

Migration in the Republic of Moldova: Trends, Determinants, and State Policy

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Abstract

In the article the authors examine the state policy of the Republic of Moldova in the field of migration. Since the country is mainly a donor of migrants, there are a number of state bodies in the country whose purpose is to control and ensure the right to free movement both inside and outside the country, as well as facilitate the return of migrants to their homeland from abroad. Among the main reasons for migration, the authors identify such problems as poverty, high unemployment, the unstable political situation and corruption at state level, a desire to improve the quality and standard of living, moving to live with relatives or to study.

The research methodology is based on the following general scientific and special cognitive methods: system-structural analysis, the comparative method and formal logical method. The article analyses the materials and data provided by the national institutes of the Republic of Moldova, as well as the data and materials of international organizations.

As a result of the study, it became clear that the Republic of Moldova is actively working towards the implementation of the principles of effective public administration in the field of migrations. There are a number of laws adopted at state level that contribute to the regulation of migration in the country. The Republic of Moldova is facing many challenges. Although significant pro-

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gress was recorded, much work remains to be done on migration policy at all levels of public administration. People continue to migrate and only a small percentage of them return to their homeland.

Key words

The Republic of Moldova, emigration, state policy, European Union, The Russian Federation, law.

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The 20th–21st centuries are known as the era of migration, as international migration of the population is a dynamical global social process. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), there are 281 million migrants in the world, or 3.6% of the world's total population.⁴ Migration is one of the phenomena that make up the social environment of the political system and has a direct impact on the state as a whole. It positively or negatively affects the social, demographic, ethnic, and confessional composition of various states. Today, migration is an important resource both for the demographic and economic development. Thus, migration policy is an important political tool for the implementation of social goals in such areas as the economy, demography and the national security of the country.

Theoretically the research is based on the publications of scientists, politicians, experts in the field of statistics and migration, and economists, such as K.P. Ecko (Ecko, Gorbunova, 2017), V.G. Moshnyagi (2007), S.V. Rusu, S.V. Ryazantsev (Rusu, Ryazantsev, 2020), who specialize in the issue of migration and whose articles describe the impact of migration on the political and economic situation in the Republic.

Translated from Latin, the word “migrant” means relocation or relocation. In 1885, the English scientist E. Ravenstein first introduced an academic definition of the concept of “migration”. He argued that migration is a permanent or temporary change of a person's place of residence and that this movement is associated with four groups of factors: factors that operated at the migrant's ini-

⁴ World Migration Report 2022. International Organization for Migration. URL: <https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

tial place of residence, factors that operate during the migration process, factors related to the migrant's place of arrival and factors of the migrant's personal nature. Since migration processes in the modern world occur simultaneously both in space and in time, in the context of globalization, people's movements have become not only more diverse and intense, but also more diversified from a geographical point of view. Thus, based on all of the above, population migration can be considered both in a narrow and in a broad sense.

Migration in the narrow sense means resettlement, namely a complete type of territorial displacement, which ends with a change of permanent place of residence. In a broad sense, population migration is any movement of people across the borders of certain localities, regardless of regularity, duration and target orientation. Moreover, the main and most important feature is a change of residence, which usually has a permanent, long-term, or temporary character.

In a broader sense, population migration covers the following types of displacement: seasonal, episodic, pendulum and irrevocable. Seasonal migration is one of the most common types of population migration. This type of migration is characterized by temporary movement in order to provide additional labor for industries that require it. Also, this type of migration is characterized by trips for study, medical treatment, tourism and recreation. Episodic migrations are trips for business, recreation, tourism and other purposes that are made not only irregularly in time, but also not necessarily in the same directions (Yudina, 2007). As for pendulum migration, this mainly involves regular return trips by the population from one locality to another to study or work. And finally, irrevocable migration, which is the most important source of the formation of the population: people move from one locality to another and these movements are accompanied by a change of permanent residence (Yudina, 2007).

When considering migration, it is necessary to focus on the state migration policy, which, according to the Constitution guarantees, a legitimate concept of fairly set goals, tasks, trends in the formation of social relations, elements of legislation in the field of migration, including ways of governing the country used by migration entities (individuals, public organizations, state bodies) and aimed at resettlement, integration and arrangement of individuals in the state and its regions.

According to S.V. Ryazantsev, migration policy is a system of generally accepted ideas and conceptually unified means by which, first of all, the state, as well as its public institutions, observing certain principles corresponding to the specific historical conditions of the country, assume the achievement of goals adequate to both this and the subsequent stage of development of society (Rusu, Ryazantsev, 2020). The main task of migration policy is to regulate migration flows, to control the crossing of state borders by foreign citizens, register the staying and activity of foreign citizens in the country, and legalization of migration. Migration policy is also aimed at protecting the interests and rights of migrants, creating various conditions for the accommodation and reception of migrants, which stimulate their active participation in adaptation in the host country. One of the priorities here at present is combating illegal migration.

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Moldova is a parliamentary republic in Eastern Europe, with an area of 33 000 square kilometers and a population of 2597100 as of 2022. Despite such a small number of inhabitants, the country remains the poorest country in Europe, and almost every third resident of the country is a migrant. Since gaining independence on August 27, 1991, the Republic of Moldova has become a participant in international migration processes, and primarily a country that sends migrants to other countries.

The Republic of Moldova is a country of origin of migration to a much greater extent than it is a country of destination or transit of migrants. The migration situation is predominantly characterized by the emigration of Moldovan citizens, with about 17.5% of the population permanently living abroad, leaving for work, studies or for the purpose of family reunification. Many countries with more than 15% of the population living abroad are islands or landlocked states with well-established and long-lasting migration patterns (Rusu, Ryazantsev, 2020). Their citizens usually migrate to neighboring or culturally similar countries. The Republic of Moldova fits this profile, while also having certain specific and distinctive features. Although the level of migration to the Russian Federation, Ukraine and other CIS states is very high, migration flows to the European Union and North America are increasing significantly. In addition to the large diasporas in Italy, migration to other European Union states could increase, in

particular to Ireland, Portugal and Spain, especially since the visa regime was abolished on April 28, 2014, and with the possibility to gain citizenship of EU member states.⁵

There are several types of emigration that are specific for the Republic of Moldova:

1) permanent emigration. So far, 101 000 people have gone abroad permanently. The main destinations for these people are the USA, Canada, Germany, Israel, and in the CIS, the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

2) international migration. 520 000 citizens are involved in long-and short-term external migration processes, according to data collected by migrant and household surveys conducted between December 2019 and June 2020 as part of the CIVIS study / NEXUS Moldova:

1) 411 000 people are involved in long-term international migration: 370 000 people for work purposes (56% men, 44% women; 68% rural, 32% urban). In the Russian Federation 56% (or 206 000 people), 22% (or 81 000) in Italy, between 2% and 3% (8000 -10 000) in France, Turkey and Portugal; 18 700 people for the purpose of family reunification; 18 400 – for studies;

2) 109 000 seasonal migrant workers (72% male and 28% female, 70% rural and 30% urban). In the Russian Federation, 81% (or 88 000 people) work seasonally, 7% in Italy (or 7 700 people).⁶

The migration policy of the Republic of Moldova is a set of legal norms, theoretical provisions and practical directions for the movement of citizens from their permanent place of residence to other places. Conceptually, migration policy develops taking into account the political and legal environment, as well as the ongoing changes in the economic and social sphere of society. It embraces the legal relations that arise between a migrant and state authorities or management bodies, their officials, public organizations, local self-government bodies, their representatives, the attitudes of the authorities towards migrants and their place in society.⁷

⁵ Visa-free regime with the EU. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova. URL: <https://ue.mfa.gov.md/en/content/visa-free-regime-eu> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

⁶ IOM GMDAC Migration Data Survey. Report for Moldova. International organization for Moldova. URL: https://moldova.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1266/files/documents/MOLDOVA%20GMDAC%20Report%202021.04.22_rev-IOM_cleaned.pdf (accessed: 15.07.2022)

⁷ Unemployment Rate in Moldova. Biroul Național de Statistică. URL: <https://statistica.gov.md/category.php?l=ru&idc=107> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

In Moldova there is a network of state bodies responsible for the implementation of migration policy illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1.

State bodies responsible for the implementation of migration policy in Moldova

The body	Responsibilities in the field of migration
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (MFAEI)	in charge of foreign policy and visa policy, holds extended meetings of the Local Platform Mobility Partnership of the Republic of Moldova and the EU and monitors the process of implementation of the Agreement on Moldova's association with the European Union and the liberalization of the visa regime with the EU countries
The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)	develops public policies and monitors their implementation in the field of migration and asylum, as well as coordinating the process of integration of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova
The Bureau for Migration and Asylum	an administrative body under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs created in order to implement the policies related to migration and asylum, manage migration by receiving and documenting foreigners with identity documents, recognize refugee status, grant humanitarian protection, coordinate the process of integration of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova, to control the legality of stay of foreigners in the Republic, to grant state funding and take appropriate measures for removal and restraint
The Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family (MLSPF)	develops policy and regulates the processes in the field of labor migration. MLSPF has taken steps to negotiate and conclude bilateral agreements to regulate the flow of labor migration and their protection, as well as for the prevention of domestic violence and human trafficking
The State Chancellery (Bureau for Relations with the Diaspora)	coordinates state policy in the sphere of relations with the Diaspora
The National Employment Agency (NEA) of the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family and its regional divisions	performs four basic functions that are broadly aimed at preventing migration abroad and employing citizens in the Republic of Moldova: it informs the population about the situation in the labor market, announces available vacancies, provides brokerage services for employment and introduces active and passive social protection measures, such as job fairs, information campaigns aimed at informing the citizens about the services of the NEA, arranges meetings with potential employers and negotiations with economic agents on the issue of employment, promotes enterprises, selects the labor force, etc. NEA also makes decisions on granting / extending / refusing the right to employment to foreigners on the basis of available vacancies on the labor market, informs the population on employment opportunities abroad, organizes recruitment and employment of Moldovan citizens abroad in accordance with signed bilateral intergovernmental agreements in the field of labor migration, as well as keeping records of labor migrants according to the established procedures.

The body	Responsibilities in the field of migration
National Bureau of Statistics (NBS)	conducts quarterly labor force surveys and household budget surveys. These databases allow for the estimation of the volume of labor migration and the proportion of households receiving remittances

Source: Compiled by the authors using data⁸

The legal framework for regulating migration is grounded in the relevant articles of the Constitution and the Law on the Regime of Stay of Foreigners on the Territory of the Republic Moldova, the Law on Labor Migration, as well as provisions of bilateral and multilateral interstate agreements. In this area, there are also regulatory legal acts included in the system of administrative, customs, tax, investment, banking legislation of Moldova.

The key legislative acts regulating the migration sphere in the Republic of Moldova are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Key legislative acts regulating migration in Moldova

Regulation	Legal framework in the field of migration
National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011-2020), approved by the governmental decree Nr.655 / 08.09.2011	a national document to ensure the regulation of the movement and mobility of citizens in order to promote their welfare, social-economic development of the country, ensure human rights and social protection of labor migrants; a tool for the integration of existing strategic framework and unification of migration and asylum policies
Action Plans on implementation of the National Strategy on Migration and Asylum	adopted for different periods: 2011-2015, 2011-2020; regulate the cooperation in the wide range of areas of justice, home affairs, migration; clarifies migration laws establishing the rules of entry, stay, documenting and departure from Moldova, foreign nationals and stateless persons, as well as laws defining the legal relations in the sphere of migration processes and the competence of the state authorities in regulating migration processes
National Employment Strategy for 2007-2015	defines the priorities related to the regulation of labor migration relying on the principles of return and prevention of youth migration. Since this strategy expired in 2015, a new project of employment strategy was developed in 2016 for the period of 2017-2021. One of its key priorities is the capitalization of the migration potential for the development of the country

⁸ National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011-2020). IOM. URL: https://moldova.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl266/files/documents/MOLDOVA%20GMDAC%20Report%202021.04.22_revIOM_cleaned.pdf (accessed: 15.07.2022); Republic of Moldova. Migration Profile. International Centre for Migration Policy Development. URL: <https://www.icmpd.org/file/download/48367/file/Republic%2520of%2520Moldova%2520Migration%2520Profile%2520Light%2520EN.pdf> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

Regulation	Legal framework in the field of migration
The National Action Plan to support the reintegration of citizens returning home for 2014-2016	provides for creating optimal conditions for the return of citizens, especially highly skilled professionals, and to create opportunities for their employment in the country
National Strategy «Diaspora – 2025 and the Action Plan for its implementation	define a common framework to ensure consistency of the state policy towards the Diaspora and the introduction of a common governmental vision of the issues pertaining to the Diaspora, migration and development
Law № 200 of 16.07.2010 on the regime of stay of foreigners on the territory of the Republic of Moldova; Law on Labor migration (10.07.2008); Law on the citizenship of the Republic of Moldova (02.06.2000); Law on exit from RM and entry to RM (09.11.1994)	In accordance with the provisions of the Law on labor migration, labor immigration to the Republic of Moldova of foreign citizens and/or stateless persons is possible if vacant jobs cannot be filled by Republic's own human resources in accordance with the provisions of the Law and other normative regulations and international treaties of the Republic of Moldova. The State shall ensure, in accordance with the existing legislation, protection of immigrant workers without any discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religion, sex, opinion, political affiliation, wealth or social background.

Source: Compiled by the authors using data⁹

Foreign nationals and stateless people arriving for the purpose of employment on the basis of individual employment contracts can only be employed with the single employer and may occupy only vacancies registered by the employer with the territorial employment agency. Employment priority is given to highly qualified specialists and / or professionals invited by the government on the proposals of specialized central and local public administration authorities. Foreign nationals and stateless persons engaged in labor activity on the territory

⁹ Action Plan for 2011-2015 on implementation of the National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011-2020). European Commission. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/action-plan-implementation-national-strategy-field-migration-asylum-and_en (accessed: 15.07.2022); Action Plan for 2016-2020 on the implementation of the National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011-2020). Ministarstvo sigurnosti Bosne i Hercegovine. URL: http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Strategija_ENG_2016.pdf (accessed: 15.07.2022); National Strategy on Migration and Asylum (2011-2020). IOM. URL: https://moldova.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl266/files/documents/MOLDOVA%20GMDAC%20Report%202021.04.22_revIOM_cleaned.pdf (accessed: 15.07.2022); The National Action Plan to Support the Reintegration of Citizens Returning Home for 2014-2016. International Centre for Migration Policy Development. URL: <https://www.icmpd.org/file/download/48367/file/Republic%2520of%2520Moldova%2520Migration%2520Profile%2520Light%2520EN.pdf> (accessed: 15.07.2022); National Strategy Diaspora – 2025. Biroul Relații cu Diaspora. URL: https://brd.gov.md/sites/default/files/sn_diaspor_a_2025_web.pdf; Law №200 of 16 June 2010 on Foreigners in the Republic of Moldova. ILO. URL: http://ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=86900&p_count=97596 (accessed: 15.07.2022); Law on Labour migration (of 10.07.2008). ILO. URL: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=81081&p_country=MDA&p_count=268 (accessed: 15.07.2022); Law on the Citizenship of the Republic of Moldova (02.06.2000). ILO. URL: http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=112630&p_country=MDA&p_count=338&p_classification=01&p_classcount=48 (accessed: 15.07.2022); Law on Exit from RM and Entry to RM (09.11.94) Ensuring the Freedom of Movement. OSCE/ODIHR Database of Legal Reviews and Legislation. URL: <https://www.legislationline.org/documents/id/4816> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

of the Republic of Moldova must obtain temporary residence and employment permits.

The right of temporary stay for labor purposes (hereafter – the right) is given by the decision issued by the Bureau for Migration and Asylum of the Ministry of the Interior. The decision granting the right is the basis for issuing a decision on granting the right of temporary stay for labor purposes. The right can be granted to the following categories of people: a) immigrant workers; b) workers on business trips; c) seasonal workers; g) border workers; e) other categories stipulated by bilateral agreements in this area signed by the Republic of Moldova with other states. The right ceases: a) since the moment of publication of the decision to revoke, b) upon the expiration of the residence permit, c) upon cancellation of a temporary residence and employment permit. Before the expiry of a temporary residence and employment permit a foreign citizen and / or a stateless person may apply for the right to work and right of temporary stay for employment purposes to be employed by another employer on common grounds.

Within the Mobility Partnership¹⁰ between Moldova and the EU, on 5 June 2008¹⁵ EU member-states signed the Common Declaration on the Mobility Partnership with the Republic of Moldova as a pilot project and became the country's partners in its implementation. Priorities of the partnership include consolidation of the system of international protection of migrants, legal support for resettlement of citizens, consolidation of relations with the Diaspora, promotion of labor migrants' return home and reintegration of returned migrants. Through the partnership, careful attention is paid to the development of national border management systems and security documents and cooperation in the international fight against human trafficking. Mobility Partnership with the Republic of Moldova within the EU encompasses (under different migration projects) Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Cyprus and France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal, as well as Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Hungary. The European Commission, FRONTEX and the European Training Foundation are also part of this cooperation format.

¹⁰ Mobility Partnership between Moldova and the EU. MFA of Moldova. URL: <https://mfa.gov.md/en/content/mobility-partnership> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

The Eastern Partnership (EaP)¹¹ was launched within the framework of the Prague Summit in May 2009 and is an EU initiative aimed at strengthening relations between the European Union and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and helping to achieve the necessary conditions to accelerate political association and further economic integration. The partnership provides for closer cooperation with the EU, namely:

- the prospect of closer political relations under new association agreements;
- closer economic integration with the EU with the help of extended free trade agreements;
- facilitation of travelling to the EU through gradual visa liberalization, along with carrying out measures to combat irregular immigration;
- expansion of interpersonal contacts and greater involvement of civil society.

Citizens of Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan do not need visas to visit Moldova. Entry to the territory of Moldova is possible only with a valid international passport. By the decision of Moldova's Parliament, from 2007 visas were abolished for the citizens of the European Union member states, the United States, Canada, the Swiss Confederation, the Kingdom of Norway, the Republic of Iceland and Japan, and from June 1, 2010 for citizens of the Principality of Andorra, the State of Israel, the Principality of Liechtenstein, the Principality of Monaco and the Vatican, and from June 1, 2014 for citizens of Turkey.

To obtain a residence permit in the Republic of Moldova, a foreign citizen or stateless person must contact the Bureau for Migration and Asylum with a request to obtain the right of temporary stay, which is the basis for issuing a residence permit. The right to temporary stay must be obtained a month before the end of the authorized period of stay in the Republic of Moldova (90 days).

On the territory of the Republic of Moldova foreigners can engage in labor activities only on the basis of a temporary residence and employment permits.

¹¹ The Eastern Partnership. URL: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eastern-partnership_en (accessed: 15.07.2022)

The right of temporary stay may be granted for immigration for employment purposes, to study, for the purpose of family reunification, to carry out humanitarian, volunteer or religious activities, for long-term treatment in a medical facility, for sanatorium or rehabilitation treatment, for the protection of victims of trafficking, to foreign investors, for other purposes.

To obtain the right to stay in the country and extend it, foreign citizens or stateless persons shall apply to BMA within 30 calendar days prior to the expiry of the permission to stay on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. If a foreigner is a citizen of a country with which Moldova has a visa regime, he/she must hold a visa for long-term stay. The decision on granting the right to stay or refusal thereof is made by the competent authorities within no more than 30 calendar days from the date of submission of the application. Depending on the purpose of stay the right to temporary residence may be granted for a period of up to 5 years. In cases stipulated by law a permit may be issued for a different period of duration. As a rule, foreign nationals are granted the right to reside for one year with the possibility of subsequent annual renewal.

The right of permanent stay is granted if an applicant is married to a citizen of the Republic of Moldova for at least 3 years (on the basis of permanent and legal residence), has had the right to legal temporary and continuous stay in the Republic of Moldova for at least 5 years, confirms sufficient livelihood means, has accommodation, speaks the state language at a satisfactory level, has not had a criminal record for the past 3 years.¹²

Experts note that for at least a decade Moldova's economy has been in a deep recession. These years were characterized by a significant decline in economic growth. At the beginning of 2021, Moldova saw a significant slowdown in GDP growth, a weak export level, and a budget deficit higher than usual. Moreover, it was noted that Moldova was characterized by "a low competitiveness rating (86 out of 141), low economic freedom (87 out of 180) and a high level of corruption (120 out of 180)."¹³ In terms of the prospects for socio-economic

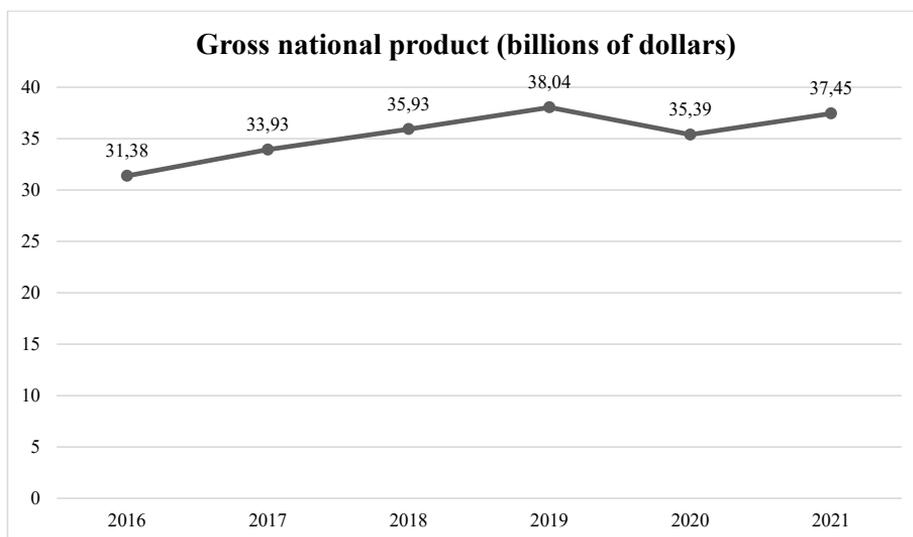
¹² Republic of Moldova. Migration Profile. International Centre for Migration Policy Development. URL: <https://www.icmpd.org/file/download/48367/file/Republic%2520of%2520Moldova%2520Migration%2520Profile%2520Light%2520EN.pdf> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

¹³ Ranking of the Countries of the World According to the Global Competitiveness Index. GT Portal. URL: <https://gtmarket.ru/ratings/global-competitiveness-index> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

development, the situation as a whole remains unfavorable. Today Moldova is among the poorest countries in Europe. This is confirmed, among other things, by the IMF rating of the poorest countries in Europe as of 2018 (calculations of GDP by purchasing power parity per capita). According to this rating, Moldova was the poorest country in Europe, followed by Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia.

It is enough to analyze the main economic indicators that will help us determine the economic situation in the country as a whole in a given period of time. Among these indicators, we distinguish gross national product, competitiveness index, gross domestic product, unemployment rate, housing construction, real estate sales, as well as the national wealth of the country.

Figure 1. Gross national product (billions of dollars)



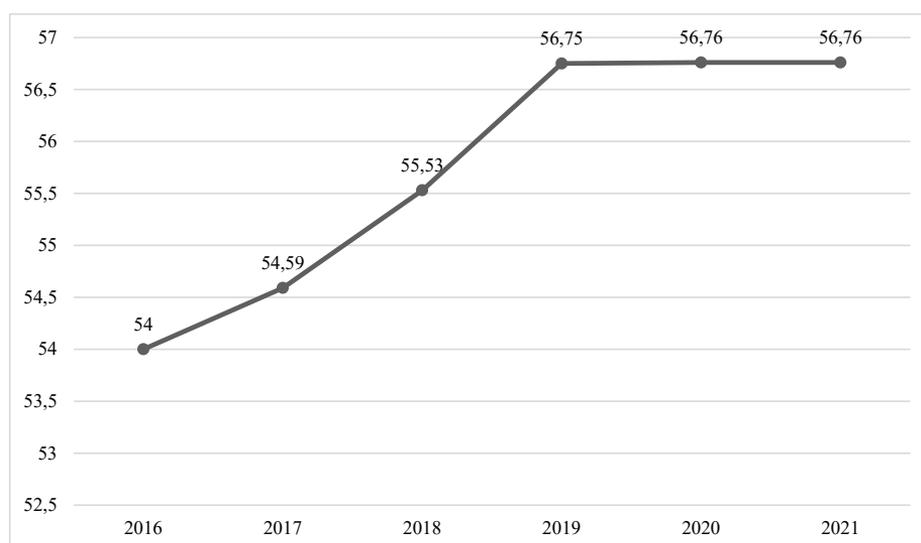
Source: *Gross domestic product (GDP) in absolute value*. UNECE. URL: <https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/ru/Table?IndicatorCode=7>

The gross national product reflects the value of goods that are created only by its residents, regardless of their location. If we analyze Figure 1, starting from 2016 to 2021, this indicator increases until 2019 and reaches \$38.04 billion, but with the onset of the pandemic, the indicator decreases significantly and only

begins to increase in 2021. If we compare the GNP of Russia and Moldova, we can see that this indicator is much higher in Russia, which attracts migrants from Moldova to leave for Russia and other countries.

The competitiveness index evaluates the capabilities of different countries to ensure a high level of well-being of their citizens. First of all, this indicator determines how effectively a country uses the resources it has, while there is a constant need to improve the quality of goods and services, as well as increase labor productivity. Judging by the indicators shown in Figure 2, Moldova coped well for its level, and the index increases every year relative to the previous year, but compared to Russia, it remains quite low.

Figure 2. Competitiveness index

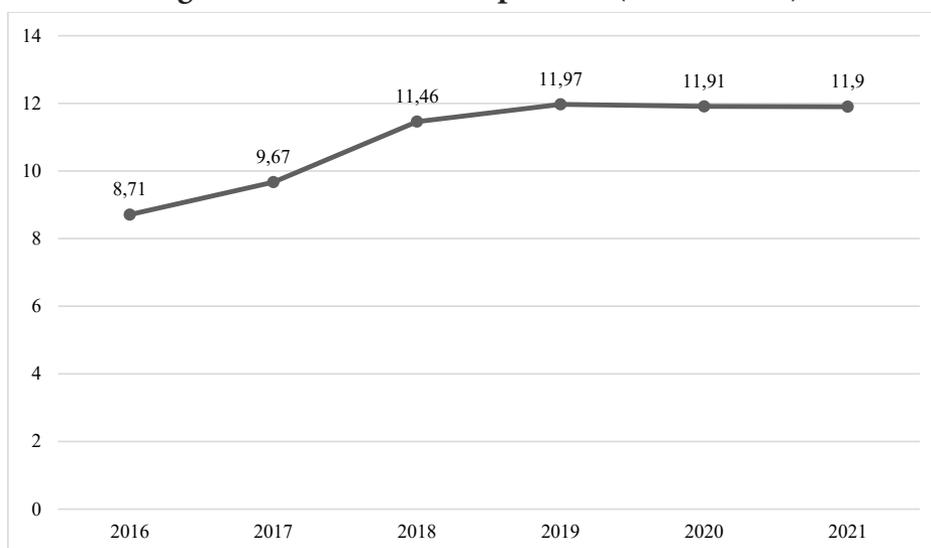


Source: Ranking of the Countries of the World According to the Global Competitiveness Index. GT Portal. URL: <https://gtmarket.ru/ratings/global-competitiveness-index>

Gross domestic product reflects the final level of all goods and services that were produced in one year in all sectors of the economy on the territory of a particular state, for consumption, export and accumulation, regardless of the nationality of the factors of production used. If we look at the data in the Figure 3,

this indicator is growing every year, but with the onset of the pandemic, it began to decline. According to the International Monetary Fund, at the end of 2020, Moldova's GDP per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP) was the lowest in Europe – \$5 661 (this indicator is ten times higher in developed countries). If we compare this with other countries: neighboring Ukraine, which has been in a state of de facto civil war for eight years, has a GDP per capita of \$8 713, the Russian Federation \$27 834, and Romania \$24 508. According to calculations by expert analysts, in order to get closer to average European indicators, the country's GDP growth rate in Moldova should be at least 10% per year.¹⁴

Figure 3. Gross domestic product (USD billion)



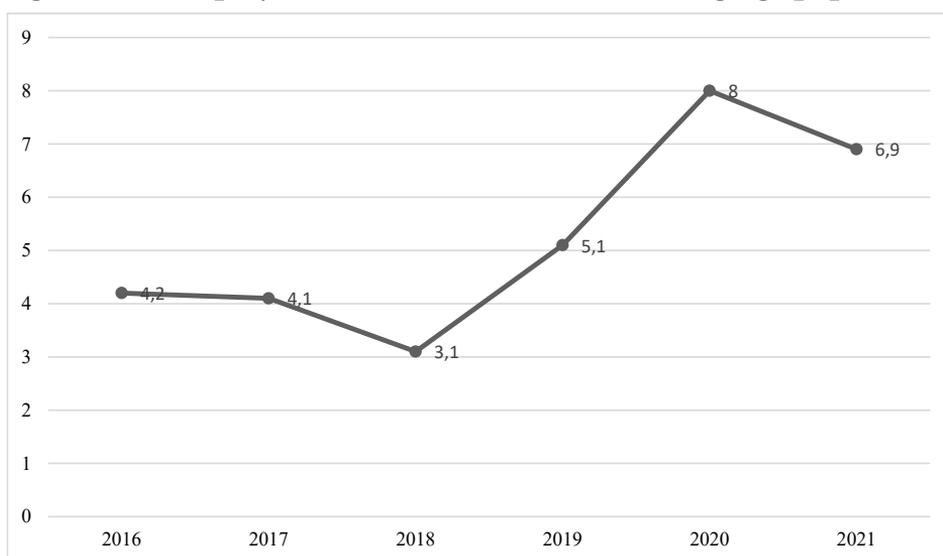
Source: *Gross domestic product (GDP) in absolute value. UNECE. URL: <https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/ru/Table?IndicatorCode=7>*

The unemployment rate measures the percentage of the people who are part of the active population of the country, who want to work, but cannot or do not have the opportunity to find a job. In any country, unemployment is a natural

¹⁴ Gross domestic product (GDP) in absolute value. UNECE. URL: <https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/ru/Table?IndicatorCode=7> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

indicator and there will always be people in any country who will not be able to find a job, or those places that will be available will not be of particular interest to them. In countries where there is no unemployment, this means that people accept even the most vulnerable and low-paid jobs.¹⁵ Moreover, there are people in the market of any country who want to work, but cannot find a job they like. Moldova is such a country, and this is why many citizens migrate in order to find a job that will be more attractive to them and where they can earn more money than at home.

Figure 4. Unemployment rate (% of the total working-age population)



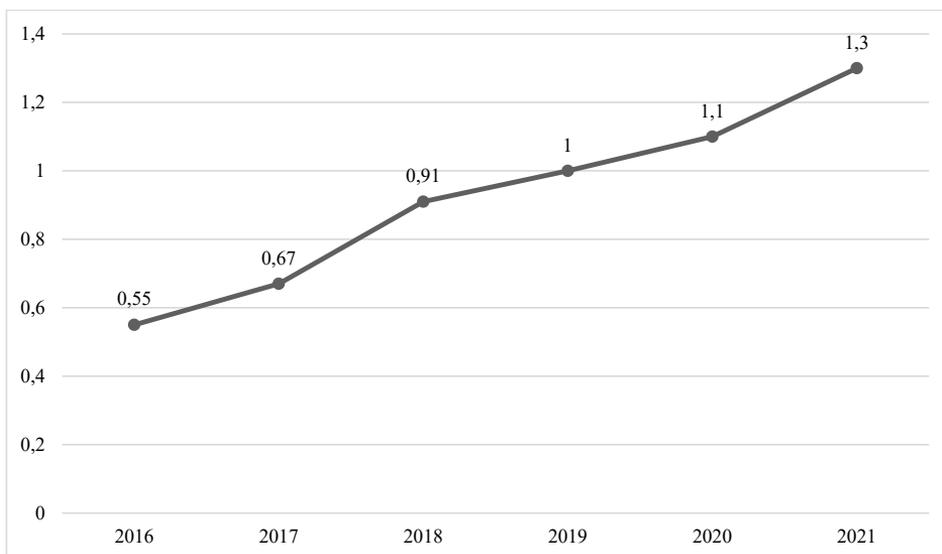
Source: *Unemployment Rate in Moldova*. Biroul Național de Statistică. URL: https://statistica.gov.md/ca_tegory.php?l=ru&idc=107

Based on the data given in Figure 4, the unemployment rate significantly decreased by 2018, but in 2019, it began to rise again and reached a peak in 2020, when due to the pandemic, many Moldovan citizens were forced to return back to their homeland, where jobs were unfortunately not provided for them.

¹⁵ Unemployment Rate in Moldova. Biroul Național de Statistică. URL: <https://statistica.gov.md/category.php?l=ru&idc=107> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

Many of them waited for the pandemic to end and borders to open so that they could leave again and return to their former workplace.

Figure 5. Housing construction, real estate sales (USD billion)



Source: 8. *Housing Construction, Real Estate Sales (USD billion)*. UNECE. URL: <https://unece.org/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/cp.moldova.2015a.en.pdf>

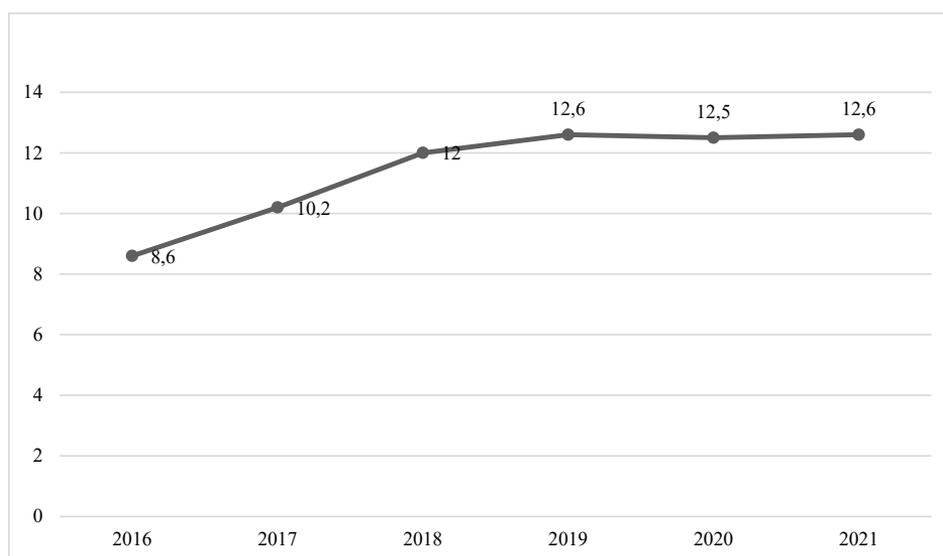
Housing construction and real estate sales occupy an important place in the development of the Moldovan economy. According to data (Figure 5), this indicator increases annually and is not affected by events that occur in the country. For example, in Chisinau in 2021, a total of 4118 authorizations were issued. Of these, 3026 were issued for the construction of residential buildings, and the remaining 1 092 for non-residential building. The number of authorizations for the construction of residential buildings increased by 48% over the year, and non-residential by 9.9%. It should be noted that the last time that the authorities issued more than 4000 authorizations for the year (4316) was in 2015.¹⁶ The de-

¹⁶ Gross domestic product (GDP) in absolute value. UNECE. URL: <https://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/ru/Table?IndicatorCode=7> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

mand for housing is increasing every year, mainly from citizens from the Diaspora who earn money abroad, accumulate capital and come home and buy real estate. Experts note that after 13 years of decline in the demand for real estate, in 2019 demand increased significantly. This year alone, 29.7 thousand apartments were sold, and in the first quarter alone, 7.6 thousand apartment deals were concluded across the country. For such a small country as Moldova, this number is significant. For example, if 5-6 years ago about 60% of apartments were sold in the capital, today this number reaches 80%.¹⁷

The national wealth of the country is also an important economic indicator. It is a set of assets in monetary terms that are created and accumulated by the country. Since 2018, this indicator in Moldova has been relatively stable and has not changed significantly from year to year. On average, it reached \$12.5 billion a year (Figure 6).¹⁸

Figure 6. National wealth (billions of dollars)



Source: 22. *National Wealth (billions of dollars)*. WB. URL: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/moldova/overview>

¹⁷ Housing Construction, Real Estate Sales (USD billion). UNECE. URL: <https://unece.Org/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/cp.moldova.2015a.en.pdf> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

¹⁸ National Wealth (billions of dollars). WB. URL: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/moldova/overview> (accessed: 15.07.2022)

It is also important to note for Moldova that the country is completely dependent on foreign energy resources. Lacking its own energy resources, the country is forced to import 98% of energy resources. Energy overspending per unit of GDP is 3-4 times more than in developed countries. Local energy resources cover only 2% of needs. In recent years, the Moldovan Government has taken a number of measures to reconstruct the energy sector by opening this sector to competitors and attracting private investors.

Thus, we may say that the economic situation of the Republic of Moldova is generally quite difficult. According to many indicators, the country lags behind its neighbors and is the poorest country in Europe, which is one of the most important reasons for population migration from the country. People who are unemployed are forced to go abroad to work, including to Russia, where they can feed themselves and send part of the accumulated funds home so that their relatives and friends can survive.

* * *

In recent decades, migration has become a significant factor of development for many countries of the world. This has an impact on the transformation of the political, social and economic spheres of the recipient countries. Migration has unpredictable economic and social consequences for all countries. Migration contributes to a more efficient use of resources, not only labor, but also financial resources, which contributes to the economy of the region as a whole. In most developed countries, migration plays an important supporting role, helping to eliminate the imbalances in the local labor market, ensure the proper functioning of production and activate the investment process, thereby bringing significant benefits to the country.

Thus, the migration of the population from Moldova is essentially irreversible, as when they arrive in another country, many migrants decide to stay there permanently, and also invite their relatives and friends to join them.

It might be concluded that migration policy is closely related to public administration and the laws adopted in the country. A number of documents have been adopted at state level to regulate migration policy in Moldova. The main challenge facing the Republic of Moldova at present is ensuring that these laws are put into practice, and that they are correctly understood and realized by the

authorities responsible for their implementation. The next question is whether the existing gaps will be filled by the inclusion of European standards in the legislation, subject to the political and financial commitment of the State, and if the Law will be applied in practice. At this stage, the Republic of Moldova is drafting a new legislative framework in the field of migration, which could improve the present situation in the country.

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Тенденции, факторы и государственная политика в сфере миграции в Республике Молдове

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Аннотация: Статья посвящена анализу современного состояния государственной политики Республики Молдова в сфере миграции. Поскольку страна в основном является донором мигрантов, в стране действует ряд государственных органов, цель которых – контроль и обеспечение права на свободное передвижение как внутри страны, так и за ее пределами, а также содействие возвращению мигрантов. Среди основных причин миграции авторы выделяют бедность, высокий уровень безработицы, нестабильную политическую ситуацию и коррупция на государственном уровне, стремление улучшить качество жизни, переезд на жительство к родственникам или в целях получения образования.

Исследование опирается на системно-структурный анализ, сравнительный и формально-логический метод. В статье анализируются материалы и данные, которыми оперируют государственные учреждения Республики Молдова, а также международные организации.

Республика Молдова активно работает над внедрением принципов эффективного государственного управления в сфере миграции. На государственном уровне принят ряд законов, которые способствуют эффективному регулированию миграции в стране. При этом Республика Молдова сталкивается со рядом проблем: несмотря на значительный прогресс, предстоит еще много работы по миграционной политике на всех уровнях государственного управления. Граждане страны продолжают мигрировать, и лишь небольшой их процент возвращается на родину.

Ключевые слова: Республика Молдова, эмиграция, государственная политика, Европейский Союз, Российская Федерация, право

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