



THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR MOLDOVA:

The 2022 EU4Business Country Report for Moldova shows that the difficulties and challenges due to the COVID pandemic continue to affect SMEs and are challenging for the delivery of support by EU partners and implementers.



Due to the multiple lockdowns across much of 2021, disbursement decreased in 2021



RESULTS OF EU SUPPORT IN 2021

€86.9 million extra income 6,206 generated SMEs supported increase in staff among +16.2 women-**EU-supported SMEs** 38.6% owned SMEs growth in SMEs' +13.4% turnover recorded 8,350 new jobs created **EU-supported SMEs** +10.05% engaged in exporting €735.52 million total turnover +10.25% increase in exports among EU-supported

SMEs

IMPACT OF EU SUPPORT





FACILITY COMMUNICATIONS

success stories and news items were generated in Moldova and shared



Mark Hellyer Team Leader, EU4Business Facility

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website regularly maintained and updated

11,423

total visits to the Moldovian website in 2021

Promotion campaign in the social and traditional media was conducted in September 2021 to attract SMEs to the newly created websites.

Twofold increase in average monthly website visits recorded in Moldova following the promo campaign

120,000+

audience reach in the social media

over a dozen media outlets reached with campaign messages

Despite the continuing challenges to SMEs post-COVID and fewer SMEs supported, these SMEs created more jobs, grew more and increased exports. There are continuing challenges in 2022 but despite the regional turmoil, the EU is committed to continue to support SMEs in Moldova. The EU4Business initiative is adapting and providing appropriate measures so that SMEs can access the support they need.

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and procedures reformed

government institutions improved their capacity



EU SUPPORTTO SMESIN MOLDOVAIN 2021













This was the total value of contracts being implemented, not disbursements in 2020.

A2 Interest Subsidy

This instrument is a grant given by the EU to IFIs in order to lower the cost of their loans to SMEs in the EaP. The grant provides interest subsidies of up to 10%, which is applied to the regular interest rate, with which the IFI lends to PFIs and further on to SMEs. The purpose of this instrument is to lower the final cost of finance for SMEs in the EaP.

A3 Targeted Assistance (TA) to PFIs

This instrument consists of technical assistance to PFIs in the form of consultancy services, mentoring, and specialised training. The main effect of this instrument is that the PFIs (local banks and microfinance institutions) become more familiar with the modus operandi of the big IFIs, the characteristics of their credit lines, their reporting requirements, as well as the standards regarding financial and risk analysis of the potential borrowers.

A4 Capped Guarantees

This instrument consists of a guarantee given to IFIs in order to lower the risk of lending to

SMEs via local PFIs through guarantees to reduce collateral requirements of SMEs. This is a guarantee that enables improved access to finance through the reimbursement of a portion of the loss caused by the SME portfolio. These guarantees are generally capped at up to 25% of the total portfolio of the respective partner financial institution and to generally 70%-80% of each individual sub-loan. In the case of the DCFTA facility phase 1 EIB/ EIF, the guarantee is 25%/70%, for EIF COSME support the guarantee is 50%/70%, for DCFTA facility phase 2 the guarantee is 25%/80%.

A6 SME Incentive Grants (linked to loans)

This instrument is different from regular grant schemes as the incentive grants are not given directly to SMEs as a "pure grant". The SME signs a loan contract from one of the credit lines of the IFIs via the PFIs. After the loan is disbursed, there is a verification process to check if the loan was used for the purpose listed in the business plan or feasibility study and of the other pre-conditions for the loan disbursement. Once the verification report confirms compliance, a part of the loan is transformed into a grant, so

that the total "cost" of financing is lowered. The most common incentive grants are between 10% and 15% of the loan value as is the case for the EBRD DCFTA facility 1 and 2.

7 Grants to SMEs

These grants are non-reimbursable and generally modest in value in order to support as many SMEs as possible. In general, SME grants are disbursed in order to target specific economic development goals such as development in rural areas, poor communities, or a response to various types of crises. These grants are usually disbursed through Non-governmental Agencies (NGOs) with links into targeted communities.

A8 Structured Funds

This instrument is implemented directly by EU participation as opposed to risk-sharing with IFIs. Typically, this involves direct loans or equity investment in a financial instrument or fund. As the EU does not have the capacity to disburse direct loans to SMEs, this function is assigned to an intermediary. The most important EU investment in Direct Finance is shares in the European Fund for Southeastern Europe (EFSE).





EU4BUSINESS SUPPORTS PASTRY MAKER IN MOLDOVA

Panilino, a family business, began its journey in the 1990s and is now one of the largest manufacturers of bakery and confectionery products in Moldova. Every month the company produces more than 50 tonnes of confectionery, combining traditional recipes with high quality ingredients.

Panilino is one of 250 companies in Moldova that benefited from the EU4Business-EBRD Credit Line. The company purchased and installed a new confectionery production line, raw material handling and packaging equipment, transportation vehicles, refrigerator trucks and much more. The new equipment reduces heat, electricity and water consumption, ensures the delivery of high quality products and creates a safe and healthy environment for employees.

The results of the investment were immediate and best evidenced by numbers: productivity increased by 15 per cent, accompanied by boosted exports and new contracts signed with distributors from Austria, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Latvia. The investment also led the company to hire more people: its workforce grew from 238 to 257 employees.

After extensive research of the various SME credit offers available in Moldova, we decided in favour of the EU4Business-EBRD Credit Line. The conditions of the credit line are very competitive, and the freeof-charge technical support and the grant component of the loan are truly helpful."

Valentina Gisca Entrepreneur

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THE SUCCESS OF THE LOCAL ACTION GROUPS AND THE NATIONAL LEADER NETWORK IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

The LEADER approach has been implemented in the Republic of Moldova since 2016, and the LEADER National Network is the organization that represents the interests of the Local Action Groups (LAGs) at the national and international levels. The residents of the LAGs systematically implement projects in various fields that contribute to the improvement of the quality of life in rural areas, to the emergence of new local services that meet the needs of the inhabitants, as well as to the creation of new jobs. Several development partners are involved in this process, and the main one being the European Union under its EU4Business Initiative.

Today, **32 LAGs** are active in Moldova, and another **15** are now at the end of the creation process. The LAGs involve around **438 administrative-territorial units**, **732 localities** or 50% of the country's rural

We need to promote the beauty of our country. That's the only way we can keep our families at home. By promoting our hometowns and our parents' home, we can also grow. When we develop the countryside, the entire country wins."

Valentina Gisca Entrepreneur localities, with a **population of 1.007 million**. Based on their Local Development Strategy (LDS), Moldova's LAGs have implemented some **700 local micro-projects** aimed at fostering SMEs, improving local infrastructure, developing missing products and services in villages, and much more. Micro-projects implemented using the LEADER approach have generated **402 new jobs** in rural Moldova.

For example, Valentina Gisca was able to set up a wood-fired oven to cook polenta and steak, a BBQ grill table, and tables and chairs so that guests of her Bed&Breakfast called **La Bunica** in her hometown Chiscareni could dine in the garden and enjoy meals al fresco. The gazebo construction cost EUR 2.974 with the Hora Ciulucului LAG contributing EUR 1.289, and the own contribution was 1.685 euros.

THE HASNAS CHILDREN'S MARCHING BAND

The Hasnas children's marching band has benefited through the Valea Cuboltei LAG in the village of Hasnasenii Mari, Drochia. The civic sector submitted a project idea to develop and promote traditions, support cultural activities as part of the Valea Cuboltei LAG's Local Development Strategy. It cost EUR 5,410 to equip the orchestra with musical instruments, with the band contributing EUR 2,436 and the Valea Cuboltei LAG contributing EUR 2,974.

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MOLDOVA'S UNGHENI AND CAHUL REGIONS SEE BUSINESS RESULTS

One of the beneficiaries of the EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme is **Serghei Bajenov**, founder of Interstepcom, a Cahul-based furniture maker. A €30,000 grant allowed Bajenov buy woodworking equipment, an investment that increased automation and digitization in the company's assembly process by over 60% and generated 10 new jobs.

With the help of this equipment, we can improve our quality to be able to enter the European market."



In Pascani, a village in Cahul, **Casa Bunicului** is a farm-based B&B founded in 2018 by **Dumitru and Lidia Lazar** in southern Moldova. With the grant they received, the Lazar family were able to quickly add all the necessary amenities. A lot of enthusiasm, dedication and hard work turned a cold, abandoned house into a colourful, modern guesthouse that can attract international guests.

Marina Cladicov founded a company called Colmirand, which specializes in handmade noodles, dumplings and pancakes that are sold frozen. With a grant of \in 14,547, Cladicov was able to top up her own savings to invest in modernizing the business. She bought a steam convection oven, a dough mixer, a noodle maker, and freezers.



Cristina Lupu makes toys – she launched Bubulino brand while she was on maternity leave. She added her own savings of \in 2,257 to a \in 18,367 grant and purchased some new equipment. This allowed her to diversify and partly automate her production process.

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The EU4Moldova: Focal Regions Programme allowed us to purchase a zigzag sewing machine that makes decorations on clothes, as well as equipment for maintenance and equipment to stuff toys. So far, we have been doing this by hand and it is very meticulous."

Ten years ago, **Cristina Scutaru** launched a family business in Ungheni. **Unfloria** provides services in cleaning and washing textiles, including carpets. The Scutaru family was able to add a €30,000 grant to its own financial resources, to buy an automatic carpet-cleaning machine and other equipment. By increasing the quality and speed of the services Unfloria provides, the company was able to reduce water consumption by up to 30% in the process of cleaning carpets, and reduced energy consumption by up to 20%.



ALLOCATION OF A2F BUDGETS BY REGIONAL AND BILATERAL INSTRUMENTS



Interest Subsidy (grant contract) TA to PFIs Capped Guarantees (Financial instrument) A(6 SME Incentive grants (linked to loans) Grants to SMEs **A8** Structured Funds

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT **SERVICES** (BDS)

BDS is the second largest area of support in Moldova representing 40% of budgets in 2021

A total of -52.6%

million

support instruments used in Moldova for BDS are defined below



Consultancy Services for SMEs

Through this instrument, the EU4Business Initiative aims to directly increase the knowledge and skills of SMEs in EaP countries through the direct provision (fully or partly paid) of non-financial business services (these can range from basic start-up and registration, accounting, marketing, input supply, technology and product development, training and technical assistance, infrastructure support, and advocacy). These services can be delivered through both international and/or local consultants, in both private firms/ individuals, and/or business support organisations.



This instrument aims at increasing the capacity of Business Support Organisations (such as chambers of commerce. SME associations, professional bodies, the Sector Trade Association, training institutes, etc) to deliver BDS services to SMEs (whether members or not). The capacity building is achieved though

mentoring, training trainers, advisory services, and study tours to either enhance existing services, build new ones, or improve organisational structures.

B Incubators

The business incubator is an organisation designed to accelerate the growth and success of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services that could include physical space, capital, coaching, common services, and networking connections.

The EU4Business Incubators Instrument generally shares the cost with the local authorities where the EU bears the cost of refurbishment and cost-sharing arrangements for the running costs and/or service provision. One of the most important aspects related to this instrument is sustainability. As operation costs are high, the initial financial set-up is crucial for keeping the incubators viable after the EU4Business intervention ends.

B5

Trade Information This instrument provides SMEs already exporting, exporting infrequently, or those interested

in exporting with the range of information needed to move closer to exporting. This instrument can include generating the necessary information (brochures, guides, market reports) or developing tools for accessing online resources and intelligent searches and covers market information, marketing guides, and market access requirements.



Business to Business (B2B) Activities support SMEs to make specific contact with nominally interested buyers (company decision makers in target export markets who regularly buy the export on offer). These can include participation in online buyer auctions, trade fair participation. inward and outward trade missions, buyer meetings, etc. and EU4Business support can range from organisation, logistics, preparation and advice, as well as covering the costs of travel and/or stand and event costs.



EU, SWEDEN AND EBRD SUPPORT MOLDOVA'S FIRST BLUEBERRY PRODUCER

Lolly Berry is the first blueberry producer in Moldova, with plans to increase production and expand the business to keep up with local demand. The company sought support from the EBRD Advice for Small Businesses programme under the EU4Business umbrella on engineering a cold storage facility and producing a business development plan for investment and expansion. The blueberry fields currently span 13 hectares, and the business plan developed with support from the EBRD includes the expansion of the harvested areas to keep up with the growing demand.

> Because of collaboration with the EU, we reached a new level of development in terms of production and sales, with plans to extend the existing harvesting area in order to meet the demand in the Moldovan market".

Tatiana Bordian-Balan CEO

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Capacity Building among Policymakers and Regulators

Through this instrument, EU4Business interventions aim at strengthening the capacity of staff of various government agencies to ensure better, more transparent, and open policies and regulations that affect business, whilst ensuring appropriate controls in the six Eastern Partnership countries. This can include making and amending policies, laws, and administrative procedures based on need and risk assessment. Through this instrument, EU4Business interventions deliver direct advisory, mentoring services, and study tours to the relevant staff involved in policymaking.



Public Private Dialogue is an instrument for more inclusive and targeted policymaking. Specifically, it involves effective consultation and collaboration between government and the private sector and/ or its representatives, in order to achieve effective reform and administration of regulations that affect SMFs.



Through this instrument, EU4Business interventions support the EaP countries to improve the regulatory environment based on best practices and most often approximation (to align their SME related legislations, rules, and regulations with those of the EU). Approximation occurs in all six Eastern Partnership countries, but it is more intensely applied in the three DCFTA countries, which are committed to widespread adoption of EU business acquis under the Association Agreement (AA).



Through this instrument, EU4Business interventions support government to inform SMEs on reforms and implications for their business and steps to compliance with regulatory reform.



ALLOCATION OF BEE BUDGETS IN MOLDOVA BY INSTRUMENT







FACHIEVEMENTS LIN 2021

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[AGGREGATE RESULTS] IN MOLDOVA IN 2021

Due to the fall in available budgets of 30.5% and continuing challenges of the post-Covid recovery, the number of SMEs supported in 2021 fell accordingly. The level of disbursements also fell from €15.1 million in 2020 to €7.56 in 2021.





THE NUMBER OF SMES SUPPORTED BY AREA OF INTERVENTION IN MOLDOVA





[IMPACT OF EU SUPPORT IN MOLDOVA]

INCREASE IN TURNOVER

EU-supported SMEs in Moldova increased turnover in 2021, although a bit lower than the regional average. EU-supported SMEs in Moldova considerably increased turnover in 2021 compared with 2020 (13.40% compared with -1.97%).

Average increase in turnover of EU Supported SMEs in 2021



INCREASE IN EXPORTING SMES

The number of EU-supported SMEs that started exporting in Moldova in 2021 is much higher than the average across the EAP. The number of EU supported SMEs that started exporting in Moldova in 2021 is up from 2020 (**10.25**% compared to **2.4**%).

Increase in number of EU supported in 2021



INCREASE IN EXPORT

EU-supported SMEs in Moldova increased exports in 2021 at the level close to the regional average. The growth of exports of EU-supported SMEs in Moldova is much higher in 2021 than in 2020 (**10.25**% compared with **-1.18**%)



The increase in exports of EU Supported SMEs in Moldova is higher than the EaP average.



ACCESS **TO FINANCE** IN MOLDOVA

OVERALL RESULTS OF A₂F **INTERVENTIONS IN MOLDOVA** IN 2021 WERE:

SMES

compared with 2020 2021 SMEs supported 1,860 **200.48**% with A2F interventions €12.12 -21.11% in loans disbursed million €1.74 41.69% in grants given million new jobs 5,364 generated at +186.39% SMEs supported through A2F increase in 20.10% -5.55% income of supported SMEs In 2021, the EU disbursed for A2F **SUPPORTED** 52.20 **BY ACCESS** million **TO FINANCE INSTRUMENT** Total spending for A2F in Moldova 5.10%





		2020	2021	
OVERALL	Total Value of loans triggered in Moldova	€15.36 million	€12.12 million	
IMPACT	Average total loans triggered across EaP	€29.17 million	€43.22 million	
OF A2F IN	SMEs receiving loans in Moldova	142	1,709	
MOLDOVA	Average size of loans in Moldova	€108,188	€9,259	
	PFIs supported	6	6	
	Total value of Grants disbursed in Moldova	€3.0 million	€1.74 million	
	Average total value of grants disbursed across EaP	€1.6 million	€1.81 million	
	SMEs receiving grants in Moldova	477	151	
	Average amount of grant given in Moldova	€6,271	€11,552	

RESULTS PER A2F INSTRUMENT

	Number of SMEs supported	Income of SMEs	Jobs in SMEs	Jobs generated	Increase in turnover	% of increase in turnover
Total	1,860	€259,028,373	17,286	5,364	€43,353,167	20.10%
A1 Capped Loss Recovery	480	€80,000,000	1,600	800	€20,740,741	35.00%
A4 Capped Guarantees	370	€25,000,000	3,500	980	€2,678,571	12.00%
A6 SME Incentive grants	842	€123,938,731	11,091	2,658	€13,380,191	12.10%
A7 Grants to SMEs	151	€28,289,642	570	835	€6,464,355	29.62%
A8 Structured Funds	17	€1,800,000	525	91	€89,309	5.22%

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

OVERALL RESULTS OF BDS INTERVENTIONS IN MOLDOVA IN 2021 WERE:

	2021	compared with 2020
SMEs supported through BDS interventions	4,346	-76.49 %
new jobs generated at SMEs supported through BDS	2,986	↓-68.72 %
increase in income at supported SMEs	10.07%	-1.46%
BSOs capacitated	96	74



RESULTS BY BDS INSTRUMENTS

	Sustained jobs in Supported SMEs	New jobs created in Supported SMEs	Total incomes of supported SMEs	Income growth	% of increase in turnover
Total	36,162	2,986	€476,495,261	€43,583,800	10.07%
B1 Consultancy services for SMEs	34,141	2,986	€476,495,261	€43,583,800	10.07%

BUSINESS ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

OVERALL RESULTS OF BEE INTERVENTIONS IN MOLDOVA IN 2021 WERE:

	2021	compared with 2020
Laws changes	18	↓-64.71 %
Public Private Dialogue Events	7	↓-75.86 %
Regulators/policy makers strengthened capacity	14	1+55.56%



RESULTS OF BEE INSTRUMENTS IN MOLDOVA

BEE Support instruments used in Moldova in 2021 are:





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Capacity building among government agencies / regulators

NUMBER OF LAWS / REGULATIONS CHANGED



NUMBER OF PUBLIC PRIVATE DIALOGUE EVENTS



NUMBER OF REGULATORS/GOVERNMENT BENEFITING FROM CAPACITY BUILDING

EaP average 77

463 EaP total

14 Moldova



LIST OF PROJECTS

								Туре					ion	
Title	Total Budget [®]	Start date	End date	of the Project	A2F	BDS	BEE							
Inclusive economic empowerment of focal regions of the Republic of Moldova	€23,000,000	2019	2025	Bilteral		•								
Harnessing the CSOs' potential to promote and develop the social entrepreneurship in Moldova	€1,000,000	2022	2025	Bilteral	•	•	•							
EU4Moldova: Local Communities Development (LEADER)	€2,500,000	2021	2024	Bilteral	•	•	•							
Start up City Cahul	€6,800,000	2020	2024	Bilteral	•	•								
TWG Further support to agriculture, rural development and food safety in the Republic of Moldova (MD 16 ENI AG 01 19 (MD/37))	€2,000,000	2020	2023	Bilteral			•							
LEADER approach for rural prosperity in Moldova	€1,000,000	2020	2023	Bilteral		•								
European Union confidence Building Measures Programme V (2019-2022)	€9,400,000	2019	2023	Bilteral			•							
Rural SME policy support window	€2,191,000	2020	2022	Bilteral	•	•	•							
Direct grant to ODIMM "Support to SMEs in rural areas"	€4,000,000	2018	2021	Bilteral	•	•								
DCFTA Initiative East (EIB) (can also be referred to as DCFTA Facility by EIB)	€62,746,000	2016	2031	Regional	•	•								
EU4Business EBRD Credit line (EU Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) Facility, EBRD DCFTA Programme)	€38,900,000	2017	2027	Regional	•	•								
EU4Business EBRD Credit line (SME Competitiveness Programme in Eastern Partnership)	€95,584,000	2019	2026	Regional	•									

 * Budgets indicated for regional projects apply for 6 EaP countries

				Туре	Areas of Interve		
Title	Total Budget [®]	Start date	End date	of the Project	A2F	BDS	BEE
EU4Business EBRD Credit line (EU Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) Facility, EBRD DCFTA Programme)	€19,430,000	2016	2026	Regional		•	•
DCFTA SME Direct Finance Facility	€10,220,000	2014	2024	Regional	•	•	
Green for Growth – Extension to Neighbourhood East II	€6,157,151	2018	2040	Regional	•		
2018 NIP decision share – Green for Growth – Extension to Neighbourhood East II	€5,162,849	2018	2040	Regional	•		
Promoting Green Lending in the Eastern Partnership	€42,855,000	2020	2040	Regional	•		
EU4Business – The EU Local Currency Partnership Initiative: the European Fund for Southeast Europe (EFSE)	€50,320,000	2018	2039	Regional	•		
EIB-04 SME Finance Facility – EIB window	€5,100,000	2010	2030	Regional	•		
FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER CENTRE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE (FINTECC) – EU4CLIMATE window	€15,400,000	2020	2027	Regional	•		
EBRD Advice for Small Businesses, Team Europe EaP window	€14,976,000	2020	2026	Regional		•	
Mayors for Economic Growth 2 TA	€10,000,000	2020	2024	Regional		•	•
Eastern Partnership Trade Helpdesk	€3,700,000	2020	2024	Regional		•	
Structural Reform Facility: World Bank component	€1,500,000	2018	2023	Regional			
EU4BUSINESS: Connecting Companies	€6,498,205	2020	2022	Regional		•	
Eastern Partnership: Ready to Trade – an EU4Business initiative	€6,000,000	2017	2021	Regional			•
EU4Business: From Policies to Action	€4,000,000	2017	2021	Regional			•
EU-EBRD Country-specific Investment Climate Reviews and Action Plans for Eastern partnership (EaP) countries.	€2,000,000	2018	2021	Regional			•

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