



## Transforming Education Summit

### Report on the Outcomes of National Consultations

The Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova in cooperation with UNICEF, as conveners of the national consultations, organized the distribution of materials related to *the Transforming Education Summit* to all targeted partners: children, parents, adolescents, academic communities, decision-makers from central and local public authorities, civil society organizations, youth organizations, trade unions, representatives of the business environment, UN, EUD and the WB.

Issues related to the transformation of education were discussed in the following national consultations:

- 1) National Forum for the Validation of the Strategy and Program "Education 2030", Chisinau, June 10, 2022;
- 2) National consultations on the transformation of education, Chisinau, August 8, 2022;
- 3) Sociological research "Young people about the crisis in education", the online questionnaire being administered by UNICEF with the help of U-Report tools.

A detailed feature of the participants in the national consultations and their major *outcomes* and findings are presented in the chapters below.

#### 1. TES national consultation process

Convenors' Name: Ministry of Education and Research and UNICEF Moldova Country Office

Data(s):	– 10 June 2022 – 8 August 2022 – 23 June 7 August 2022
Title(s):	– National Forum for validation of the Strategy and Program "Education 2030", Chisinau, June 10, 2022 – National consultations on the transformation of education, Chisinau, August 8, 2022 – Sociological research "Young people about the crisis in education", the online questionnaire being administered by UNICEF with the help of <a href="#">U-Report</a> toolkit
Types:	National
Geographical Focus:	national

Number of Participants for each consultation:	National Validation Forum: ..... 86 professionals, children, and youth National consultations: ..... 80 professionals, children, and youth U-Report: ..... 12.004 adolescents
Language used:	English, Russian, English

Number of consultations in persons (without U-Report): 2

Basic information on all the consultations convened (without U-Report):

Total number of participants: 166

Age Range of Participants:

10	10 to 17
18	18 to 29
124	30 -59
14	60+

Gender Participants:

76	Male
90	Female
0	Prefer not to say

Number of Participants from each Sector:

107	Education	2	Nutrition
19	Child Protection	2	Communication
6	Health	6	Information Technology
4	Labour	7	Social Protection
3	Environment	3	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
7	Finance	0	Other (please explain)

Number of participants from each Stakeholder Group:

14	- Teachers, educators, facilitators, and professors
15	- Youth and students (including children and adolescents)
12	- School leaders (e.g., from UNESCO <a href="#">ASP school network</a> )
8	- City and local government representatives
10	- Parents and caregivers
2	- Small/medium enterprises/unions
2	- Large national businesses

3	- Members of Parliament
2	- Multi-national corporations
6	- Local authorities
14	- Government and national institutions
18	- Public Servants
2	- Regional economic community
14	- Local Non-Governmental Organizations
5	- International and/or Regional financial institutions
5	- International Non-Governmental Organizations
6	- Indigenous people and community leaders
26	- Scientific community, academic, universities and research institutes
2	- Media
0	- Other (Please explain)

## 2. Principles of engagement

*A whole-of-government approach.* In order to ensure a holistic approach, all government entities with attributions in the fields of education, health, social protection, ensuring equality, and protecting the rights of the child were involved in the consultation process. The consultations were also attended by representatives of the Ministries of Finance, Economy and Home Affairs.

*Inclusion and equality.* Representatives of the Republican Center for Psycho-Pedagogical Assistance and psycho-pedagogical assistance services, representatives of civil society organizations, active in promoting inclusive education and defending the rights of people with disabilities, were invited to the consultations. Also, the participation in consultations of representatives of civil society organizations promoting gender equality and the rights of ethnic minorities, UN, EUD and the WB was ensured.

*Focusing on youth as 'agents of change'.* The focus on young people was achieved through the participation in consultations of the National Youth Council of Moldova, which is an associative structure of 38 youth organizations, which promotes the rights of young people and represents the interests of youth organizations in the process of developing, implementing and evaluating youth policies.

## 3. Consultations and outcomes

### 3.1. Main areas of focus of the national consultations

#### 3.1.1. Development of the Education Sector Plan for the Republic of Moldova

The general purpose and objectives of reimagining/ transforming education in the Republic of Moldova were set out in the strategic development policy documents "Education 2030" and Program for its implementation. Both, the Strategy and Program were developed and finalized within a wide consultative process, in which all the stakeholders participated: pupils, parents, students, youth organizations, local and central public authorities with attributions to education,

health care and social protection, civil society organizations active in the field of education and protection of children's rights, business representatives, UN, EUD and the WB.

In accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, adapted to the context of the Republic of Moldova, the "Education 2030" Strategy and the Program for its implementation establish the following general objectives of transformation of education in the Republic of Moldova:

1. Connecting education to the requirements and needs of the labor market from the perspective of sustainable development, by restructuring the mechanisms for the development of human capital.
2. Ensuring access to quality education for all throughout life.
3. Ensuring the educational system of all levels and forms of education with qualified, competent, motivated and competitive teaching, scientific-didactic and managerial staff.
4. Strengthening socio-educational cohesion for quality education by combining the efforts of all actors of the educational process.
5. Creating new, effective, and motivating environments for development and lifelong learning for all citizens.
6. Improving the functionality, quality and sustainability of the education system through the efficient implementation of digital technologies.
7. Ensuring for all citizens, throughout their lives, opportunities for learning and education in a formal, non-formal and informal context.
8. Promoting innovations and changes in education through the development of scientific research.
9. Increasing the performances of the educational system by streamlining the network of educational institutions, modernizing the infrastructure, strengthening the managerial capacity and developing the quality culture.

The development strategy "Education 2030" and its Program are at the final stage of official approval by the Government of the Republic of Moldova.

In the process of national consultations, the draft documents mentioned above served as a basis for the holistic approach of the five directions of action, proposed to be discussed at the Transforming Education Summit.

### **3.1.2. Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools**

The Program for the development of inclusive education was implemented in the period of 2011-2020 in the Republic of Moldova. As a result, practically all children from residential institutions were transferred to conventional educational institutions. These institutions were equipped with resource centers, and the teachers followed professional trainings on inclusive education. Local and central psycho-pedagogical assistance services were created, mechanisms for financing inclusive education were implemented.

Currently, the Government of the Republic of Moldova, in close collaboration with civil society organizations and with the support of UNICEF, is finalizing a new Inclusive Education Program, 2022-2030. This Program will focus on the modernization of psycho-pedagogical assistance services, on

application of inclusive education approaches not only in general education, but also in technical and higher vocational education. It is planned to develop integrated service packages for groups of children with hearing, visual, intellectual impairments, and autism spectrum disorders. Measures will also be taken for closer coordination and collaboration between the education and other line ministries ensuring observance of all children rights, ensuring gender equality, and excluding discrimination.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of the Republic of Moldova has implemented several measures aimed at minimizing the negative effects on education. Regulations have been elaborated on the functioning of educational institutions in conditions of health crisis, efforts have been made to ensure all institutions with materials to reduce the process of spreading the disease, trainings of teaching and administrative staff have been carried out. In order to reduce the digital exclusion in the case of online learning, students and families in difficulty were provided with digital equipment and Internet access.

In the post-pandemic period, the Government plans to carry out comprehensive studies of the impact that the pandemic has had on learning and, based on them, to implement measures to recover learning losses, which would take into account the needs of each student.

### **3.1.3. Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development**

Starting with 2018, new curricula are implemented in the educational system of the Republic of Moldova. The curricular modernizations are made at all levels of the education system: primary, general secondary, technical professional and higher. The new curricula are focused on the development and acquisition of competences and pay special attention to ensuring interdisciplinarity, focusing on learners' individual needs and inclusion.

Based on lessons learned in the process of implementing the new curricula and the changes taking place at national, regional, and global level, the Ministry of Education and Research will continue the curricular modernization by expanding education for human rights, environmental protection, active democratic citizenship. In the process of implementing the new pedagogies, the emphasis will be placed on constructivist learning, on active learning methods.

### **3.1.4. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession**

In the Republic of Moldova, like other countries with a similar historical path, in the case of human resources in education, there are several disparities: gender, age, rural-urban residence. Unfortunately, for many young people, the profession of pedagogue is no longer an attractive one. Psychological, economic, and epidemiological pressures, including the emergence of new requirements for the level of professional training of teachers, lead to an increase in the number of people who abandon the profession of pedagogue.

To attract young people into the system and to increase the motivation of teachers to continue working in the educational system, it is planned to improve the quality of initial and continuous training programs, to increase the attractiveness and prestige of the teaching profession by re-valuing it from a social and financial point of view, by extending the insertion mentoring and professional support throughout the teaching career. Measures will be taken to develop the guidance system for the teaching career by stimulating the academic performance of pupils and students in pedagogical institutions. The Government also proposes the development and implementation of an efficient system of management of the teacher's performance from the perspective of promoting innovations, excellence in teaching, meritocracy.

### **3.1.5. Digital learning and transformation**

In the Republic of Moldova, digital education is taught as a compulsory module in primary education. In general education, computer science is taught as a compulsory subject. In technical and higher vocational education, information and communication technology is compulsory studied. In recent years, the Republic of Moldova has made significant progress in equipping educational institutions with means of information and communication technologies. Unfortunately, however, there is still a certain digital inequality in the country, the educational institutions from the deprived localities not being able to ensure universal access to the digital means for learning. There are also certain gaps in the implementation of digital pedagogy methodologies.

To ensure digital transformation of the education sector, the Government of the Republic of Moldova envisages increasing the level of endowment of educational institutions, offering computers and Internet packages to disadvantaged families, implementing assistive digital technologies, reconceptualizing training programs in the field of information and information technology.

Currently, the e-Transformation Strategy is being developed, a component of which relates to the digital literacy of population.

### **3.1.6. Financing of education**

In the period of 2016-2020, the share of public expenditure on education in GDP increased from 5.3% to 6.1%, with a decrease to 5.5% in 2021.

The share of public expenditures related to education in the total expenditures of the National Public Budget has experienced fluctuations for the same period: after an increase from 17.7% recorded in 2016 to 18.4% in 2019, the value of this indicator, under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, decreased in 2020 to 17.2%, reaching 16.3% in 2021.

The increase in the share of public expenditures for education in GDP, compared to the decrease of their share in the total expenditures of the national public budget, is explained by the much sharper reduction of the GDP, compared to the decrease in the expenditures of the national public budget in the same time interval.

Although in absolute size, the public expenditures related to education have steadily increased (from 8.558 million lei in 2016 to 13.398 million mdl in 2021), however, the investments made in recent years have failed to cover the needs of the sector that aims to prepare a competitive workforce for a global economy.

Starting from the existing situation, macroeconomic forecasts and demographic trends in the country, the Government of the Republic of Moldova expects that, in addition to the increases to the Consumer Price Index, will ensure an increase in specific expenditures per educable (child, pupil, student) by 4% in 2022-2024 and by 10% in 2025-2030.

## **3.2. Main outcomes of the national consultations**

The recommendations and proposals made by the participants during the national consultations are grouped according to the main components of the consultations.

### **3.2.1. Recovery from Covid-19 disruption**

- Ensure access to health education of children and young people specifically on psycho-

emotional resilience, sex education and the development of life skills, especially of children from vulnerable families, children at risk and those with special needs.

- In-service teacher training for organizing online learning and building resilience skills for students
- Implementation of post-pandemic recovery measures: additional catch-up classes lessons for children who have learning losses; support for teachers involved in the recovery activities.
- Capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the new learning environments, resources, and active/ interactive teaching technologies, aimed at acquiring new knowledge and experiences and increasing resilience to the challenges of the contemporary world (global warming, crises, pandemics, military conflicts).

### **3.2.2. Transformation of education**

#### *3.2.2.1. Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools*

- Reorganization of the psycho-pedagogical assistance service.
- Diversification of individualized educational pathways for people with SEN, from primary education to higher education.
- Expansion of inclusive education to early childhood education institutions.
- Expansion of inclusive education to technical and higher vocational education.
- Development, standardization, costification of integrated service packages for groups of children with hearing, sight, intellectual impairments, and autism spectrum disorders.
- Development and implementation of support mechanisms for out-of-school children and for pupils at high risk of dropping out of school.
- Insurance of cross-sectoral collaboration and cooperation for the development of inclusive education.
- Strengthen partnerships between family, local authorities, and educational institutions through development of programmes for family and parenting education.
- Promotion of partnerships between educational institutions and youth-friendly health centers, youth centers.

#### *3.2.2.2. Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development*

- Design of the State Order based on periodical analyses of the labor market, employability of graduates, as well as based on national development strategies and directions.
- Reconceptualization and diversification of educational offers in the light of current and future labour market demands.
- Development of the career guidance system from the perspective of harmonizing supply and demand.
- Development of dual education for technical and higher vocational education.
- Promoting partnerships between technical vocational education institutions, higher education institutions, continuing education institutions, adult education and economic

agents as a factor for improving the quality of studies and the employability of graduates.

- Increasing the relevance of the curricular offer from the perspective of key competences, and professional ones by continuously reviewing the curricular policy documents. Designing and developing the curriculum from the intra-, inter- and transdisciplinary perspective: curricula, curricula by subjects, textbooks, methodological guides, etc.
- Ensuring social, cultural, economic, psychological and pedagogical conditions for forming the personality of the student from the perspective of education for diversity, globalization and sustainable development.

#### *3.2.2.3. Digital learning and transformation*

- Creating new contexts and favorable environments through the interconnection of didactic and information technologies.
- Providing educational institutions with equipment and program products, but also with information and communication technologies.
- Teacher training from the perspective of the effective use of digital tools.
- Implementation of management information systems at all levels of the educational system.
- Harnessing the potential of digital technologies/tools to increase the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Developing and implementing digital monitoring and evaluation tools to streamline the educational system, improve the service provision, simplify documentation and reporting procedures.
- Digitization of the system of recognition of learning in different contexts to promote educational progress, career management, lifelong learning, academic mobility.
- Unification of informational systems for educational management starting with the class / group, institution, district / municipality, educational system.
- Global update of initiatives to ensure each student with a portable computer (Laptop / Notebook / Tablet PC) connected to the Internet.
- Creating global repositories of teaching resources accessible to all, at least for compulsory education.

#### *3.2.2.4. Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession*

- Development and implementation of programs for the promotion and motivation of young people for the teaching, scientific-didactic, research career.
- Correlation of the State Order for the training of teachers with the needs of the educational system.
- Improving initial vocational training and ensuring the quality of teacher training programs according to quality standards.
- Increasing the attractiveness and prestige of the teaching profession by revalorizing it from a social and financial point of view and expanding the insertion and professional support programs throughout the career.



- Restructuring the system and reconceptualizing the continuous professional training of the teaching, scientific-didactic and managerial staff.
- Developing the guidance system in the teaching career by stimulating the academic performance of pupils / students from institutions with pedagogical profile.
- Development and implementation of an efficient system of performance management in the teaching career from the perspective of promoting innovations, excellence in teaching, meritocracy.

### **3.2.3. Review of national education targets and benchmarks**

Based on the impact assessment of the implementation of the "Education 2030" Strategy and in accordance with the commitments of the Republic of Moldova on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the Government, in close collaboration with civil society organizations and other actors, developed the National Sustainable Development Goals. These goals contain new holds for the education sector. These targets can be consulted on the official website of [the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova](#).

The attendees of the consultations drew attention that some of these targets are too ambitious, which will require the restriction of the network of educational institutions and the extension of their academic, administrative, and financial autonomy.

### **3.2.4. Ensuring sustainable public financing**

To ensure sustainable financing of the education sector, the participants of national consultations proposed:

- Improvement of the education financing system based on the development of the financing model per child / pupil / student and on the basis of performance indicators.
- Adjustment of the funding norms per child / pupil / student to the consumer price index and the needs for the modernization of the educational institutions.
- Streamlining the activity of institutions with control attributions on use of financial means in education at the level of educational system / educational level / professional training / educational cycle.
- Development and correlation of modern tools, including digital ones for monitoring and evaluation aimed at providing data for identification of solutions to improve financial management.