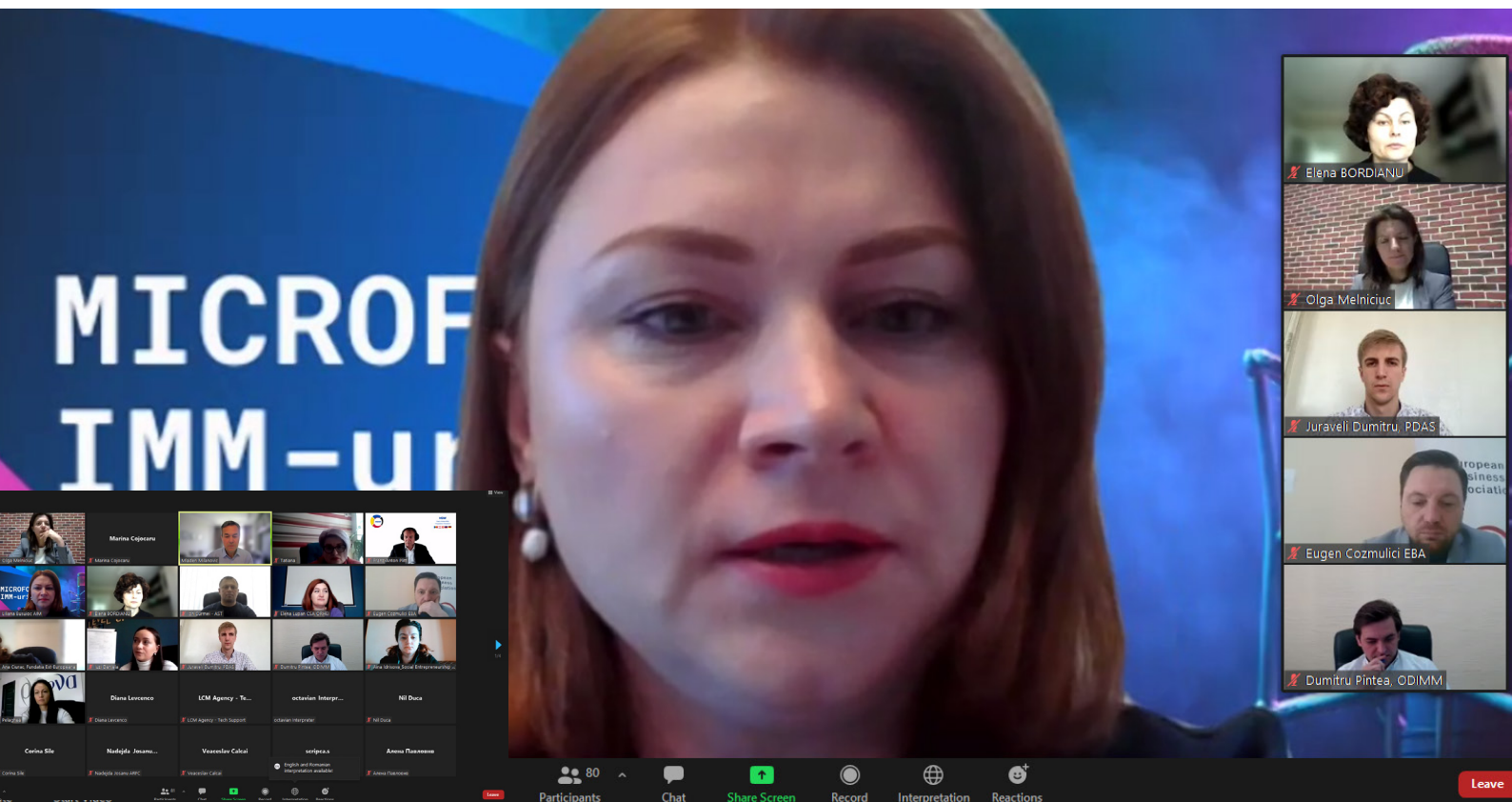


# INFO BULLETIN



The Secretariat of the Economic Council to the Prime Minister is supported by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, funded by the UK Government's Good Governance Fund, and the International Finance Corporation's Investment Climate Reform Project funded by the Government of Sweden's International Development Agency.



## AUTHORITIES TAKE MEASURES TO FOSTER THE CREATION AND FUNCTIONING OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

The draft of the National Program for promoting entrepreneurship and increasing competitiveness for 2022-2026 and the Action Plan were presented on April 15, 2022 at the SME Advisory Board.

The document, developed within the EU project "Rural SME Policy Support Window", at the request of the Ministry of Economy focuses on 5 areas:

a favorable business environment for the creation and functioning of SMEs; strengthening culture and entrepreneurial capacities; improving SMEs' access to finance; improving competitiveness and access to markets and facilitating technological exchange and innovation.

In order to achieve the objective of creating a favorable business envi-

ronment for the functioning of SMEs, the authors of the project propose a series of actions including ensuring arbitration and settlement of commercial disputes, creating the possibility of online registration of companies, digitizing customs procedures and implementing an early warning system to prevent company bankruptcy implementation of the "Second Chance" program for SMEs.

The objective of strengthening culture and entrepreneurial capacities involves the implementation of actions such as the promotion of female entrepreneurship, migrant and youth entrepreneurship, the development of family business support programme and the social entrepreneurship programme.

According to the expert team of the Rural SME Policy Support Window Project, in order to implement the third principle improving SMEs 'access to finance, the following recommendations need to be implemented: strengthening the capacities

of SMEs and future entrepreneurs in financial education to encourage responsible borrowing and lending, and raising SMEs' awareness of the resources and financial instruments available for the different stages of SME growth.

In order to achieve the fourth objective of improving competitiveness and access to markets, it is necessary, among other things, according to the program, to promote SME access to export markets, support for clustering initiatives and SME re-engineering.

In order to facilitate technology exchange and innovation, a technology transfer programme for SMEs needs to be developed, additional capacities of Science and Technology Parks and research incubators to be created, while SMEs should be made aware of the protection of intellectual property rights.

## The first meeting of the Working Group on the coordination of anti-crisis economic solutions took place

The war in Ukraine and the economic sanctions imposed on Russia are hitting Moldova's economy. In 2022, exports to Russia could fall by \$ 190 million, which could affect GDP by 1.6%. The biggest impact would be on the export of apples.

This is the conclusion of the study entitled "Economic implications of the war in Ukraine and sanctions against Russia on Moldova" conducted by the German Economic Team and presented on April 1, 2022 within the Working Group on coordination of anti-crisis economic solutions. Attending the meeting of the Working Group, Economy Minister Sergiu Gaibu stressed that data presented by German experts suggest that we are not in a position to wait for things to return to what we had before the crisis in Ukraine. We need to act in the context of a new economic order in Europe.

We must think about new projects, strategies and concepts in order to face the challenges, said Sergiu Gaibu. Some solutions are being worked out, the experts of the Secretariat of the Economic Council said at the meeting. With the support of the project "Technologies of the future", funded by USAID and the Government of Sweden, a study was developed regarding the consequences of

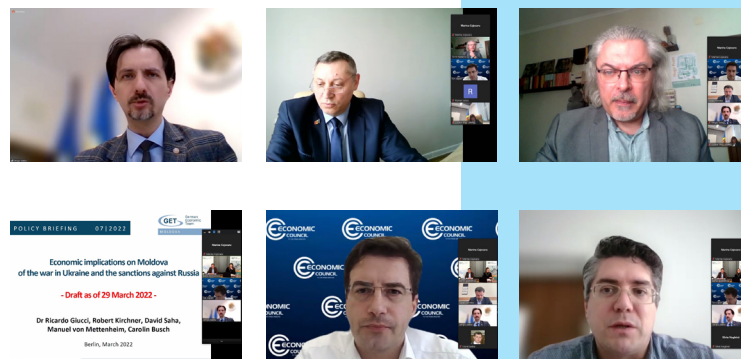
the war in Ukraine on the economy of the Republic of Moldova with the presentation of resilience measures.

More details were presented about the impacts, including by economic sectors, generated by exports and imports, rising prices for energy resources, disruption of value chains, reorientation of transport corridors, etc.

In order to mitigate the economic shock, experts propose reorienting exports to new domestic markets and consumption, dampening the increase in prices for energy resources and fertilizers, replacing imports with local production, especially in the case of dairy products and poultry meat. Experts also propose diversifying instruments to stimulate MSMEs

and attracting investment in the smart economy, i.e. in IT. These and other anti-crisis measures are to be discussed at technical level, in detail, with public authorities, members of the Working Group and the business community.

When measures are agreed upon by all stakeholders, they will be submitted for analysis to the Commission for exceptional situations of the Republic of Moldova and to the Prime Minister.



## It was agreed how Moldova will recognize electronic signatures issued in the EU

According to a draft government decision, the recognition in Moldova of qualified electronic signatures issued in the EU could be done by using a qualified certificate of the public key issued by a trusted service provider from a member state of the European Union. This way of recognizing this type of signatures will give the possibility for EU investors to sign and transmit electronic documents to Moldovan authorities. This would allow to capitalize on an enormous potential to attract investments from the EU to Moldova and reduce the constraints of foreign investors already operating in Moldova. On November 11, 2021, Parliament voted on legislative amendments whereby the Republic of Moldova unilaterally recognizes the electronic signatures of the EU. The legislative amendments were developed within the framework of the implementation of the roadmap for boosting the digitization process of the national economy and the development of e-commerce. The document is implemented by the Ministry of Economy jointly with the Economic Council to the Prime Minister of Moldova and with the international expertise provided through the International Financial Corporation, EBRD, GIZ, USAID.

## DIASPORA CAN OBTAIN THE ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE IN CONSULATES

The Electronic Signature became accessible for Moldovan citizens residing in Spain. They can apply to the consulate and ask for the issuance of public key certificate – qualified advanced electronic signature. Until now, this service could only be requested on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. Soon, it will become accessible in all embassies and consulates of the Republic of Moldova abroad. With the help of advanced Qualified Electronic Signature, diaspora representatives, including entrepreneurs, can interact with state authorities, businesses or other citizens, remotely from the country where they are located. That is, they can submit applications online, apply for electronic services, conclude contracts with utility providers, and access a wide variety of other services, for which previously – they had to travel in the country. The entrepreneurs who have a business in Moldova and cannot be physically present here, the digital signature will help them submit remote electronically signed reports and statements to the state institutions. It is now also possible to remotely request permissive acts, including signing business contracts and agreements to hire staff via the Internet. These services have also become available from outside Moldova's borders after the Parliament adopted the first legislative package for the digitalization of the economy in November 2021. The document implements a whole series of key actions from the "roadmap for boosting the digitization process of the national economy and development of e-commerce", developed by the Ministry of Economy and Economic Council to the Prime Minister, with the support of development partners (EBRD, IFC, USAID, GIZ, UK GGF). The Economic Council is working on a new legislative package that will allow, among other things, the provision of a wide range of remote notary and e-commerce promotion services.

### The courier industry, which gained momentum during the pandemic period, must be regulated legally

The current legislation of the Republic of Moldova requires additions to private courier services and postal services in the field of electronic commerce. Today no normative act regulates the activity of express courier in the "door-to-door" regime ("door-to-door"). Business associations of the country are saying this very clearly. The subject is discussed at the Economic Council to the Prime Minister of Moldova with the participation of representatives of courier companies in the country and relevant state institutions. According to the businessmen, during the pandemic period, rapid Courier in the so-called door to door – door-to-door regime has grown in Moldova. But the spread of this service along with e-commerce has revealed a number of constraints and the need for special attention for this important economic sub-sector. Representatives of the business community spoke about the need to supplement the legisla-



tion with provisions dedicated to the private courier industry. The changes that will become imperative with the entry into force of the new customs code, starting next year, must define the notion of private courier, the authority that regulates the industry and the eligibility criteria for obtaining the certification of private courier activity. It also discussed the need to adjust a number of departmental acts to clarify the goods return regime and the international refund of payments made in the e-commerce regime, accompanying documents and customs and tax declarations.



Due to chores worries today 84 thousand women in Moldova are inactive on the labor market. And this is while more than 100 thousand jobs are vacant in the country. This is what the data of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection show. Data of the National Center for Studies and information on women's issues "Partnership for Development" show that the wage difference between women and men in our country is 25%, in 16% of cases this difference is unexplained. In order to support the economic empowerment of women and help the state and business sector in this regard, a roadmap was developed, launched on May 13, 2022 at the government. The document pursues 5 major objectives: removing barriers to equal access to resources; education, developing skills and abilities; promoting female entrepreneurship; improving access to participation in the labor market; and strengthening partnerships with the private sector in implementing the principles of women's empowerment. Attending the event to launch the document, chairwoman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Policy and European integration Doina Gherman welcomed the launch of the roadmap. This document, according to the MP, unifies the efforts of all actors in the field in the process of promoting women's rights. "Women's economic empowerment is crucial for the whole society, representing a women's right, and for it to be respected, policies and laws are needed. And we MPs are already taking measures and actions in

## ROADMAP ON WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT WAS LAUNCHED

this regard," added Doina Gherman. For her part, Dominika Stojanoska, UN Women Moldova country representative, mentioned during the event that "this roadmap is an important document developed in order to accelerate the economic empowerment of women in the Republic of Moldova, being of major importance in the current socio-economic context in the country. Women's economic empowerment is crucial in advancing women's rights and gender equality. This document represents the joint effort of members and experts of the Economic Council, dedicated to identifying the necessary actions to improve the economic empowerment of women in Moldova." During the event, the head of the Secretariat of the Economic Council to the Prime Minister Ion Lupan stressed that the roadmap represents a real sustainable platform for the involvement of business associations, donor community, government agencies in promoting initiatives aimed at increasing the role of women in the economy. The head of the Secretariat called on stakeholders to help highlight critical issues related to gender equality and women's economic empowerment through actions that can be implemented and assumed in the roadmap. Stela Jemna, head of the Cabinet of the prime minister of Moldova, said during the event that the roadmap must be applied in practice, so that as many women as possible can be involved in business and be able to find a balance between family and professional life. "We are on the right track because we have become aware of the problem, now we are on the path of searching for solutions to overcome it," Stela Jemna stressed. "The actions of the roadmap are very ambitious. We at the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection will provide all the necessary support to contribute to improving women's opportunities in the economic and social sphere so that their rights are respected," said Felicia Bechtold, State Secretary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection. The implementation of the actions of the roadmap on women's economic empowerment is to be debated within the Economic Council to the Prime Minister of Moldova with

the presentation of optimal solutions for the institutions responsible for their implementation. To this end, an ad hoc Working Group on women's economic empowerment and gender equality will be created within the Economic Council, which will monitor this process and make available to the public developments in the implementation of the roadmap on women's economic empowerment. The roadmap on women's economic empowerment is developed by the Secretariat of the Economic Council to the Prime Minister of Moldova, with the support of UN Women and with the financial support of Sweden.



# NURSERIES FOR CHILDREN OF EMPLOYEES CAN BE OPENED IN THE PREMISES OF ENTERPRISES

From April 25, the new provisions of the Labor Code and the Education Code enter into force, allowing employers set up nurseries for employees' children inside enterprises.

Amendments were voted by the Parliament in March this year, allowing the employer to provide its employees with childcare services aged 0-3 years, according to the normative framework approved by the government. At the same time, the MPs established that all expenses for this type of services will be borne by the employer.

After the entry into force of the new provisions, the government, within two months, must bring its relevant normative acts in line with the new amendments and adopt normative acts allowing the implementation of the law.

With the support of UN Women, a number of proposals are being

worked on in this regard, such as the law on nursery vouchers and the regulation on the organization and operation of care services for children aged 0-3 years offered by employers.

The need to create Early Education Centers for employees' children is promoted by UN Women Moldova, which discussed this topic on the platform of the Economic Council to the Prime Minister.

In discussions with the business community and representatives of state institutions, it was mentioned that the opening of children's centers inside companies would encourage women to return to work until the expiration of maternity leave.

Statistical data show that in 2020 the employment rate of women aged 25-49 with at least one child of pre-school age is 35.5%, considerably lower than that of men who constitute 64%.

The same data show that on average about 16% of the total number of children aged 1-2 years are enrolled in early education institutions, which shows that such services in Moldova are still very few.

**The topic is part of the roadmap on women's Economic Empowerment, developed by the Secretariat of the Economic Council to the Prime Minister of Moldova, with the support of UN Women and with the financial support of Sweden.**



## CONTACT US

[www.consecon.gov.md](http://www.consecon.gov.md)  
[consecon@gov.md](mailto:consecon@gov.md)

022 250 373  
str. Piața Marii Adunări Naționale 1

Fb/Consiliul Economic  
Instagram/Consiliul Economic