Other considerations

i. Location of assignment

The desk research will be homebased. The field research will be organized and carried out by the Provider in the Republic of Moldova.

ii. Budget

The maximum budget for the evaluation of the project, covering all the deliverables to be achieved by the contractor as listed above, is EUR 10 000. The allocated budget includes consultancy fees. This budget does not include travel and subsistence required for field interviews and interpretation and translation costs related to field interviews, in the event that the contractor will travel to Moldova. Any such costs will be covered by the Council of Europe separately.

iii. Risk and assumptions

Risks and assumptions cannot be listed exhaustively. It is assumed that services within both the Council of Europe and the implementing authorities of the beneficiaries accept the evaluation as

an integral part of the program/project cycle management and are committed to provide the necessary information, and will subsequently act on recommendations and findings, as well as provide the follow-up information to the Council of Europe.

The following are additional relevant assumptions for the above evaluations:

- Access to requested documentation and information on the programs is ensured by the Council of Europe, national authorities and the project beneficiaries;
- The Council of Europe staff and implementing parties are regularly informed on objectives and methods of this evaluation, in order to ensure their full cooperation.

In the event that one or several of the above assumptions prove to be untrue, the Provider should immediately inform the project management. The Provider will also report in advance any limitations to the evaluations due to insufficient collaboration from key stakeholders.

iv. Conflict of interests

The Provider must be strictly neutral. Conflicts of interests must be avoided. The expert(s) carrying out the evaluation shall have no involvement with the project subject of this exercise. More specifically, the expert(s) must fulfil the following criterion:

- No previous involvement in programming and/or implementation of Council of Europe assistance which will be evaluated as part of this evaluation.
- No previous or current involvement with project stakeholders.

During all contacts with stakeholders, the Provider will clearly identify themselves as independent consultants and not as an official representative of the Council of Europe.

APPENDIX 1: [Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation Inception Report](#)

APPENDIX 2: [Quality Assurance Checklist for Final Evaluation Report](#)

APPENDIX 3: [CoE Code of Conduct for Evaluation](#)

APPENDIX 4: [Evaluation Matrix template](#)