MACRO
2019

TACKLING INEQUALITIES:
A FUNDAMENTAL PRECONDITION
FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, 7TH EDITION
NOVEMBER 7, 2019

Chișinău,
Republic of Moldova
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Acronym for “Moldova: Assessing Country Risks and Opportunities”, MACRO is an annual high-level event, bringing together high officials, political decision-makers and experts in order to discuss innovative ideas to support the economic modernisation and development of the Republic of Moldova.

MACRO conference offers a broad platform to discuss the development of public policies and prioritisation of sectors that need development assistance. In particular, this year’s edition aims at raising awareness among decision-makers, experts and the donor community about the importance of mitigating economic and social inequalities and ensuring a fair and inclusive society.

The 2019 State of the Country Report edition will be launched during the conference. It analyses the impact of social-economic inequalities on the state of the country and proposes a set of strategic measures that will improve income convergence and provide support to vulnerable groups of people.
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<tr>
<td>09:00</td>
<td>Participants’ registration, welcome coffee</td>
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<td>09:30</td>
<td>Welcoming remarks on behalf of the organisers</td>
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<td>Stephan MEUSER, Resident Representative, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Romania and Republic of Moldova</td>
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<td>09:40</td>
<td>State of the Country Report 2019 key findings and messages</td>
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<td>Adrian LUPUSOR, Executive Director, “Expert-Grup” Independent Think-Tank</td>
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<td>09:50</td>
<td><strong>PANEL 1: Economic growth and income inequality</strong></td>
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<td>Moderator: Ana POPA, Programme Director, “Expert-Grup” Independent Think-Tank</td>
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**Presentation:**

Sorin HADĂRCĂ, Managing partner, Centre for Policy Analysis and Alternative Solutions (CAPSA)
- Why is it important that the economic growth is not only positive, but also equitably distributed among the households and companies?
- How has the economic growth been distributed in recent years? Who were the winners and losers?
- Has the revenue distribution evolved in recent years? What are the perspectives/ expectations for the nearest future?

**Speakers:**

Vadim BRĂNZAN, Minister of Economy and Infrastructure of the Republic of Moldova
- What are the macroeconomic forecasts of the Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure?
- How is the economic growth going to be distributed in the society (between the rich and the poor; between large and small sized companies etc.)?
- What are the policies promoted by the Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure for the equitable distribution of the benefits of economic growth?

Natalia GAVRILITĂ, Minister of Finance of the Republic of Moldova
- How efficient were the income redistribution policies of the recent years, in particular the 2018 tax reform?
- What policies is the Ministry of Finance planning in order to fairly redistribute the income and mitigate income inequalities?

Anna AKHALKATSİ, World Bank Country Manager in Moldova
- How can the development partners contribute to a balanced and sustainable economic growth? What are the actions planned by the World Bank in this regard?

Sergiu GAIBU, Programme Director, “Expert-Grup” Independent Think-Tank
- How fair are the fiscal policies on the income redistribution in the Republic of Moldova?
- How can equity and equal opportunities be ensured by means of tax policies?

Cristina RAŢ, Professor of sociology, University Babeş-Bolyai, Cluj, Romania
- How do inequality, social policy, and economic development interconnect and condition each other?
- How is social justice different from charity? Promises and limits of the European Union’s approach.
11:50  Lunch and networking

12:20  PANEL 2: Social implications of economic inequalities

Moderator: Vasile BOTNARU, Journalist, Director of the Radio Free Europe Chişinău

Presentation:

Iurie MORCOTÎLO, Economist, “Expert-Grup” Independent Think-Tank
- Analysis of inequalities beyond revenues. How have inequalities in the Republic of Moldova evolved recently?
- What are the social implications of the constantly growing inequalities?

Speakers:

Ala NEMERENCO, Minister of Health, Labour and Social Protection
- What are the social protection instruments employed by the Government to alleviate inequalities and ensure social inclusion?

Simon SPRINGETT, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in the Republic of Moldova
- How can the development partners contribute to increasing social inclusion in Moldova?
- What activities do the UN agencies plan in this regard?

Alexei BUZU, Executive Director, “Partnership for Development” Centre
- Which are the vulnerable groups most affected by inequalities?
- What policies are necessary in order to reduce inequalities? How to improve the living conditions of the poor and how to alleviate the gender and urban/rural gaps in order to reduce inequality?

Alfred PFALLER, Sociologist, ex-FES Representative in Romania and the Republic of Moldova
- What are the best practices in ensuring social inclusion in the Western, Central and Eastern European countries?

14:20  Final remarks

Adrian LUPUŞOR, Executive Director, “Expert-Grup” Independent Think-Tank

Ana MIHAILOV, Programme Coordinator, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Moldova

14:35  Reception
Moderator: Ana POPA, Programme Director, “Expert-Grup” Independent Think-Tank

Sorin Hadârcă is an expert in public policy and strategic planning, with extensive experience in macroeconomics and finance. He started his career at the National Bank of Moldova, where he worked until 2003, as director of the Department of Foreign Exchange and Foreign Affairs. He received his masters degree in business administration at Instituto de Empresa of Madrid, Spain. After graduation, he continued his professional activity as a consultant in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, where he coordinated the implementation of country programs with the International Monetary Fund. During 2009-2012, he successfully implemented the project on building capacities in public policy management, where he coordinated the development of several strategic planning documents, including “Rethink Moldova” and the National Development Strategy "Moldova 2020". In 2013, Sorin Hadarca was hired as an international expert by Tony Blair Associates to support reform initiatives in Kazakhstan. Later, he had the opportunity to participate in the development of country strategies for the governments of Georgia and Kosovo. As a promoter of evidence-based policymaking, between 2015 and 2017 Sorin Hadarca had implemented a large-scale project in Bangladesh, as part of a global initiative funded by the UK Department for International Development. After returning to the country, Sorin Hadarca co-founded the Center for Policy Analysis and Alternative Solutions (CAPSA), a company specialized in policy management, strategic planning, training, monitoring and evaluation.
Vadim Brînzan has over 15 years of experience in banking and investment in the US, Europe, Asia and North America. He started his career at PriceWaterhouseCoopers as a Senior Consultant, working in Moscow, Kiev and Chisinau offices from 1994 to 1999. For the next seven years, he had led the Global Principal Investments and Structured Finance of Merrill Lynch and managed an investment portfolio of over USD 5 billion in public and private companies.

Between 2007 and 2014, Vadim Brînzan was the Managing Partner of HOV Capital - a private equity fund where he managed the fund’s investments of a number of companies with more than 10,000 employees in the USA, United Kingdom and Asia. Since 2014 he has been the founder and managing partner of the investment company Logos Advisors based in the United States of America.

In June 2019, he was appointed Minister of Economy and Infrastructure and established the following four priority areas: uncovering conspiracies, demonopolisation, privatisation and development.

Natalia Gavriliţă is the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Moldova, with an extensive experience in the field, working in a number of public, including managerial, positions. She excelled by promoting and carrying out a number of high-impact strategic reforms.

During the last four years, Natalia Gavriliţă was General Director of the Global Innovation Fund in the UK, being responsible for selecting, sourcing, contracting and managing the investments in innovations. During the same period, she managed a portfolio of 11 innovations, with a total budget of approximately USD 13.5 million.

Natalia Gavriliţă worked in countries such as: Bangladesh, Belgium, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Nigeria, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), Russian Federation, South Africa, Tajikistan, United Kingdom, USA, and Zambia.

She studied International Law at the Moldovan State University. Subsequently, she obtained a Masters’ degree in Public Policy at Harvard University, USA.
Anna Akhalkatsi is the World Bank Country Manager for Moldova based in Chisinau. She oversees the World Bank’s program in the country and leads policy dialogue with government counterparts, civil society and other partners.

Anna joined the World Bank in 1999 as an economist in Tbilisi, Georgia. She then became IFC’s country representative for Georgia before moving to Washington DC where she worked on strategy and private sector development, small business finance and firm capability, value chains and agribusiness issues. Her most recent assignment was the Regional Lead for IFC’s Cross-Cutting Advisory in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Before joining the World Bank Group, Anna worked at the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Parliament of Georgia, and did private sector consulting. She is an alumni of the Central Eurasia Leadership Academy and IFC’s Global Business Leadership Program.

Anna has co-authored a number of IFC publications on a range of private sector development issues, including “Business Linkages: Lessons, Opportunities and Challenges” and “Working with Smallholders: Smallholder Engagement Handbook”.

Anna Akhalkatsi holds an MA in Economic Policy Management from the University of Clermont-Ferrand, France, and in Human Geography from the Tbilisi State University, Georgia. She is a graduate of the Applied Market Economics course at the Joint Vienna Institute, Austria.
Sergiu Gaibu is the “Financial and Banking Sector” Program Director at the Independent Think-Tank "Expert-Grup", where he develops macroeconomic and sectoral researches and analyses, in particular for the financial sector, business environment, investment attraction and income redistribution in the economy.

Sergiu Gaibu started his professional work in 1996 and gained 23 years of experience, of which 12 years in the banking system, participating actively in the reorganisation of "Mobiasbanca-Societe Generale" and "BCR Chisinau" for the alignment of commercial banks to the group standards of transnational financial companies, implementation of operational models, management of infrastructure projects and implementation of information systems.

He also worked in areas such as business consulting, organisational restructuring, process optimisation, macroeconomic and financial-monetary analysis, economic and social development projects.

He is a promoter of free and transparent market economy, excellence in process organisation, efficient and sustainable policies for the development of the company. He studied international economic relations at ASEM, Chisinau.

Cristina Raț is a lecturer at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work of the Babeș-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca, teaching courses on Social stratification and mobility, Social Policies and Social inequalities and the critical analysis of public policies. She holds a PhD – “The social segregation of the poor in Romania during the transition period at the same university” (2008). Her research is focused on the problems of inequality and social marginalization in relation with redistributive social policies. She took part in national research grants such as “The spacialization and rascalization of social exclusion” (2013-2015), and collaborated with the World Bank (2009), the UNDP (2012), and the European Commission (2018).
Moderator: Vasile BOTNARU, Journalist, Director of the Radio Free Europe Chișinău

Iurie Morcotîlo has been an economist at “Expert-Grup” Independent Think-Tank since 2014. He has published a number of analyses and researches on public finances, labour market, social-economic inequalities. Throughout his career he has provided support to local and central authorities in the decision-making process, as well as technical support to the Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, and Ministry of Finance. He has cooperated with several international organisations, such as: ILO, UNICEF, UNPF and UNDP.

He has an academic background in Economics. He graduated from the Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, department of International Economic Relations and completed his post-graduate studies at the National University of Research - School of Economics, Moscow, Russia.

Ala Nemerenco is a specialised doctor, currently the Minister of Health, Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova. Prior to her appointment as Minister, she worked as an international health system expert for a number of leading consulting companies in Switzerland, the Tropical and Public Health Institute, in France, Conseil Santé, and in Germany, GFA Consulting Group GmbH, but also for international organisations such as the World Health Organization, the Swiss Agency for Development, the World Bank, where she provided expertise for reforming the health systems in Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Georgia. She also worked as a university lecturer at the "Nicolae Testemițanu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy. During the last 4 years (2015-2919) she was a Municipal Councilor at Chisinau Municipal Council and Chair of the Committee for Social Protection, Health, Culture, Education, Mass-Media and Inter-Ethnic Relations.

In 2016, Ala Nemerenco was hired by the Bucharest Office of the World Bank as personal advisor to the Romanian Minister of Health.

During 2012-2015, she worked for the World Health Organization, coordinating an EU project on health workforce and the migration of health workers.
Simon SPRINGETT brings 25 years of international experience in humanitarian and development work. Prior to assuming his duties as the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Moldova, Mr. Springett was the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Director for Response Operations for the UK Department for International Development’s Humanitarian and Stabilisation Operations Team. Mr. Springett served for five years as the United Nations Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative, UNFPA Representative, and the UN Designated Official in both The Republic of Mauritius and The Republic of Seychelles (2012-2017). Earlier in his career he held several key management positions within the international charity confederation Oxfam and concurrently sat as Trustee or Director for several international non-profit organizations.

Mr. Springett has worked extensively across Africa, East Asia, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Southeastern Europe. Mr. Springett holds a Master’s degree (MSc) in Development Practice (Humanitarian Protection) from Oxford Brookes University (United Kingdom), a Bachelor’s degree in Geology from The College of Wooster (USA), and is a member of the UK Royal College of Defense Studies (2007). Mr. Springett is a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Humanitarian Coordination Pool.

Alexei Buzu is the Executive Director of the “Partnership for Development” Centre, an organisation that aims to reduce inequalities and promote gender equality in Moldova. Alexei has extensive experience in analysing policies related to gender equality and inclusion. He has experience in a wide range of sectors, such as: healthcare, labour market, water supply and sewerage, youth, migration, social assistance as well as demography, trade and education.

Alexei and his colleagues provide support to non-governmental organisations in analysing public policies from the equality and inclusion perspectives. In 2015, Alexei was one of the authors who developed the methodology for Youth Gap Index – an indicator that measured for the first time inequalities among young people in Moldova, and in 2016 he developed a methodology for integrating the active aging perspective into public policies.

Alexei is one of the authors of the “Unequal Moldova” study – the most comprehensive analysis of the most relevant inequalities in Moldova.
Alfred Pfaller is currently a free-lance political consultant. He has previously worked with Friedrich Ebert Foundation, which he represented in Romania and the Republic of Moldova from 2004 to 2007. For 10 years he was editor-in-chief of the quarterly journal „International Politics and Society”. He is author of numerous publications on social inclusion and income distribution, on the political economy of democracy, on issues of globalization, on economic development, on the service economy and other subjects. He studied Sociology and Economics and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh (USA).
The political transition following the parliamentary elections in 2019 produced a major change of power that created preconditions for boosting the reforms’ agenda, but the fundamental weaknesses of the state of the country were not resolved yet.

The takeover of power by the multi-geopolitical opposition, which entered into a temporary coalition based on joint pro-reform commitments, put an end to the oligarchic governance under the umbrella of the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM). Most of the reforms were initiated by the parliamentary majority formed of the Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM) and the ACUM bloc aimed at reviewing and remediating the governance shortcomings of the previous governments, focusing primarily on policies initiated by the PDM. The depoliticization of institutions, judicial reform, and better use of public money and property are the major reform landmarks, equally appreciated by public and external partners (International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, European Union). However, the PSRM-ACUM government, has hesitated repeatedly to carry out real depoliticization, and the initiated de-oligarchizing is strongly focused on the system previously led by Vladimir Plahotniuc, rather than on establishing a mechanism to prevent and fight the phenomenon of the ‘captured state’ by de-oligarchizing political power in a systemic and permanent manner.

The revival of the internal democratic process has resuscitated, as a ‘chain reaction’, foreign policy with both the West and the East.

The rapid unfreezing of European Union (EU) budget support has considerably fostered the dialogue with the EU institutions. Thanks to the return to a proportional voting system, more rigorous investigation of the “billion dollar theft” from the banking system, the prioritization of judicial reform and the fight against political corruption etc., the PSRM-ACUM coalition has quickly gained robust credibility among external partners. At the same time, there is a firm stance towards the importance of restoring the relationship with Russia, mainly in commerce, the energy sector, and in relation to the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict. The Socialists insist on the idea of a “balanced foreign policy”, while the ACUM bloc shows no resistance to this. Intelligent, i.e. flexible, conditionality needs to be strictly applied to the governing parties, to discourage deviation from their commitments. At the same time, rebuilding the relationship with Russia must be free of any elements that might reduce Moldovan security, in particular by encouraging “hybrid” activities in the informational space or with regard to the Transnistrian conflict resolution, carried out by the Russian authorities in the region.

On the economic side, Gross domestic product (GDP) annual growth rates have stabilized at around 4 per cent, without any significant structural changes in the national economy.

Although volatility has decreased, this growth plateauing presents some significant risks. First, this level of GDP growth is insufficient to achieve convergence with Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, such a rate will push back convergence with these countries in terms of GDP per capita by several decades. At the same time, such a slow rate of growth does not allow for a qualitative leap towards a new model of economic development. Thus, the growth paradigm remains the same: household consumption accounts for over 80 per cent of GDP and depends strongly on remittances. Such a model can hardly survive in the long run, and the inability to accelerate and diversify the economy means that the population will continue to suffer low standards of living. The economic growth above 5% in 2019 is likely to be temporary, being fuelled by the low comparison base and the effects of the tax cuts from 2018 that will rapidly fade away.

Some marginal improvements in personal income and welfare have been recorded.

Real disposable personal income is on an upward trend. Over the past decade, although with periods of stagnation and decline, the personal income grew by about 3 times in nominal terms, representing a 30% growth in real terms. This growth was also reflected in people’s perceptions of their standard of living. The share of those reporting a ‘bad or very bad’ standard of living has fallen to an historical low — 10 per cent of all households. The majority (75 per cent) believe they have a ‘satisfactory’ standard of living. Despite these positive trends, per capita income and consumption in the Republic of Moldova remain at only 40 per cent of the average in Central and Eastern Europe, without showing signs of rapid convergence. Further income growth, or accelerating the convergence with such countries, is restricted by the income structure in the Republic of Moldova. An increasing number of Moldovan households receive their main income from activities that are not linked directly to the performance of the national economy and labour productivity. In 2017, over 60 per cent of households were receiving either pensions or remittances from abroad as their income.
Thus, the demographic and migration limitations create significant challenges for the sustainable and rapid growth of income for a large part of the population.

At the same time, there is a worrying level of income inequality, given the sizeable informal economy and narrow tax base that undermine the capacity of the social protection system to address this problem.

About 40 per cent of total disposable income is held by quintile V (the richest category) of the population, with the Gini coefficient being estimated at a worrying level of 0.35 points. People working in agricultural are the most vulnerable: more than half of them are part of quintiles I and II (the lowest income), revealing issues with income inequality. These trends indicate that farming households are marginalized from the income growth and convergence process. Only those who have given up farming have joined this process and managed to exit the ‘poverty trap’. However, over the last few years, the level of inequality has been decreasing. More active involvement of low-income groups in migration is a factor that has narrowed inequalities. The share of remittances in the income of these households is now the same as in the high-income groups. The structural change in the social and economic status of households has been another factor that has contributed to income convergence. The number of farmers and agricultural employees has decreased, where the concentration of the poor is higher than 50 per cent of households with this status. Despite this dynamic, the level of inequality remains a major concern, poses risks to the state of the country, and calls for economic and tax policies adapted to this challenge. While the level of inequality compares well with other countries in the region, the low capacity of the social protection system to address inequality is an issue going forward. The reasons are mainly related to high fiscal imbalances, coupled with profligate fiscal and budgetary policy before the Parliamentary elections in 2018, which limits the policy space for Government in fighting inequalities with fiscal and budgetary tools. In addition, the demographic aging process could further hinder inequality narrowing efforts, while in the medium and long-term, these processes could further aggravate inequalities due to the diminishing share of the economically active population and the increasing share of pensioners.

A major challenge for the state of the country and the economic development is related to the deprivation of the main factors that have until recently underpinned economic growth and attracted investments – remittances and cheap labour.

Remittances are becoming more volatile and uncertain, and tend to shrink in the long-run, and the main factor that has attracted (the low level of) investment so far – cheap labour – is undermined by emigration, an inefficient education system, and wage growth outstripping productivity. As a result, the country’s ability to generate added value is diminishing, as revealed by the slowdown in economic growth in recent years, which is expected to worsen in the future. The seriousness of the situation is also revealed by decreasing labour productivity and the stagnation of the employment rate (both being the lowest in Europe), with increasing informal employment. Thus, if Moldova does not identify sustainable sources of value added investment and exports in the coming years, the economy will deplete its ability to create jobs, income for the population and revenue for the public budget, with economic growth tendency to become lower and less certain.

The slowdown in economic growth becomes even more problematic against the backdrop of a broadening current account deficit, which reveals structural weaknesses in competitiveness.

This imbalance is mainly caused by the increasing gap between exports and imports, which ultimately points on competitiveness issues in the Moldovan economy and fuels risks for the long-term macroeconomic stability. It is not the deficit per se that is problematic, but rather the fact that it is determined by imports of energy products, consumption and industrial inputs, and not by machinery, equipment and know-how, which would boost exports in the long-run and balance the current account. In addition, with stagnating foreign investment and the expected decline in remittances, financing the current account deficit will become an increasingly acute problem, putting pressure on the national currency and foreign debt. In this context, enhancing the competitiveness of the national economy must be the fundamental priority for Government.

Competitiveness enhancement should be ensured on three interdependent areas: (i) the labour market; (ii) capital and investment markets; and, (iii) foreign markets for exports.

Labour-force competitiveness must be enhanced by improving its quality and relevance, rather than by decrea-
ing labour costs. In this regard, the educational system needs to be reformed so that, on the one hand, it is more flexible and able to respond to the economy’s needs; and, on the other hand, instils a spirit of entrepreneurship, initiative and innovation. These efforts should be also encouraged by tax and economic policy. This will allow the harnessing of people’s potential, especially of the younger generation, and will make Moldova more attractive for talent – a fundamental condition for strengthening the state of the country and its long-term competitiveness. At the same time, this should be the main sustainable factor in terms of increasing the country’s competitiveness at the level of the capital and investment market. Fostering a high-skilled labour force, initiative, and openness to innovation and know-how should be the main factors behind the country’s investment attractiveness and must be supported by pro-business regulation, a free market economy, transparent and non-corrupt institutions, and a rule of law that protects private property rights. This will boost competitiveness at the level of foreign markets for exports, by augmenting the technological sophistication of exports, diversifying them in terms of products/services and sales markets, and adding more value for the economy and the country as a whole.

While policies aimed at competitiveness enhancement should be intense and active, these should not compromise on sustainable development objectives related to environment protection, the integrity of investments (transparency), employees’ security and human rights in general.

Given scarce investment, Moldovan governments have traditionally prioritized pro-business policies and marginalized other important objectives related to sustainable development. As a result of this narrow approach to economic policies, Moldova is still lacking investment, while having weak frameworks and institutions dealing with environment protection, employees’ rights and money laundering. The government should not attract investment at all costs (e.g. by granting citizenship to investors without proper screening, by capital and tax amnesties, by weakening the environment and labour protection institutions of control and enforcement). Instead, Moldova needs a balanced economic policy that would stimulate through all possible means (e.g. fiscal, regulatory, financial tools) investments that contribute to the sustainable long-term development of the country. Such investments would meet the following 5 criteria: (i) generate high-value added; (ii) are export-oriented; (iii) create decent jobs; (iv) implement green technologies and contribute to decoupling of economic activity from the use of natural resources; and, (v) comply with the highest standards of transparency and integrity of ownership. The government should deploy a wide range of investment attraction tools for investments meeting all of the above-mentioned criteria.

All in all, the state of the country can be fostered by empowering three key elements: (i) government; (ii) private sector; and (iii) households.

In a nutshell, the current state of Moldova is undermined by highly corrupt, inefficient and weak public institutions, which in turn represent the main barriers for doing business and, hence, lead to a fragile private sector, undermining the tax base, employment and the wellbeing of the population. It forms a vicious circle, because weak private sector and high poverty undermine further the public institutions by narrowing the tax base and fueling corruption. In order to turn this vicious circle into a virtuous one, Moldova needs a complex and well-coordinated set of reforms that should be anchored in a well-defined national development strategy for the next 10 years. Policies should target the mentioned three elements that define the state of the country: (i) the government has to become more accountable and efficient, by increasing the transparency of public institutions, fostering the integrity framework, reforming the justice system and making the public sector attractive for talented professionals; (ii) the private sector should be supported by implementing balanced pro-business fiscal and economic policies (without undermining the sustainable development objectives mentioned above), providing loan guarantees for SMEs and start-ups that implement innovations, generate added value and jobs, developing business infrastructure for start-ups and easing the bureaucratic procedures (e.g. digitalization, tacit approval mechanisms, one stop shops etc.); (iii) households should be empowered by reforming the educational and health systems – top sectors of systemic and strategic importance where reforms stagnated over the last years and which determine the long-term development of the country. Hence, the structure of this edition of the state of the country report is centred around these three key elements.
WHO WE ARE

Expert-Grup is a leading think-tank/not-for-profit organization specialized in economic and policy research and trainings. As an independent organization, Expert-Grup reflects the ideals of the young intellectuals from Moldova who have created the institution with the purpose of contributing to the country's development. We are positioning ourselves as politically and ideologically neutral organization and we do not represent any economic, corporate and political interests.

Our mission is to promote public interest and develop efficient and innovative solutions for the sustainable development of Moldova.

In order to accomplish this noble goal, Expert-Grup offers an excellent, creative and institutional environment to promote free and non-trivial thinking, values which allows the organization to be a leader in providing unbiased economic research, consultancy and trainings.

OUR ACTIVITIES

Our core activities are economic analysis and forecasts, as well as research and consultancy in public policies. We offer a wide range of analytical products and services, helping our beneficiaries to take decisions that will set Moldova to a sustainable development path. Our key competence lies in the ability to provide professional, high-quality and objective research and professional consultancy in such broad fields as:

- Investment environment
- Macroeconomic analyses and forecasts
- Financial stability
- Banking sector
- Political economy
- Public finance
- Human development and poverty reduction
- Foreign trade
- Financial markets
- Economy of European integration
- Economic analysis by sectors
- Regional and local economic development
- Energy and economy of environment
- Labour market and consumer behaviour

PARTNERS AND DONORS

In the period 2006-2019 the EXPERT-GRUP has implemented more than 100 research and advocacy projects in different areas related to economic and policy research. More than 100 associated and non-associated experts from Moldova and other countries were involved in these projects. We have worked with such donors as Moldova Soros Foundation, Eastern European Foundation, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Balkan Trust for Democracy, Black Sea Trust, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, UNDP Moldova, UNICEF, European Commission, Council of Europe, Open Society Foundation, Swiss Agency for International Cooperation, United Kingdom Department for International Development, World Bank, OECD, SIDA, Dutch Embassy in Bucharest and the European Union.
WHO WE ARE

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is a German political social democratic foundation which aims at promoting democracy, peace, international understanding and cooperation. FES fulfils its mandate in the spirit of social democracy and devotes itself to public debates finding social-democratic solutions to current and future issues of the society.

FES IN MOLDOVA

In the Republic of Moldova, FES aims at fostering European integration, democracy, peace and social justice through political dialogue, education and research. Our main areas of activity are the following:

DEMOCRATIZATION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Moldova faces the challenge of consolidating its democratic institutions and developing a democratic culture that brings the country fully in line with standards of the European Union. FES contributes to this process by promoting political participation in civil society organizations, political parties and local self-governing bodies. A particular focus of FES activities in this area is on empowering citizens in the regions. Citizens need to be empowered to be able to critically follow public debate, monitor political stakeholders, articulate their views, and act on behalf of their interests. Therefore FES has engaged activities to promote participatory democracy and an enhanced citizens’ civic and political culture on the local level.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Moldova is part of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership. FES supports the European Integration Process of the country. Through a series of instruments such as radio debates, news bulletins, policy papers, publications and conferences FES focuses on the main challenges related to the European Integration process, facilitating the access of the public to up-to-date and reliable information on the topic, improving the dialogue between the civil society and decision makers on the requirements for successful European Integration, and contributing to strengthening the European integration efforts of Moldovan authorities. Additionally, FES supports non-governmental organizations in contributing to a peaceful resolution of the Transnistrian conflict as a prerequisite for successful European Integration in the long-run.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

In this area the FES supports its partners in developing and implementing policies for a functioning market economy which is sustainable, socially balanced and able to address the needs of all citizens. Input and projects in the area focus on topics such as reforming social security systems, improving working conditions and labour market opportunities and fostering sustainable development. Additionally, FES runs programs which aim at promoting Social Democratic values.
TELL US YOUR OPINION

In order to improve your experience with the future editions of the MACRO conference, we invite you to fill in a brief opinion form, which can be accessed at the link next to the QR code.

Also, if you would like to express your opinion on the speeches held at the MACRO 2019 conference, to ask a question or to share the key messages of the event, please use the event’s hashtags both on Facebook and Twitter.

#macro2019  #tacklinginequalities

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Moldova

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