

SKILLS AND MIGRATION COUNTRY FICHE MOLDOVA

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PREFACE

The European Training Foundation's (ETF) Skills and Migration country fiche is intended as a first-entry evidence-based analysis of the main issues relating to the skills dimensions of migration. It is composed of three main conceptual blocks.

- It presents data, trends and challenges relating to the skills dimension of migration to provide an updated and structured state of play.
- It focuses on policy developments and practical experiences to reinforce migrants' skills. Policies and projects are analysed with reference to legal labour migration needs and migration and development issues. The aim of the analysis is to identify success factors and challenges to be addressed.
- It provides an overview of the main insights on the way forward in terms of policy and areas of intervention in the short to medium term.

The goal of the fiche is twofold. On the one hand, it aims to contribute to the broader policy dialogue on the skills dimensions of migration issues of specific countries with European Union (EU) institutions, Member States and international players. On the other hand, it serves as a reflection and communication tool in the policy dialogue conducted by the ETF and the national authorities in charge of human capital development. As such, the fiche will contribute to the policy analysis and policy-making support that the ETF provides to its partner countries in order to improve the employability of citizens via lifelong learning, including migration in this specific case.

The ETF fiches aim to cover the partner countries with whom circular and/or mobility schemes with EU countries can be established¹.

More in-depth country-specific or cross-country studies may be produced as a follow-up to the fiches' findings and recommendations and to support the needs expressed by EU institutions. Further follow-up actions to the fiche could take the form of specific ETF support actions to the EU or partner countries; in line with the ETF's mandate, this might include inputs to the programming of new initiatives, content monitoring or other specific actions to be agreed.

¹ In 2021, the fiches cover Georgia, Jordan, Lebanon, Moldova, Morocco, Tunisia and Ukraine.

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ANALYSIS

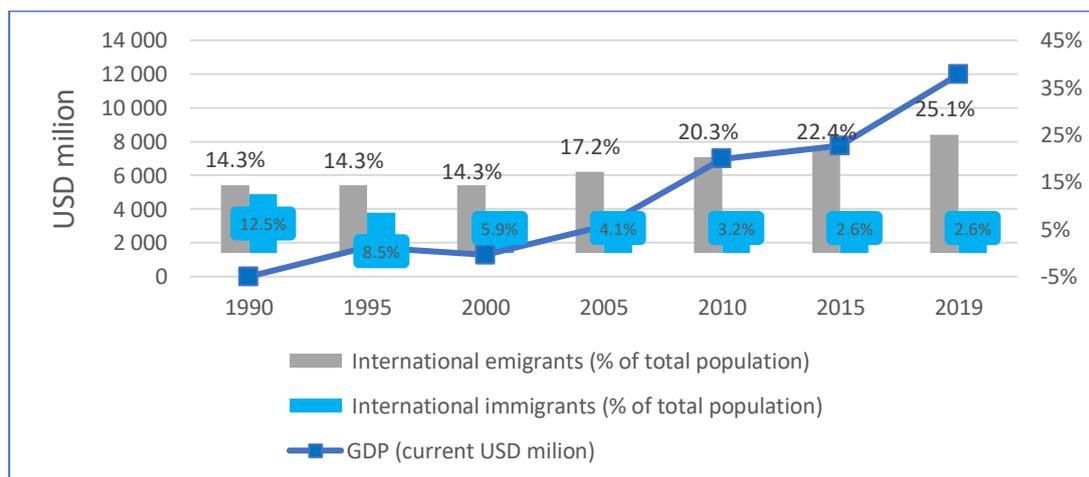
1. Skills and migration overview

Migration is probably the most significant socioeconomic trend for Moldova, a country with one of the highest total emigration rates in the world. Migration has a strong impact on several aspects of Moldovan society, including the population age structure, the economy, and skills availability.

As of 2020, Moldovan international migrants numbered more than 1 150 000, from a population of slightly more than 4 million people – 28.7% of the total population². Historical studies about the migration phenomenon in Moldova reveal a strong migration flow since 1990, accelerated since 2000 and again since 2015. Until then, the share of migrants in the population was high (14%) but stable. From 2000 to 2020 the number of migrants increased steadily, at a rate of around 100 000 people every five years (up to 248 000 in 2015–2020). Taking into account the parallel depopulation linked to low fertility rates, the share of international migrants increased by 2–3 % every five years (and 6.3% in the past five years), and the COVID-19 pandemic seems to have strengthened this trend. As shown in Figure 1, this phenomenon has continued regardless of the sustained economic growth achieved over the past 20 years, which has been even bigger in per capita terms.

As for immigration, Figure 1 shows that the number of immigrants has decreased steadily over the period 1990–2019, from well over 500 000 (12.5% of the population) to slightly over 100 000 (2.6%). In contrast, as a result of the population movements between the former republics of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the number of Moldovan citizens born abroad has increased during the period, reaching 8.9% of the total population (315 949 persons).

FIGURE 1. GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AND MIGRATION STOCKS (% OF TOTAL POPULATION), 1990–2019

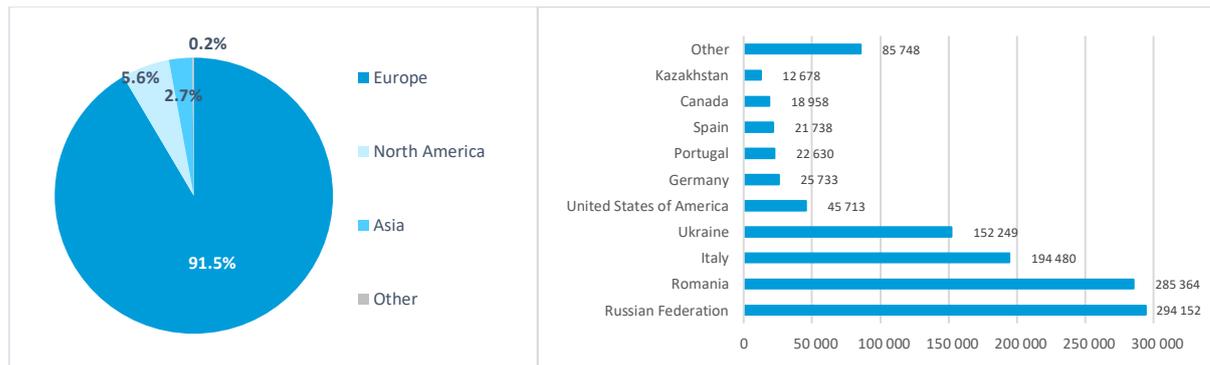


Source: UN DESA International Migrant Stock 2019, World Bank (World Development Indicators)

² Unless otherwise indicated, Annex I provides the sources of all the statistics in this section.

According to the Extended Migration Profile carried out in 2018, over the same period there has been a gradual trend of masculinisation of the migration force (from 64% men and 36% women in 2014 to 67.5% men and 32.5% women in 2018). Around 69% of migrants came from rural areas in 2018 and 78% were in the 15–44 age bracket (39% were 25–34 years old). In terms of destination countries, as shown in Figure 2, in 2020 four countries absorb more than 90% of Moldovan migration: Russia with almost 30% (48% for men), followed by Romania (with close cultural, language and historical ties to Moldova), Italy (35% of all migrant women) and Ukraine.

FIGURE 2. TOP 10 REGIONS AND COUNTRIES OF EMIGRATION, 2020



Source: UN DESA, International Migrant Stocks, 2020

The reasons for leaving are similar to those in other countries, with a strong net emigration profile (lack of job opportunities, very low salaries, prospects of a better future for children). In addition, Moldova possesses a unique combination of legal opportunities and informal connections that further facilitates migration. Over 1 million Moldovans have Romanian nationality, which allows them to work in other EU countries without restrictions, despite the fact that the visa liberalisation by the EU that Moldova was expecting after the signature of the Mobility Partnership in 2008 has not materialised. In any case, the intensity of past migration has given rise to a strong and well-connected diaspora network that makes migration easier. Given the impossibility of scaling down the population and skills drain, government policies have endeavoured to support the establishment of circular migration, trying to set up a policy framework in which migrants create development opportunities for Moldova through economic investments and an upskilled returning workforce.

According to the Extended Migration Profile, 86% of all migrants from Moldova in 2018 held a secondary-level education (36% of them a technical/vocational secondary degree, a remarkably high rate that is explained by the specificities of the education system in the former USSR, contrasting with the low rates in the EU's Southern Neighbourhood), while people with higher education accounted for 13% of migrants (with an increasing trend over the past few years reflecting the difficulties of finding rewarding employment opportunities in the country after graduation). An interesting figure is the number of Moldovan students abroad, totalling close to 15 000 (largely in Ukraine and Italy; see Annex I). There are no official data on migrants' qualifications. However, a study carried out in 2020 in six destination countries (IOM and UNDP, 2020) showed significant differences in the areas of training of men and women involved in labour migration: while around 25% of men had studied engineering and construction, among women the predominant fields of study were economics and finance, education, health and social care. Over 30% of men and little more than 25% of women have not studied specialised subjects. The same study also provides detailed information on the distribution of migrants for work purposes by education levels and destination countries. The construction sector offers attractive salaries in all destination countries, including for unskilled workers, and in particular for men.

This massive migration push has had two main socioeconomic effects. The first is the huge impact of remittances on economic growth and population living conditions, while the second is clearly negative in the form of an overall deterioration of human capital development (HCD) in the country (in terms of brain drain, ageing of the population structure and lower incentives to work).

In terms of direct economic impact, in 2020 remittances represented 16.3% of gross domestic product (GDP) (a total of USD 1.9 million), significantly contributing to keeping a large proportion of the population, mostly rural, over the poverty line. This percentage has halved since 2005 as a result of the strong economic growth during this period (see Annex I). However, a quarter of Moldovan households still receive remittances, and for half of these households remittances constitute more than 50% of their disposable income; 23.4% of households would fall below the poverty line if they did not receive remittances (IOM, 2020).

On the negative side, high emigration rates have had a direct impact on the population dynamics and age structure, in particular in rural areas, which suffer from higher dependence ratios and ageing, thus reinforcing the rural exodus to cities. Since 2014 Moldova has experienced a demographic regression, with mortality rates exceeding birth rates. But even more damaging is the impact of migration on the availability of specific occupation profiles, specifically in the health and education sectors. In 2019 there were 25.6 doctors and 65.3 health workers (doctors, nursing and midwifery personnel) per 10 000 inhabitants, which is well below the EU average (of 37 doctors and 130 health workers). In rural areas this situation is even worse, with an average of 5.6 doctors and 20.8 health workers per 10 000 inhabitants. Teachers and researchers are two other groups who are strongly attracted by migration opportunities. In the ILO study “The Impact of Migration on Teachers and Researchers in Moldova”, more than half of the teachers interviewed expressed their intention to leave (40.3% of respondents said they wanted to go abroad to work temporarily).

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit the Moldovan economy hard, largely due to the country's high dependency on migrant remittances. Unlike the situation in other countries, the steep fall in the flow of remittances experienced in Moldova in the second quarter of 2020 (a decrease of over 20%) was only very partially offset in the third and fourth quarters. The second possible direct impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on migration is the potential return of a massive number of migrants to Moldova and the impact on the national labour market. Up to 30% of migrants abroad indicated the intention to return, i.e., 255 000 persons, of whom 67% indicated the intention to return as soon as possible (170 000 persons). 31% of those planning to return (79 000 persons) indicated they intend to remain in Moldova for a longer period. As returning migrants in high numbers are bound to face challenges as they seek to reintegrate and establish new livelihoods, this will have a significant impact on unemployment, which can increase up to 8.5% (79 000 persons) by the end of 2020, compared to 5.1% in the end-2019 (46 900 persons). (IOM, 2020).

However, this expected massive return does not seem to have materialised so far, and the full impact of the pandemic is still to be seen. Alongside these challenges, the return of migrants creates interesting opportunities in terms of investments, new businesses and the general availability of medium- and high-level skills: 26% or approx. 21 000 returning migrants bring investments and can create jobs, indicating that they will need financial support and consultancy to open new business in Moldova. 39% or 32 000 migrants bring skills and knowledge, indicating that they will require support to adapt and get employed. (IOM, 2020).

2. National policy framework

Given the importance and impact of migration for the country, Moldova has developed a sophisticated and well-coordinated migration policy and governance structure. A number of strategies to support a systemic approach towards migration have been developed, while responsibility for the specific policies is held by different dedicated institutions. However, these strategies tend to focus on actual migrants (post-migration phase) and to a certain extent neglect potential migrants, both in terms of prevention and in terms of optimisation of the migration process (i.e. the pre-migration phase).

More specifically, the National Strategy on Migration and Asylum covers the 2011–2020 period and its Action Plan 2016–2020 provides implementation lines clustered around five axes: i) stabilisation and development of the framework for international cooperation in the field of migration and asylum; ii) legal aspects of migration; iii) migration and national development; iv) migration management in the event of an increased inflow of foreigners; and v) fighting irregular migration. A draft National Strategy on Migration and Asylum for 2021–2030 was due to be developed by June 2021.

The National Strategy ‘Diaspora 2025’, together with its Plan of Action 2016–2018, contributes to an increase in the cooperation between the government, local public authorities, civil society and members of the diaspora by enhancing and extending the transversal approach to diaspora, migration and development (DMD). The Plan of Action includes four objectives: i) drafting and developing the strategic and operational framework for the DMD sector; ii) ensuring the diaspora’s rights and building trust; iii) mobilising, harnessing and recognising the diaspora’s human potential; iv) engaging the diaspora directly and indirectly in the sustainable economic development of the country. The skills dimension is not one of its main objectives, but references to it can be found transversally under objectives iii) and iv).

The National Action Plan for Reintegrating Returning Migrants for 2018–2020 is the follow-up to the previous National Action Plan (2014–2016). The new action plan sets out three main objectives: i) enhancing the institutional framework for information and promotion of (re)integration of Moldovan citizens returned from abroad; ii) ensuring social (re)integration of nationals returned from abroad; and iii) supporting economic (re)integration of nationals returned from abroad. Currently, a new Programme for Reintegrating Returning Migrants is undergoing public consultation and approval.

Additionally, migration is tackled within the framework of several broader policy documents, such as the new National Development Strategy ‘Moldova 2030’, replacing the National Development Strategy 2020, which is also aligned with the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development and includes migration considerations; and the Action Plan of the National Employment Strategy 2017–2021, which focuses on capitalising on the potential of migration to support sustainable development.

Overall, the government has taken steps to make emigration policy a priority and to develop basic structures to facilitate these movements, promoting circular migration as a way of optimising the development impact of migration flows. The government is committed to continue working in this direction and to include education and training as an important pillar of circular migration schemes. As of 2021, however, migration-related interventions continue to focus mainly on the post-migration phase, supporting the socioeconomic reintegration of returnees. This policy is often supported by international cooperation projects (see the following section and Annex II).

The first immediate intervention to support returnees is the vocational training offered as an active labour market measure for those who register as job seekers. However, despite the accessibility and

free nature of such measures for beneficiaries, their coverage appears to be limited and their outreach to returnees is modest. In 2016 and 2017, fewer than 100 returnees benefited from them, out of a total estimated number of returnees of around 170 000 (IOM, 2017). Other relevant programmes implemented are: i) the National Programme for Economic Empowerment of Youth, which following its expiration was replaced in 2018 with the programme START for young people – A sustainable business at home; ii) the women’s empowerment programme Women in Business; iii) the continuing education programme Efficient Business Management; and iv) the return assistance programme for reintegrated citizens implemented with the support of the French Office for Immigration and Integration.

Validation of non-formal and informal learning is also a recently developed key policy for supporting the reintegration of migrants in Moldova. This instrument ensures the formal recognition of skills and competences acquired by migrants in their jobs abroad in an informal or non-formal way, allowing them a more successful reintegration into the domestic labour market. For this and other policy-related reasons, in January 2019 the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research took steps to establish a national system for the validation of non-formal and informal learning for the benefit of a wide range of beneficiaries, including returnees. The corresponding order establishes the normative framework for a national validation system for the identification, documentation, evaluation and certification of these skills.

The country strongly believes in the establishment of circular migration schemes, but only three agreements to this effect had been signed up to 2020 (with Bulgaria, Israel and, most recently, France). Negotiations have been initiated to update and sign bilateral labour agreements with the Russian Federation, Italy, Kazakhstan and Belarus.

The governance structure of the migration sector in Moldova involves a large number of institutions playing different roles. The Bureau for Migration and Asylum, attached to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, is the main agency responsible for implementing the country’s immigration policies, with the support of the Border Police and the National Employment Office. The Bureau for Diaspora Relations within the State Chancellery of the Prime Minister and the Ministries of Health and of Labour and Social Protection are, in turn, the main agencies responsible for implementing diaspora engagement, emigration, and return and reintegration policy.

The institutional complexity of the migration sector has pushed the government to seek stronger coordination among the different stakeholders. The inter-ministerial Committee on DMD was established to coordinate the development and implementation of state policies in this sector. There is also a Technical Working Group on Migration, established in 2010, which involves the Ministries of Health, of Labour and Social Protection, of Education and of Foreign Affairs, as well as the National Bureau of Statistics. This working group aims to enhance migration data coordination among agencies, encouraging capacity-building efforts and facilitating collaboration on migration policy design. The network of DMD Focal Points operates throughout the country at local level.

Private recruitment agencies play a special role in Moldova. Twenty of them were operating in the country in 2013 (ETF, 2015). According to a recent survey (IOM, 2020), one in three migrants interviewed left Moldova through a private employment agency (43% in the case of women).

3. Cooperation projects on skills and migration

Given the impact of migration flows on Moldovan society and the economy, the government has adopted a number of programmes and projects aimed at stimulating the return of its citizens and creating conditions for the legal employment of Moldovan citizens abroad, including the development of circular migration. Many of these involve education and training and have been implemented with the assistance of projects funded within the framework of the EU–Moldova Mobility Partnership (in particular between 2009 and 2014, see Annex II). More recently, in the context of the Torino Process, the ETF carried out an assessment of HCD policies in Moldova (ETF, 2020) with a strong focus on migration and, more specifically, on migrant support measures from an employment and skills perspective (MISMES). In particular, the study analysed the depletion of human capital caused by migration and the extent to which national policies support migrants to address their skills and employment needs. The analysis clearly shows the commitment of the government to address challenges linked to the massive migration flows, but it also identifies this as one of the aspects of migration policy that requires more investment, and provides specific recommendations to this effect.

The shared goal of most of these measures is to mobilise the human and financial resources of the diaspora with a view to attracting returnees and investments and creating new jobs. These measures can be clustered in relation to different phases of migration. The pre-migration phase is the area in which the country has achieved the least impressive results; most of the measures implemented are limited to facilitating a smooth transition to host countries by raising awareness about the dangers of irregular migration and through training to support cultural and linguistic integration in the host country.

In contrast, reintegration through business initiative and entrepreneurship training has probably been the most successful intervention area. The operational tool behind this was the Programme for Attracting Remittances into the Economy (PARE 1+1), which sought to capitalise on return migration and remittances to create and expand the domestic small and medium-sized enterprise sector. Established in 2010, the programme was implemented and monitored by the Organisation for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Development (ODIMM), a non-profit, quasi-governmental organisation under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy. The declared purpose of PARE was to boost the volume of remittances and create thousands of new businesses and jobs, the majority of them in rural areas. PARE was based on a '1+1' model of business financing, according to which the authorities would match the financial resources invested by programme participants in their businesses, up to a certain level. In addition to this funding component, PARE also had a component for the provision of training in entrepreneurship and business development, and a component devoted to the post-funding period in which business owners could receive assistance in the form of further training and consultancy services for development. Since the inception of PARE, its education and training component has been strengthened and has become a mandatory requirement for accessing funding.

Another noteworthy example is the innovative model of valorisation of the potential of migrants in the development of their origin localities, developed and piloted with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Migration and Local Development (MiDL) project in the period 2015–2018 in 38 localities of Moldova. Through this project, 38 Home Town Associations (HTAs) were created and consolidated as an institutional mechanism for continuous and effective involvement of migrants in local development planning; 55 infrastructure and socioeconomic projects were also implemented, the beneficiaries of which were over 316 000 people (55% of them women). Additionally, the HTAs implemented over 300 small- and medium-scale initiatives in the target localities with a total value of USD 542 000, with migrants' contributions amounting to over 40% of the

total. These initiatives targeted 45 000 beneficiaries. The effect of replication of the MiDL intervention by other local communities in Moldova resulted in the creation, with the indirect support of Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova, of another 100 HTAs. Phase 2 of the MiDL project is being implemented in 2019–2022.

ETF support

The ETF has been very active in supporting HCD reforms in Moldova. Some of the policy areas in which the ETF has been working are indirectly linked to migration issues. The qualifications reform and its sub-components – such as NQF, validation of informal and non-formal learning, occupational standards, and registry of qualifications – all have a strong connection to migration policy and MISMES. The ETF has worked closely over the past decade to support the Ministry of Education and to assist in the establishment of the unit responsible for the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). In the coming years the ETF will remain a key partner of the NQF unit, providing policy advice in this thematic area. The analysis of labour market needs and the mismatch with skills supply is another area in which the ETF has worked over the past several years in support of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the National Employment Agency and the Labour Market Observatory. This is another area which cross-cuts migration policies and programmes.

The ETF is also delivering a systemic analysis of the human capital dimension of policies in the country. For a decade, the Torino Process has delivered a holistic and evidence-based review of the HCD system and reforms in Moldova. Every report has included specific information about migration and about its links to education and training. As previously mentioned, the ETF assessment in 2020 identified the depletion of HCD due to migration as a key challenge and provided policy recommendations in this regard. The ETF will continue to monitor and assess HCD reforms in Moldova through the Torino Process and other more specific diagnostic tools, aiming to ensure cross-fertilisation among several thematic areas that could inform migration policy and programmes.

THE WAY FORWARD

Over the past 30 years, Moldova has experienced massive outmigration affecting up to 25% of its total population. This has had major implications for the population structure (the population is contracting and ageing) and constitutes a clear case of brain drain. The government has reacted by putting in place a sophisticated institutional and migration policy framework that attempts to facilitate circular migration and hence optimise the development impact of migration. The EU (through the Mobility Partnership signed in 2008) and MISMES have played an important role in this strategy.

The government has the commendable policy objective of promoting effective circular migration to optimise the development and skills impact of migration flows. However, there persists a bias favouring policies that target some phases of migration rather than others (post-migration over pre-migration). This, in turn, leads to insufficient preparation of migrants, notably in terms of skills, and as a consequence the insufficient promotion of actual opportunities for circular migration. Out of the 35 projects and interventions to support migrants identified in the ETF (2015) MISMES country study, 26 focused on the post-migration phase and only 9 on the pre-migration phase. A further obstacle to the consolidation of circular migration is the slow progress in the area of qualifications. At the time of the ETF assessment in 2020, Moldova had developed and approved only 33 occupational standards and the register for the NQF was still under development. None of the information-provision measures seem to include career guidance and counselling, despite the fact that such forms of support can be a powerful tool for the professional orientation and integration of migrants. There is no evidence on the effectiveness of any of these measures, such as how many job seekers use the information sources, whether there are any returning migrants among them, how many have found a job with the help of information provided in this way, and what is the quality (reliability, comprehensiveness, timeliness) of the information provided. A more structured and comprehensive system of monitoring and evaluation of these measures and projects would have significant potential to improve policy interventions in this area.

The underutilisation of HCD as a policy priority is the second main area of improvement. Education and training measures are seldom included in the package of policy responses in support of migrants, despite their proven potential in supporting reintegration and thus preventing the waste of human capital. Successful programmes such as PARE 1+1 demonstrate the potential of including professional and vocational training opportunities in policies aimed at migrants, who, on their return, are often confronted with uncertainty about the best way to start their own business, find a job and apply the ideas and knowledge they have acquired abroad. Therefore, tailored support in the form of training and skills-related guidance and counselling has an important role to play in supporting reintegration. According to the analysis conducted by the ETF's Torino Process assessment on the basis of the national report, out of the 9 pre-migration interventions identified, only 1 includes an education and training component, and out of the 36 post-migration interventions, only 4 do. Another 23 multi-dimensional interventions have been identified, none of which include an education and training component.

Other factors that put at risk the policy commitment to a sustainable circular migration model are donor dependence, and weak coordination and monitoring and evaluation. To sustain the number and scale of migration-related activities implemented so far, the country depends heavily on donor support, to the extent that well over 90% of all actions are fully or partially enabled through financial contributions from abroad and, most notably, from the EU (ETF, 2020). This poses a risk to the sustainability of

achievements and creates coordination problems, both among donors and between donors and national authorities.

The ETF report offers a number of recommendations to address these challenges. The first one specifically targets the financial sustainability of migration policies and programmes by combining forms of cost optimisation and innovative financing solutions. Specifically for migration programmes targeting education and training, the report recommends making better use of the existing network of public vocational education and training (VET) providers.

Most of them appear to have surplus capacity in terms of human resources and infrastructure, and, as of recently, all are also allowed to generate their own income. There is good practice to follow in this respect, such as the labour market training in support of migrants, which already relies on VET provider involvement and needs to be reinforced in terms of outreach and coverage. (ETF, 2020)

The second recommendation of the ETF report focuses on stepping up the creation of conditions for circular migration, notably by opening opportunities for international education and through the mutual recognition of professional qualifications and educational credentials. To this end, Moldova has already entered bilateral agreements with a number of host countries. The ETF recommends expanding the practice of concluding such agreements and prioritising education and training as key elements within them.

Finally, the report advocates the integration of HCD as a priority in actions targeting all phases of migration, and, in parallel, working on setting standards for decent employment across the economy. Education and training can and should play a much more prominent role in all phases of migration.

The reinforcement of the skills development dimension could be a gradual process that encompasses [...] the development and updating of curricula for training courses driven by the needs of those who are leaving or returning and the situation on the labour market; where applicable, diversification of training for both beginners and more advanced participants; facilitation and promotion of improved access to such training as an integral part of migration policy. (ETF 2020)

ANNEX I: STATISTICAL ANNEX

General economic and demographic indicators

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2020
¹ GDP (current USD million)	m	1 752.98	1 288.43	2 988.35	6 974.96	7 745.23	11 968.71	m
² GDP per person employed (constant 2017 purchasing power parity USD)	m	15 490.37	13 449.69	19 773.96	26 519.24	28 963.86	39 304.53	m
³ Total population at mid-year and by age group	4 365 564	4 340 597	4 202 658	4 159 293	4 086 081	4 070 700	4 043 263	4 033 963
0–19 (%)	35.7	35.0	33.0	28.5	24.7	21.8	21.0	20.9
20–64 (%)	56.0	56.0	57.6	61.5	65.2	68.2	67.0	66.6
65+ (%)	8.3	9.0	9.4	9.9	10.1	10.0	12.0	12.5

Key migration indicators

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019	2020
^{4a} Total emigrants	625 683	620 036	602 782	715 599	827 763	911 446	1 013 417	1 159 443
^{4b} International migrants: emigrants (% of total population)	14.3	14.3	14.3	17.2	20.3	22.4	25.1	28.7
Emigrants by sex								
^{5a} Females (emigrants)	335 072	322 165	303 511	373 283	443 724	490 359	539 532	605 123
^{5b} Females (as a % of total emigrants)	53.6	52.0	50.4	52.2	53.6	53.8	53.2	52.2
^{5c} Males (emigrants)	290 611	297 871	299 271	342 316	384 039	421 087	473 885	554 320
^{5d} Males (as a % of total emigrants)	46.4	48.0	49.6	47.8	46.4	46.2	46.8	47.8
^{6a} Total immigrants	544 162	367 231	247 828	171 122	129 488	106 374	104 713	104 438
^{6b} International migrants: immigrants (% of total population)	12.5	8.5	5.9	4.1	3.2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Immigrants by sex								
^{7a} Females (immigrants)	306 109	211 934	146 731	103 198	77 290	62 907	61 874	61 695
^{7b} Females (as a % of total immigrants)	56.3	57.7	59.2	60.3	59.7	59.1	59.1	59.1
^{7c} Males (immigrants)	238 053	155 297	101 097	67 924	52 198	43 467	42 839	42 743
^{7d} Males (as a % of total immigrants)	43.7	42.3	40.8	39.7	40.3	40.9	40.9	40.9
Immigrants by age group								
0–19 (%)	12.7	9.9	9.6	13.0	11.3	13.6	17.6	15.1
20–64 (%)	65.3	66.5	66.1	64.2	62.1	58.1	56.5	56.2
65+ (%)	21.9	23.7	24.3	22.8	26.6	28.4	25.9	28.7
^{9a} Refugees (including asylum seekers) at mid-year	m	0	266	232	229	556	423	530
^{9b} Refugees (including asylum seekers) as a % of the international migrant stock (immigrants)	m	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.5
^{10a} Personal remittances, received (current USD million)	m	1.02	177.58	915.08	1 752.83	1 540.12	1 909.63	m
^{10b} Personal remittances, received (% of GDP)	m	0.1	13.8	30.6	25.1	19.9	16.0	m
^{11a} Personal remittances, paid (current USD million)	m	0.33	29.21	46.27	115.73	154.11	179.14	m
^{11b} Personal remittances, paid (% of GDP)	m	0.0	2.3	1.5	1.7	2.0	1.5	m

	1990–1995	1995–2000	2000–2005	2005–2010	2010–2015	2015–2020
¹² Net number of migrants	-131 953	-65 309	-12 079	-47 911	-7 020	-6 935
¹³ Annual rate of change of the migrant stock (%)	-7.9	-7.9	-7.4	-5.6	-3.9	-0.4
¹⁴ Annual rate of change of the refugee stock (including asylum seekers)	m	m	-2.7	-0.3	17.7	-1.0

		2020
15a	Total emigrants	1 159 443
	Main destination regions	
	Europe	1 061 386
	North America	64 671
	Asia	31 573
	Main destination countries	
	Russian Federation	294 152
	Romania	285 364
	Italy	194 480
	Ukraine	152 249
	United States of America	45 713
	Germany	25 733
	Portugal	22 630
	Spain	21 738
	Canada	18 958
Kazakhstan	12 678	

		2020
15b	Total immigrants	104 438
	Main countries of origin	
	Ukraine	42 436
	Russian Federation	40 018
	Kazakhstan	4 370
	Italy	3 225
	Belarus	2 076
	Romania	1 880
	Azerbaijan	727
	Germany	701
Uzbekistan	691	
Portugal	670	

Migration of tertiary-level students		2000	2005	2010	2015	2018	2019
¹⁶ Inbound mobility rate (%)		1.9	1.7	1.2	2.5	5.1	5.6
¹⁷ Outbound mobility ratio (%)		9.2	7.6	11.6	18.0	22.2	m
¹⁸ Total inbound mobile tertiary students		1 961	2 264	1 574	2 733	4 428	4 544
¹⁹ Total outbound mobile tertiary students		9 523	9 901	15 129	19 671	19 412	m
²⁰ Net flow internationally mobile tertiary students		-7 562	-7 637	-13 555	-16 938	-14 984	m

21a Inbound tertiary students per country of origin (2019, top five available countries)		(19)
Romania	1 989	
Israel	1 749	
India	259	
Ukraine	114	
Turkey	87	

21b Outbound tertiary students per destination country (2018, top five available countries)		(19)
Romania	9 223	
Italy	2 642	
Germany	733	
Ukraine (2019)	648	
France	471	

Last update: end of May 2021

Sources:

Indicators: 1, 2, 10a, 10b, 11a, 11b – World Bank (World Development Indicators)
 Indicators: 3, 12 – UN DESA, World Population Prospects 2019³
 Indicators: 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 6a, 6b, 7a, 7b, 7c, 7d, 8, 9a, 9b, 13, 14, 15a, 15b – UN DESA, International Migrant Stock 2019⁴, 2020⁵
 Indicators: 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21a, 21b – UNESCO

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Not all the countries of origin and destination are available

Legend:

m = missing data

This data collection is intended to give a short but comprehensive description of the dynamics of immigration and emigration inserted in the economic and sociodemographic context of the country. Most of the indicators cover the period 1990–2020, a period long enough to observe significant demographic and migratory changes. A five-year gap between one detection and another has been left in order to make the data description as concise as possible. The 2019 values for all the indicators are also collected (where available) in order to facilitate comparability with the economic and 'international mobile students' indicators for which 2019 (or in some cases 2018) is the last available year.

³ <https://population.un.org/wpp/>

⁴ <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates19.asp>

⁵ <https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/pd/content/international-migrant-stock>

The major limitation of this data collection relates to the lack of available and comparable indicators for migrants' skills and qualifications. Indicators for migrants' skills exist, but most of the time they come from specific national surveys and/or studies regarding a specific target group, year and country.

The UNESCO indicators for tertiary-level students who migrate with the aim of studying abroad, also referred to as 'international mobile students', have been collected as an attempt to address this lack of information on migrants' skills. Although these indicators represent only part of the skills dimension, they are nevertheless regularly updated and they describe a specific aspect of migration.

The UN DESA database has been used as a source for the demographic, migration stock and refugee indicators. The economic indicators come from the World Bank database. The UNESCO database is the source for the international mobile students indicators.

General economic and demographic indicators

	Description	Definition
1	GDP (current USD million)	GDP at purchasers' prices is the sum of gross value added by all resident producers in the economy plus any product taxes and minus any subsidies not included in the value of the products. It is calculated without making deductions for depreciation of fabricated assets or for depletion and degradation of natural resources. Data are in current USD. Dollar figures for GDP are converted from domestic currencies using single year official exchange rates.
2	GDP per person employed (constant 2017 purchasing power parity \$)	GDP per person employed is GDP divided by total employment in the economy. Purchasing power parity GDP is GDP converted to 2017 constant international dollars using purchasing power parity rates. An international dollar has the same purchasing power over GDP that a US dollar has in the United States.
3	Total population at mid-year and by age group	Estimates of the total population, as of 1 July, expressed as number and as percentage of the total for the age groups 0–19, 20–64 and 65+.

Key migration indicators

	Description	Definition
4a, 5a, 5c	Total emigrants, females (emigrants), males (emigrants)	International migrant stock (emigrants) at mid-year, both sexes, females and males.
4.b	International migrants: emigrants (% of total pop)	The number of international migrants (emigrants) divided by the total population. Data are expressed as percentages.
5b/d	Females/males (as a % of total emigrants)	The number of female/male emigrants divided by the total number of international migrants (emigrants).
6a, 7a, 7c	Total immigrants, females (immigrants), males (immigrants)	International migrant stock (immigrants) at mid-year, both sexes, females and males.
6b	International migrants: immigrants (% of total population)	The number of international migrants (immigrants) divided by the total population. Data are expressed as percentages.
7b/d	Females/males (as a % of total immigrants)	The number of female/male immigrants females/males divided by the total number of international migrants (immigrants).
8	Immigrants by age group	The number of immigrants in a particular age group expressed as percentage of the total number of international migrants (immigrants). Age groups: 0–19, 20–64 and 65+.
9a	Refugees (including asylum seekers) at mid-year	Estimated refugee stock. This stock is a subset of the stock of international migrants (immigrants).
9b	Refugees (including asylum seekers) as a percentage of the international migrant stock (immigrants)	Estimated number of refugees as a percentage of the immigrant stock. These two indicators are based on the end of year 2017 estimates of refugee populations or persons in refugee-like situations prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and, where appropriate, by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

		(UNRWA).
10a/b	Personal remittances, received (current USD million/% of GDP)	Inflow of personal remittances into the country expressed in current USD million and as a percentage of GDP. Personal remittances comprise personal transfers and compensation of employees. Personal transfers consist of all current transfers in cash or in kind, made or received by resident households to or from non-resident households. Personal transfers thus include all current transfers between resident and non-resident individuals. Compensation of employees refers to the income of border, seasonal and other short-term workers who are employed in an economy where they are not resident and of residents employed by non-resident entities. Data are the sum of two items defined in the sixth edition of the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Manual: personal transfers and compensation of employees.
11a/b	Personal remittances, paid (current USD million/% of GDP)	Outflow of personal remittances in the country expressed in current USD million and as a percentage of GDP. Personal remittances comprise personal transfers and compensation of employees. Personal transfers consist of all current transfers in cash or in kind made or received by resident households to or from non-resident households. Personal transfers thus include all current transfers between resident and non-resident individuals. Compensation of employees refers to the income of border, seasonal and other short-term workers who are employed in an economy where they are not resident and of residents employed by non-resident entities. Data are the sum of two items defined in the sixth edition of the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Manual: personal transfers and compensation of employees.
12	Net number of migrants	Estimated number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants.
13	Annual rate of change of the migrant stock (%)	Estimated exponential annual rate of change of the international migrant stock (immigrants), expressed as a percentage.
14	Annual rate of change of the refugee stock (including asylum seekers)	Estimated exponential rate of change of the refugee population (including asylum seekers) per year expressed as a percentage.
15a	Main destination regions and countries	Top 10 destination countries (and top 3 destination continents) for emigrants in the last available year with their respective number of international migrants.
15b	Main countries of origin	Top 10 countries of origin for immigrants in the last available year with their respective number of international migrants.
16	Inbound mobility rate (%)	Number of tertiary students from abroad studying in a given country, expressed as a percentage of total tertiary enrolment in that country.
17	Outbound mobility ratio (%)	Number of students from a given country studying abroad, expressed as a percentage of total tertiary enrolment in that country.
18	Total inbound mobile tertiary students	Total number of tertiary students from abroad studying in the country.
19	Total outbound mobile tertiary students	Total number of tertiary students from the country studying abroad.
20	Net flow of internationally mobile tertiary students	Number of tertiary students from abroad (inbound students) studying in a given country minus the number of students at the same level from a given country studying abroad (outbound students).
21a/b	Inbound/outbound tertiary students per country of origin	Top five origin/destination countries of mobile tertiary students with their respective number of mobile students (last available year).

ANNEX II: LIST OF RELEVANT PROJECTS

This list is not exhaustive and includes selected projects specifically targeting the development of skills of migrants.

Project title	Implementing agency	Amount and/or source of funding	Duration	Main activities	Beneficiaries
<p>Strengthening Moldova's capacity to manage labour and return migration within the framework of the Mobility Partnership with the EU</p> <p>Strengthening Moldova's Capacity to Manage Labour and Return Integration Migration for development (migration4development.org)</p>	Swedish Public Employment Service in cooperation with the National Employment Agency of Moldova	€3 000 000 EU	2009–2012	Qualification assessment Retraining (VET) Support for entrepreneurship Assisting in job counselling and placement or/and arrangement of micro-business with the resources available from returnees' reintegration budget	
<p>PARE 1+1</p> <p>The Programme For Attracting Remittances Into Economy – Organizația Pentru Dezvoltarea Sectorului Imm (Qdimm.Md)</p>	ODIMM	\$ 1 000 001 –2 500 000 EU Moldova	2010–2012	Qualification assessment Retraining (VET) Support for entrepreneurship Assisting in job counselling and placement and/or arrangement of micro-business with the resources from returnee's reintegration budget	370 people from 1 157 candidates started new businesses
<p>Supporting the implementation of the migration and development component of the EU–Moldova Mobility Partnership</p> <p>EU-Funded Project Promotes Mobility for Development in Moldova International Organization for Migration (iom.int)</p>	IOM	€1 999 734 EU	2010–2012	Qualification assessment Retraining (VET) Support for entrepreneurship Assisting in job counselling and placement or/and arrangement of micro-business with the resources available from returnees' reintegration budget	
<p>Remittances Developing Moldovan Communities – Sustainable Use of Remittances by Generating Local Income</p> <p>Scoreboard (gov.md)</p>	Hilfswerk Austria International Moldova	€502 249 EU	2011–2014	Training of migrants and potential migrants in starting or developing their own business Grants competition for opening or developing businesses Opening the Orhei Resource Centre	400 migrant workers trained 5 returning migrants received a grant
Better managing the mobility of health professionals in the	IOM, WHO, UNAIDS, Ministry of	€2 000 000 EU Thematic	2011–2014	Adjustment of training curricula to correspond to EU requirements for	

Project title	Implementing agency	Amount and/or source of funding	Duration	Main activities	Beneficiaries
<p>Republic of Moldova</p> <p>WHO/Europe Health workforce - Better managing the mobility of health professionals in the Republic of Moldova – context, challenges, and lessons learned</p>	<p>Health, National Employment Agency, State Medical and Pharmaceutical University, National College of Medicine and Pharmacy, Bureau of Diaspora Relations</p>	<p>Programme for Cooperation with Third Countries in the field of Migration and Asylum</p>		<p>easier recognition of qualifications of health workers</p> <p>Development of retraining courses</p> <p>Development of motivation policies (financial and non-financial) to retain people at home and encourage their return</p>	
<p>Effective Governance of Labour Migration and its Skill Dimensions</p> <p>Project 'Effective Governance of Labour Migration and its Skills Dimensions' in Moldova (ilo.org)</p>	<p>IOM, ILO, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Education</p>	<p>€1 884 376 EU (80%) and ILO</p>	<p>2011–2014</p>	<p>Development of six occupational standards for blue-collar jobs and related capacity building</p> <p>Support for negotiation of bilateral agreements on social security</p> <p>Data collection and analysis on labour migration and skills, migration and education</p> <p>Capacity building for tripartite forum on issues related to migration</p>	
<p>Making Migration in Moldova Work for Development</p> <p>Making Migration in Moldova Work for Development Migration for development (migration4development.org)</p>	<p>ODIMM (Moldova), Centre for International Migration and Development, Germany (CIM), IOM</p>	<p>€2 000 000 EU</p>	<p>2013–2015</p>	<p>Promoting circular migration schemes (CIM) and skills retention and return</p> <p>Enhancing the diaspora's positive contribution to Moldova's socioeconomic development through strengthening its partnership with the government</p> <p>Job placement and intermediation with private and public employment agencies from Moldova and the EU, with a specific focus on skill matching</p>	<p>185 migrant workers trained</p> <p>91 grants for financing businesses</p>
<p>Diaspora Engagement Hub Grants Programme</p> <p>State Chancellery The Government of the Republic of Moldova</p>	<p>Diaspora Relations Bureau of the State Chancellery of Moldova, in partnership with IOM</p>	<p>SDC</p>	<p>2016–2022</p>	<p>Grants for diaspora professionals' return and diaspora innovative projects</p> <p>Thematic regional partnerships</p> <p>Diaspora women's empowerment</p> <p>Diaspora educational centres</p>	<p>Diaspora professionals and highly skilled migrants</p> <p>Diaspora associations</p>
<p>Migration and Local Development (MiDL) – Phase 2</p> <p>Migration and Local</p>	<p>UNDP and IOM in partnership with national authorities</p>	<p>\$6.4 million SDC</p>	<p>2019–2022</p>	<p>Equipping employment support services for the benefit of labour potential, actual and returning migrants</p>	<p>National and local public authorities</p> <p>Migrants</p>

Project title	Implementing agency	Amount and/or source of funding	Duration	Main activities	Beneficiaries
Development (phase 2) UNDP in Moldova				Engaging community members, including migrants, in the local development process	Community members from 35 towns and villages and towns Returnees

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DMD	Diaspora, migration and development
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
HCD	Human capital development
HTA	Home Town Association
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MiDL	Integrated Migration Development Project
MISMES	Migrant support measures from a skills and employment perspective
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
ODIMM	Organisation for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise Development
PARE	Programme for Attracting Remittances into the Economy
UN DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	United States of America
USD	US dollar
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VET	Vocational education and training

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