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GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF MOLDOVA

LEVERAGING THE SYNERGIES OF EU ACCESSION AND THE SDGs FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MOLDOVA

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Foreword

Moldova's accession to the European Union (EU) is now the key development process in the country and is an absolute priority for the Government, being integrated into all areas of social-economic development. This process is seen as a crucial step toward fostering stability and prosperity, and as a catalyst for bringing about comprehensive political, economic and societal transformation in Moldova. While embarking at full speed on the upcoming accession negotiations through developing and aligning Moldova's legal and policy framework and strengthening the economy and public administration to address the requirements of the EU membership, Moldova is also pursuing another reform agenda that has been agreed at the global level: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The EU, the United Nations and the Government of Moldova have common values and interlinked strategic priorities. Delivery on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015, and the EU accession agenda of the Republic of Moldova, require enhanced coordination and cooperation. The present report focuses on identifying those areas and aspects of the 2030 Agenda, the EU accession, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2027, in relation to which there is the potential for joint work to accelerate the reforms and improve policy support.

The findings of this Report indicate that 128 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets (76% of all the targets) are linked to policy recommendations in 33 negotiating chapters, and that 103 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF 2023–2027) indicators out of 111 (93%) are linked to policy recommendations in the European Commission (EC) assessment report dated 8 November 2023. This confirms the multitude of intrinsic linkages and synergies between these important development road maps. At the same time, the Building European Moldova National Plan (20 Priorities Action Plan), as well as the National Development Plan 2024–2026, also show simultaneously the strong commitment by the Government of the Republic of Moldova to delivering on the European Commission recommendations and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Moldova's pursuit of the EU accession stands as a pivotal driver of stability, prosperity and the rule of law and is triggering a comprehensive transformation of the country, encompassing the political, economic, and societal realms. Concurrently, the alignment with the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underscores Moldova's commitment to a multifaceted reform agenda. The intricate mapping of synergies illuminates the interconnectedness of the EU accession, the 2030 Agenda, and the UNSDCF, and also highlights the Government of Moldova's resolute dedication to harmonizing national priorities with EU and international benchmarks for a sustainable and inclusive future.

Acknowledgements

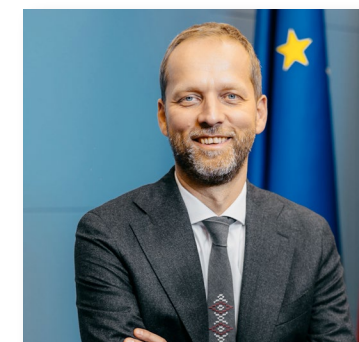
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Executive Summary

The overall objective of this analysis is to conduct a mapping of synergies and linkages between the Republic of Moldova's European Union (EU) accession requirements and planned actions and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda. In addition, the analysis seeks to understand possible synergies with the United Nations Moldova Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2027 (UNSDCF 2023–2027).

The mapping analysis should serve as a tool for the Government of Moldova, the United Nations country team, the EU and other development partners to monitor how both processes – EU accession and the SDGs Agenda – reinforce and complement each other. In addition, this mapping will support the country in the EU accession process as enlargement countries are obliged to link the reporting on EU accession (including the pre-accession programming and reporting) with the SDG monitoring process.

The results of the analysis show a strong complementarity between both agendas, being mutually reinforcing processes.

The EU embraces the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as offering a unique opportunity for a better future as the agenda is based on fundamental values and fairness. The global vision behind the SDGs to take action for people, the planet and prosperity is fully in line with the European agenda: sustainability is a European brand.

To ensure a sustainable and prosperous future the right policy choices have to be made today. The mapping of EU policies and acquis indicates that all 17 SDGs are in one way or another addressed through European action. Hence, many of the SDGs are at the heart of the EU's political priorities.

The report presents a detailed mapping analysis in 34 tables, which makes possible to see linkages between the 169 SDG targets and 111 UNSDCF indicators and the 33 negotiating chapters, grouped in six clusters. Also included are the key recommendations from the Republic of Moldova 2023 European Commission (EC) assessment report of November 2023¹ (policy recommendations and required improvements).

Results of the mapping analysis (Table 46) are as follows:

- 128 SDG targets (76%) are linked to the policy recommendations in 33 negotiating chapters set

out in the 2023 EC report (some of them appear multiple times in total, there are 259 links).

- 103 UNSDCF 2023–2027 indicators, out of 111 (93%), are linked to policy recommendations in the 2023 EC report (some of them appear multiple times – in total, there are 233 links). Only eight output indicators from the UNSDCF document are not covered by the EU accession chapter.
- Scope for links – particularly in three key chapters. The crucial chapters that have the greatest impact on the achievement of the 2030 SDGs Agenda, are Chapter 27 on the environment, Chapter 23 on justice and fundamental rights, and Chapter 19 on social policy and employment.

With regard to the UNSDCF 2023–2027 for the Republic of Moldova, the SDGs and the policy areas of EU chapters (Table 6), Cluster 1: Fundamentals; Cluster 2: Internal market; and Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity are fully interlinked and parts of Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth; Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion; and Cluster 6: External relations are covered (24 out of 33 chapters). Areas that are more evident in the synergies are as follows: 1) Fundamentals, rule of law area (Chapters 23 and 24); 2) social inclusion chapters (Chapters 19, 26, 28); 3) environment and climate change (Chapter 27, but also Chapters 14, 15, 21); 4) food and food security (Chapters 11, 12, 13); and 5) economic development (all co-called economic chapters).

In view of the recognized complementarities between the EU accession requirements and the SDGs Agenda, as well as the Government's major strategic documents, such as the Moldova National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030" and the UNSDCF 2023–2027, together with the key priorities from the 2023 EC report, it is clear that by working together and creating synergies between these agendas and strategies, greater benefits can be achieved in regard to the overall prosperity of the Republic of Moldova.

In that context, this mapping analysis provides an opportunity to take a smart approach to the implementation of both development agendas. By addressing both agendas at the same time, common strategic goals may be achieved more easily and more effectively.



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¹ Commission Staff Working Document, Republic of Moldova 2023 Report, Accompanying the document: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement policy.



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Acronyms and abbreviations

AGEPI	State Agency on Intellectual Property	IGC	Intergovernmental Conference
AL	Albania (ISO code for the country)	ILO	International Labour Organization
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina (ISO code for the country)	IOM	International Organization for Migration
CBO	Community based organization	ITU	International Telecommunication Union
CFSP	EU Common Foreign and Security Policy	KS*	Kosovo (not listed as a two-digit ISO standard country for Kosovo, but unofficially used in analysis)
CSO	Civil society organization	LPA	Local public administration
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement	MD	Republic of Moldova (ISO code for the country)
EC	European Commission	ME	Montenegro (ISO code for the country)
EVAWG	Elimination of violence against women and girls	MK	North Macedonia, country ISO code (previously Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)
EU	European Union	MSMEs	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
EURES	European Network of Employment Services	NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	NDICI	Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
GDP	Gross domestic product	NECP	National Energy and Climate Plan
GE	Georgia (ISO code for the country)	NEET	Not in employment, education or training
GRECO	The Group of States against Corruption	ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights



PAR	Public administration reform	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
RS	Republic of Serbia (ISO code of the country)	UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement	UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
SCM	Superior Council of Magistracy	VET	Vocational education and training
SCP	Superior Council of Prosecutors	WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals	WHO	World Health Organization
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises	WJP	World Justice Project (WJP Rule of Law Index)
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics		
TR	Türkiye (ISO code for the country)		
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS		
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme		
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe		
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization		
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund		
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees		
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund		



1 AN INTRODUCTION TO EUROPEAN UNION ACCESSION AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS FRAMEWORK IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

1.1 2030 Agenda and Moldova

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a global and universal vision for human development covering the period up until 2030. It contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets that seek to realize the human rights of all and achieve gender equality. The goals represent an integrated and indivisible balance of three sustainable development dimensions: economic, social and environmental. As such, the SDGs represent an important opportunity for advancing human rights and development.

At the same time, the SDGs are universally applicable to all countries. The pledge to Leave No One Behind has two elements: firstly, the SDGs and accompanying targets must be met for all nations, peoples and segments of society; and secondly, groups of people for whom the SDG targets are furthest away from being achieved must be prioritized and their needs must be met first. Along with other international summits and conferences held in 2015 in Addis Ababa, Sendai and Paris, under the 2030 Agenda the international community agreed on this ambitious new framework according to which all countries will work together on shared challenges.

The European Union (EU) embraces the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a unique opportunity for a better future, recognizing that the agenda is based on fundamental values and fairness. The global vision behind the SDGs to take action for people, the planet and prosperity is fully in line with the European agenda: Sustainability is a European brand.

To ensure a prosperous and sustainable future, the right policy choices have to be made today. A mapping of EU policies and *acquis* indicates that all 17 SDGs are in one way or another addressed through European action. Hence, the SDG Agenda is among the priorities of the EU.

The Republic of Moldova, along with 192 other member states of the United Nations, has undertaken to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By adopting the 2030

Sustainable Development Agenda, Moldova has agreed to implement and track progress in achieving the SDGs at the national level. The combined efforts of key actors are being mobilized to end all forms of poverty, tackle inequalities and tackle climate change, ensuring that no one is left behind. This process has involved adapting the SDGs to the specific context of Moldova, identifying national priorities, and developing specific plans and policies to achieve these goals

1.2. Moldova's national EU Agenda 2030 and European perspective

In 2014, the EU and Moldova signed an Association Agreement, including establishing a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA), which fully entered into force in July 2016. The Association Agreement/DCFTA is the bilateral legal instrument which serves as the basis for political association and economic integration between the EU and Moldova. Since 2016, Moldova has continued to implement its obligations under the agreement. Regular political and economic dialogue between the EU and Moldova has continued through the Association Agreement/DCFTA structures, which also include various subcommittees. Since April 2014, citizens of Moldova have enjoyed visa-free travel within the Schengen area.

On 3 March 2022, the Republic of Moldova presented its application for EU membership. On 17 June 2022, less than four months after the submission of applications for EU membership by Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, and after the presentation of the European Commission's (EC's) opinion, the European Council granted Ukraine and Moldova the status of candidate countries and recognized Georgia's European perspective, marking a step towards formal candidacy. Never before have EU countries made a positive response to applications for EU membership so quickly.



As stated in the November 2023 assessment Report, the EC welcomes the significant reform efforts undertaken by Moldova since the European Council decision of June 2022, despite the severe impact in Moldova of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The EC considers that Moldova has made important progress on the nine steps² set out in its Opinion of June 2022 and has taken additional measures to complement and sustain these achievements.

In the light of the results achieved since June 2022 relating to the political criteria, within the framework of the nine steps and beyond, the EC considers that Moldova has **sufficiently fulfilled** the criteria related to the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, set by the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, provided it continues its reform efforts and addresses the remaining requirements under the nine steps. On this basis, the EC recommends that the Council opens accession negotiations with Moldova.

Furthermore, the EC recommends that the Council adopts the negotiating framework once Moldova has:

- 1 Continued making significant progress in appointing vetted Supreme Court Justices, and members of judicial and prosecutorial self-governance bodies, and in nominating a new Prosecutor General in a merit-based and transparent process;
- 2 Assigned adequate resources and structures to the Anti-corruption Prosecutor's Office of Moldova;
- 3 Undertaken further steps on de-oligarchization, including through relevant regulations, such as on cash payments and on financial flows.

According to the EC, Moldova must continue to fight against corruption by advancing its track record on corruption investigations and convictions. As stated in the 2023 report, the EC will continuously monitor the progress and compliance in all areas related to the opening of negotiations and will report to the Council by March 2024. The report states that the EC stands ready to start preparatory work, in particular the analytical examination of the *acquis* (screening) and the preparation of the negotiating framework.

On 15 December 2023 the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and invited the Council to adopt the respective negotiating framework once the relevant steps set out in the respective




EC recommendations of 8 November 2023 are taken. After this crucial political decision, the next step is to set a date for the opening of accession negotiations. The European Council also decided to grant the status of candidate country to Georgia, on the understanding that the relevant steps set out in the EC recommendations of 8 November 2023 are taken. Consequently, possibly in the next year we can expect up to nine candidate countries to negotiate at the same time to attain EU membership.

The following table presents the current a comparison of EU integration dynamic for Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia.

² These are: 1) comprehensive justice system reform; 2) implementation of Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)/ Venice Commission recommendations; 3) fighting corruption; 4) de-oligarchization; 5) fighting organised crime; 6) public administration reform; 7) public finance management; 8. involving civil society; and 9) strengthening the protection of human rights.



Table 1 . EU enlargement policy: December 2023

European integration phases	A NEW EASTERN ACCESSION TRIO		
	CANDIDATE COUNTRIES		
	 MOLDOVA	 UKRAINE	 GEORGIA
Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA)/ Association Agreement / DCFTA entry into force	01/07/2016	01/09/2017	01/07/2016
Submitted application	03/03/2022	28/02/2022	03/03/2022
Candidate country status	23/06/2022 (and EC analytical report - 01/02/2023)	23/06/2022 (and EC analytical report - 01/02/2023)	23/06/2022 potential candidate
EC report 2023 recommendations (8/11/2023):	EC has recommended that the Council opens accession negotiations with Moldova	EC has recommended that the Council opens accession negotiations with Ukraine	EC has recommended that the Council grants Georgia the status of a candidate country on the understanding that a number of steps are taken
European Council conclusions (15/12/2023)	Decision on opening accession negotiations	Decision on opening accession negotiations	Decision on candidate country status
Accession negotiations start – the First Inter-governmental Conference (IGC)	Negotiating frameworks have to be adopted by the Council		

Having in mind all of the foregoing, **Moldova has committed to both the EU integration agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

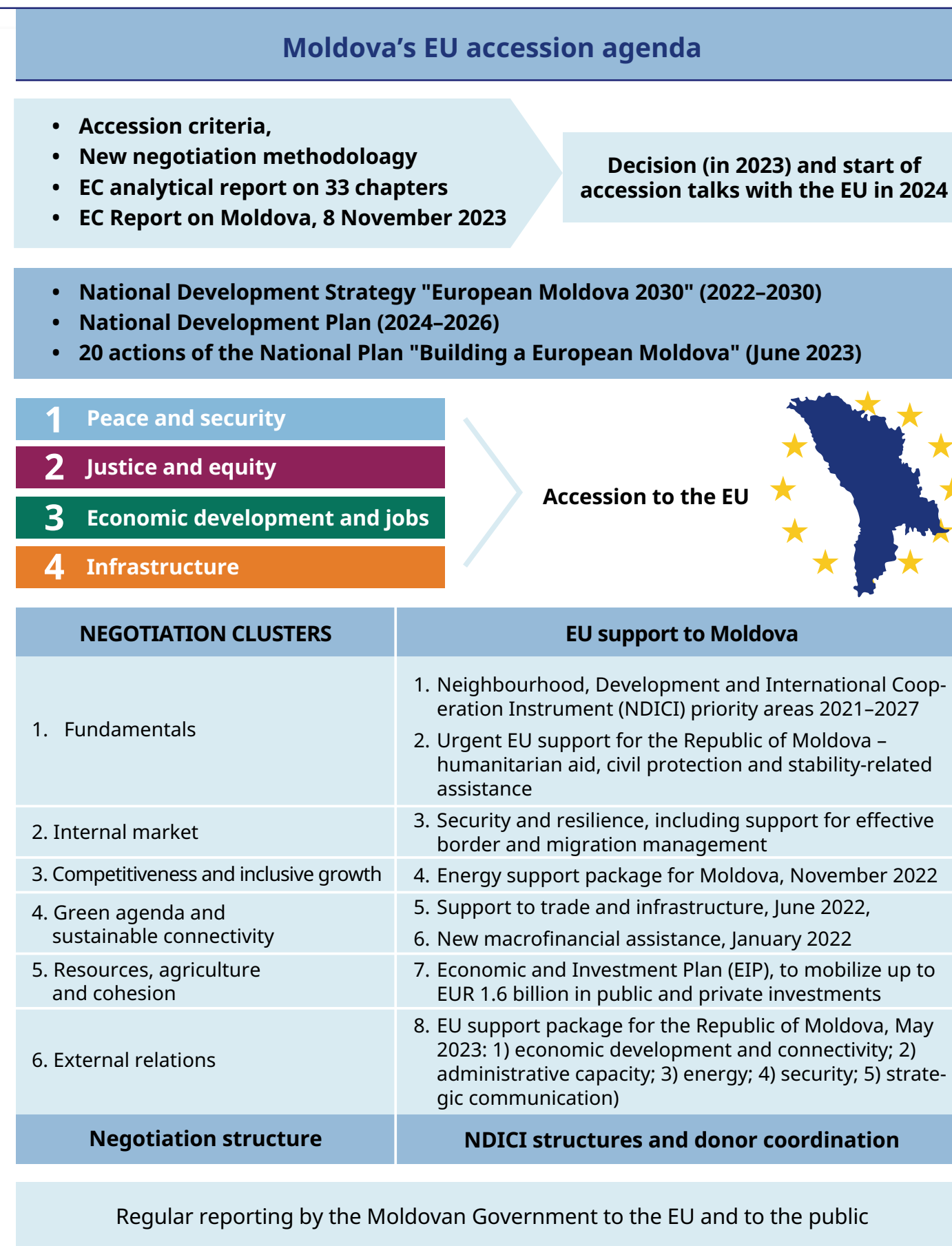




1.3. 2030 Agenda and EU Accession Agenda interlinkages

This analysis is devoted to mapping linkages between the recently presented EU accession agenda and the 2030 Agenda, with a focus on the Republic of Moldova.

Table 2 . 2030 Agenda and the framework for EU accession





As outlined in **Table 2**, this comparative matrix can be helpful in aligning the Republic of Moldova's strategic national plans with the objectives set forth by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the EU's accession process.

The columns on the left delineate Moldova's 2030 Agenda, underpinned by the UNSDCF for the period 2023–2027. The UNSDCF encapsulates Moldova's commitment to key development domains, such as just and inclusive institutions, participatory governance, and sustainable economic and environmental policies. These domains are intrinsically linked to specific SDGs, ranging from SDG 1, which targets the eradication of poverty, to SDG 17, which focuses on global partnerships and the means of implementing these goals.

On the right side of the table, the Moldova's EU accession agenda is shown in detail. It presents a clear trajectory towards Moldova's EU accession, delineating the negotiation clusters, supportive structures and processes within the EU, and associated timelines. This includes the articulation of Moldova's National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030" and the imminent National Plan "Building a European Moldova" which aim to propel the nation towards its declared objective of achieving EU membership.

Central to this table is the articulation of thematic areas where Moldova's national agenda intersects with the SDGs, illustrating the synergistic potential of Moldova's dual commitments. Additionally, the negotiation clusters are mapped out to provide insight into the focal areas for EU negotiations, encompassing essential sectors such as market integration, economic competitiveness, and environmental sustainability.

Having in mind the foregoing, **Moldova has committed to both the EU integration agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.** The table above sets out the structural complementarities of these two agendas. The 2030 Agenda is a long-term development framework focused on the SDGs and their targets, while the EU integration agenda comprises the pre-accession period (future accession negotiations process) and obligations arising from full-fledged membership after accession.

The 2030 Agenda as a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity, is based on achieving the SDGs, while the EU integration process is based on satisfying the accession criteria defined in negotiating chapters and related benchmarks.

In this context, the 2030 Agenda, as a universal, global development agenda is **"nationalized"** through the adoption of a **national framework for monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda**, while the European integration process has strictly defined goals, i.e. achieving EU norms and standards through achieving the closing benchmarks of the negotiating chapters.

We can conclude that the EU agenda is, on some points, narrower than the 2030 Agenda, keeping in mind that the scope of SDGs is significantly wider than the scope of the accession criteria.

The EU provides support to the country's integration process according to defined priorities in specific sectors, while the 2030 Agenda **does not** bring an exact financial envelope that provides financial support to the Government as achieving SDG targets is the responsibility of each of the United Nations member states. However, financial support for achieving the SDGs may come from external sources (vertical funds, bilateral, international finance institutions, private donors, etc.), depending on the economic / income status of the country. Hence, **an important source of assistance for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is EU support and the concessional loans provided by European banks.**



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1. Methodological notes

The objective of this analysis is to conduct a mapping of synergies and common areas of work between 1) the Moldova EU accession needs and actions, and 2) Agenda (SDGs). In addition, synergies with the UNSDCF 2023–2027 will also be analysed.

The mapping will help the Government of Moldova, the United Nations Moldova, the EU and other development partners, to monitor how both processes – EU accession and the SDGs Agenda – reinforce and complement each other. In this context, the State Chancellery will be the primary beneficiary of the mapping, as it has, among other duties, the responsibility for legal harmonization for EU accession, and the coordination of actions relating to the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda.³

In addition, the mapping will also be of importance in the context of the EU's focus on the SDGs Agenda, whereby the EU accession countries are obliged to link the reporting on EU accession (including NDICI programming and reporting) with the SDG monitoring process.⁴ At the same time, it will serve the United Nations as a guiding tool in efforts to better tailor and align its support to the Government of Moldova's needs in the context of the EU accession negotiations and connected reforms and the 2030 Agenda.

Key sources used for the mapping analysis are the following: the EC Annual Report for Moldova and EC

Communication (8 November 2023);⁵ the UNSDCF 2023–2027; Moldova EU Action Plans of the 33 working groups created by the Moldovan Government for the EU accession (2023); 2030 Agenda and the SDGs; EU Acquis; the Moldova National Development Strategy; the annual government SDGs report; and other resources.

The key deliverable within this analysis is a summary of a mapping of synergies per specific negotiating chapters that includes the EC recommendations for policy improvements, other sources analysed, related SDG targets, and UNSDCF indicators.

Policy recommendations/needed improvements for EU accession/negotiations

SDGs targets

UNSDCF indicators

A potential limitation of this kind of analysis is the lack of live communication with government representatives from negotiation structures.

³ Government Decision no. 953/2022 "On the approval of the national monitoring framework for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", which establishes the tasks, responsibilities and mechanisms necessary for the implementation of the SDGs. Responsibility for implementing the Decision rests with the State Chancellery.

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument** – Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No. 466/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009;

⁵ **Additional EC documentation** comprises the following: 1) **questionnaire** – information requested by the EC from the Government of the Republic of Moldova for the preparation of the Opinion on the application of the Republic of Moldova for membership of the European Union, Part I, April 2022; 2) EC, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council, **Commission Opinion** on the Republic of Moldova's application for membership of the European Union, COM(2022) 406 final, Brussels, 17/06/2022.; 3) European Commission, Commission Staff Working Document, **Analytical Report** following the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council, Commission Opinion on the Republic of Moldova's application for membership of the European Union, SWD(2023) 32 final, Brussels, 01/02/2023.

2.2. From a qualitative to a quantitative evaluation of progress in reform areas set out in EC assessment reports

In its 2015 Progress Report, the EC introduced standard wording for describing the **overall progress** in the adoption and implementation of the EU standards and rules made by negotiation chapters, as well as for estimating activities under the EU agenda, that occur in the time period between two progress reports, i.e. **dynamic indicators** of progress (or backsliding) in specific areas.

Table 3 . From a qualitative to a quantitative evaluation of progress in reform areas set out in EC reports

Overall progress in EU integration–state of play	Early stage (1)	Some level of preparation (2)	Moderately prepared (3)	Good level of preparation (4)	Well-advanced (5)
Activities occurring between two EC reports – dynamic indicator	Backsliding (1)	No progress (2)	Some progress (3)	Good progress (4)	Very good progress (5)

Source: EU Enlargement Strategy 2015 and reports per countries.

In the 2019 EC report, in addition to being applied in 33 chapters, this approach is also applied to the estimation of the following:

- The quality of public administration reform (PAR indicator);
- Economic indicator 1 (existence of a functioning market economy);
- Economic indicator 2 (capacities to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU).

An evaluation of subcategories C23 and C24 is also provided, with separate marks for the judiciary, the fight against corruption, freedom of expression in C23, and for the fight against organized crime in C24.

Areas not covered within this standard wording relate to classical political criteria and the process of strengthening democratic institutions (election legislation and implementation, parliament, government, and dialogue with civil society organizations (CSOs)).

If we convert every qualitative mark of progress into a quantitative one, we get a **static indicator (state of play)** and a **dynamic indicator of the progress made in the process of European integration** for each enlargement country, in the period between two reports.⁶

⁶ This assessment scale for these two indicators is also mentioned in the EC report 2023 for Moldova, on page 3 footnote 4 (https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/moldova-report-2023_en).

Table 4 . Overall progress and dynamics in chapters/areas in the 2023 EC report

Chapter	State of play		EC report, 08/11/2023	
	Analytical report, 01/02/2023	State of play	State of play	Dynamic (y-to-y)
C1. Free movement of goods	Some level of preparation	2	2	2.5
C2. Freedom of movement for workers	Early stage of preparation	1	1	2.5
C3. Right to establishment and freedom to provide services	Some level of preparation	2	2	2.5
C4. Free movement of capital	Some level of preparation	2	2.5	3
C5. Public procurement	Early stage of preparation	1	2	3
C6. Company law	Early stage of preparation	1	1.5	2.5
C7. Intellectual property law	Some level of preparation	2	2	2.5
C8. Competition policy	Some level of preparation	2	2	2.5
C9. Financial services	Early stage of preparation	1	2	4
C10. Digital transformation and media	Some level of preparation	2	2	4
C11. Agriculture and rural development	Early stage of preparation	1	1	3
C12. Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
C13. Fisheries	Early stage of preparation	1	1	2.5
C14. Transport policy	Some level of preparation	2	2	2.5
C15. Energy	Some level of preparation	2	2.5	4
C16. Taxation	Early stage of preparation	1	2	4
C17. Economic and monetary policy	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
C18. Statistics	Some level of preparation	2	2	2.5
C19. Social policy and employment	Early stage of preparation	1	2	3
C20. Enterprise and industrial policy	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
C21. Trans-European networks	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
C22. Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
C23. Justice and fundamental rights	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
Judiciary			2	4
Anti-corruption			2	3
Freedom of expression			2	3
C24. Justice, freedom and security	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
Fight against org. crime			2	3
C25. Science and research	Moderately prepared	3	3	3
C26. Education and culture	Some level of preparation	2	2	3
C27. Environment and climate action	Early stage of preparation	1	1	3
C28. Consumer and health protection	Some level of preparation	2	2	2.5
C29. Custom union	Some level of preparation	2	2.5	3
C30. External relations	Moderately prepared	3	3	3
C31. Foreign, security and defence policy	Moderately prepared	3	3.5	4
C32. Financial control	Early stage of preparation	1	1	3
C33. Financial and budgetary provisions	Early stage of preparation	1	1	2.5
Average mark for 33 chapters:		1.76	1.92	2.97

Public administration			2	3
Economic criterion 1 – existence of a functional market economy			1.5	
Economic criterion 2 – capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU			1.5	
The average mark for 33 chapters, PAR and economic criteria:			1.90	

■ - medium mark, progress of an activity between two reports



Dynamic indicator (progress between two reports across the 33 chapters) is very good – the average mark is **2.97 / 5.0**.

Based on the result achieved, the Commission recommended that **the Council opens accession negotiations with Moldova**. EC will monitor the progress and compliance in all areas related to the opening of negotiations and report to the Council in future assessments.

Application of the revised EU enlargement methodology and quantification of these indicators for all candidate and potential candidate from the EC 20223 report is presented in [the Annexe 1](#).

3 SDGs AND LINKS WITH GOVERNMENT OF MOLDOVA PRIORITIES

The National Development Strategy “European Moldova 2030” as well as the Government Action Plan “Building a European Moldova” describe the short-, medium- and long-term strategic development vision of the country, synchronizing the priorities, objectives, indicators and targets of international commitments undertaken by the Republic of Moldova, including the ones set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within the national context.

The Government has identified 20 priority actions, coordinated by various ministries, which aim to provide citizens with concrete solutions in the shortest possible time. These activities represent the Government’s commitment to Moldova’s citizens and highlight its determination to bring about improvement in the lives of the people of the Republic of Moldova.

The 20 actions emerge from the four priority pillars of the “European Moldova 2030” strategy:

- 1 Peace in the country and the security of Moldova’s citizens;
- 2 Economic development and an increase in the jobs available;
- 3 The modernization of infrastructure and improvement in the quality of life across Moldova;
- 4 A justice system that ensures justice.⁷

Stability, the rule of law and economic development led by the private and public sectors are the main elements of the envisaged transformation.

UNSDCF 2023–2027

The vision for the country programme is for Moldova to become a more cohesive, inclusive, just and resilient society, supported by a better quality of life for everyone. The UNSDCF has four strategic priorities, which are in line with the national priorities:

- Human development;
- Participatory governance;
- Shared prosperity;
- Climate and environmental resilience.

The achievement of the national priorities and goals, i.e. UNSDCF strategic priorities 2023–2027, would represent a strong contribution to 16 of the 17 SDGs (except SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development).

⁷ https://gov.md/en/20_actiuni







Table 5 . “Building European Moldova 2030” and the SDGs

Action	Action description	SDGs
MODERNISATION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF LIFE ACROSS MOLDOVA		
1. Modernization of cities and villages	Local development projects in at least 496 localities provide citizens with quality public services and modern infrastructure.	
2. Increasing buildings' energy efficiency	Improving the energy efficiency of public buildings with a social purpose and residential blocks.	
3. Clean water and sanitation	Review of the legislative framework in the field of water supply and sanitation. Construction of regional water supply projects.	
4. Modernization of roads and bridges	Rehabilitation of national roads – M2 (bypassing Chisinau municipality), M5 (Criva-Bălți), R 14.1 Soroca-Ari-onești-Otaci – and six bridges.	
5. Digitalization of public services	Development of a mobile application to provide access to all digitized government services.	
6. Implementation of the national forestry programme	Restoration, expansion and conservation of forest areas and forest vegetation.	
PEACE IN THE COUNTRY AND THE SECURITY OF CITIZENS		
7. Securing the borders of the Republic of Moldova	Improving border management capabilities by digitizing verification procedures.	
8. Modernization of the national army	Adopting new measures to ensure a better quality of life for military personnel.	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF JOBS AVAILABLE		
9. Support of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs ("373"))	Creation of a fund that gives SMEs access to competitive bank loans.	
10. Increased and correct distribution of financial aid for farmers	Review of conditions and criteria for small and medium-sized farmers to access subsidies.	
11. Reduction of bureaucracy for entrepreneurs	Facilitating business creation and income generation by reducing administrative red tape.	
12. Increase in agricultural exports to the EU	Expanding the types of product categories approved for export to the EU.	
A JUSTICE SYSTEM THAT ENSURES JUSTICE		
13. Confiscation of illegally obtained property	Implementation of reforms within the National Asset Recovery Plan.	
14. Renovated regional hospitals	Ensuring modern and quality medical infrastructure by equipping and renovating existing hospitals.	
15. Promotion of integrated and professional prosecutors and judges	Restructuring the Superior Council of Magistrates and the Superior Council of Prosecutors through undertaking an external evaluation.	
16. Services accessible for the diaspora	Facilitating access to government services for the Moldovan diaspora.	
17. Reformed social assistance system	Reviewing and reforming welfare benefits to increase labour market participation.	
18. Creation of the national institute for education	Improving the system for the training and professional development of human resources in education.	
19. Elimination of corruption from state institutions	Establishing a robust and effective set of practices that will focus on identifying key areas affected by corruption in state institutions.	
20. Accession to the EU by the year 2030	Fulfilment of the nine recommendations for membership of the EU by aligning the legal framework in all relevant sectors.	



Table 6 . UNSCDF 2023–2027: strategic priorities and link with SDGs and the policy areas of specific EU chapters and clusters

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	LINKS TO SDGs AND EU ACCESSION PRIORITIES	
	SDGs:	EU ACCESSION CLUSTERS AND CHAPTERS:
<p>Just and inclusive institutions and equal opportunities for human development</p> <p>The United Nations in Moldova will support achieving just and inclusive institutions that have sufficient capacities to ensure effective delivery of quality human rights-based and gender-responsive services and inclusive access to quality basic services to empower those who continue to remain excluded.</p>	<p>NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Improvement in public infrastructure, utilities and housing</p>	 <p>Cluster 3 – Chapters 19, Chapter 26 Cluster 5 – Chapter 11, Chapter 12 Cluster 2 – Chapter 28, Cluster 1 – Chapter 23</p>
<p>Participatory governance and social cohesion</p> <p>The United Nations in Moldova will support the strengthening of governance and the rule of law to contribute to the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights, provide access to justice and security, and sustain peace (achieving sustained participatory and accountable governance).</p>	<p>NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Efficient and inclusive governance and rule of law</p>	 <p>Cluster 1 – Chapter 23, Chapter 24, Chapter 5, Chapter 18 and Chapter 32 Cluster 6 – Chapter 30, Chapter 31</p>
<p>Enhanced shared prosperity in a sustainable economy</p> <p>The United Nations in Moldova will do the following: support achieving enhanced and shared economic prosperity, underpinned by more sustainable inclusive economic development; support employment policy and equal opportunities; support micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs); support the building of human capital, addressing the skills mismatch and reducing gender segregation in the labour market; support work to reduce the persistent discrimination against some marginalized groups, and enhanced engagement with the private sector in a comprehensive manner; support the creation of decent employment opportunities for all vulnerable categories.</p>	<p>NATIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: Reduction of economic inequalities</p>	 <p>Cluster 3 – Chapter 19, Chapter 20, Chapter 26 Cluster 1 – Chapter 23 Cluster 5 – Chapter 11, Chapter 22 Cluster 2 – all so-called economic chapters</p>
<p>Green development, sustainable communities, and disaster and climate resilience</p> <p>The United Nations in Moldova will support green development, climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, contributing to the reduction of poverty and inequalities. The UN programme will continue to strengthen environmental governance through the development of more ambitious policies, while facilitating the enforcement of existing laws and regulations. The United Nations in Moldova will also support sectoral changes promoting innovative approaches and nature-based solutions in line with the systems changes required by green transformation. It will also support the strengthening of the country's resilience to future energy shocks by advancing energy efficiency measures and renewable energy use and by strengthening Moldova's social protection system to address energy poverty.</p>	<p>NATIONAL PRIORITY: Healthy and safe environment</p>	 <p>Cluster 4 – Chapter 14, Chapter 15, Chapter 21 and Chapter 27 Cluster 5 – Chapter 11</p>

For each of the four strategic priorities, the UNSCDF defines a desired outcome that the United Nations system and the Government of the Republic of Moldova want to achieve by the end of 2027.

As presented in [Table 6](#), the policy areas of Clusters 1, 2, 4 and 6 are fully covered by the UNSCDF, and part of Clusters 3 and 5 (i.e. **the policy areas of 26 chapters are covered**), whilst only seven chapters are not covered by the UNSCDF (Chapters 10, 16, 17, 25, 29 from Cluster 3, and Chapters 13 and 33 from Cluster 5). However, the UNSCDF covers a period of five years, while it is planned that EU accession will occur by 2030 at the latest. Areas for which synergies are more evident are the following:

- 1** Fundamentals – rule of Law area
- 2** The social inclusion chapters
- 3** Environment and climate change
- 4** Economic development
- 5** Food and food security

The 17 United Nations Joint Outputs of the UNSCDF are the specific contributions to the achievement of the four outcomes for which the United Nations and the Moldovan Government are accountable. They represent the combined work of all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes operating in Moldova, delivered both jointly as well as through single-entity initiatives.



Table 7 . UNSDCF outcomes, outputs, agencies and related SDGs



A harmonized approach to mainstreaming the six principles of Leave No One Behind; a human rights-based approach; gender equality and empowerment of women; resilience; sustainability; and accountability are integrated across United Nations interventions, in cooperation with partners.⁸

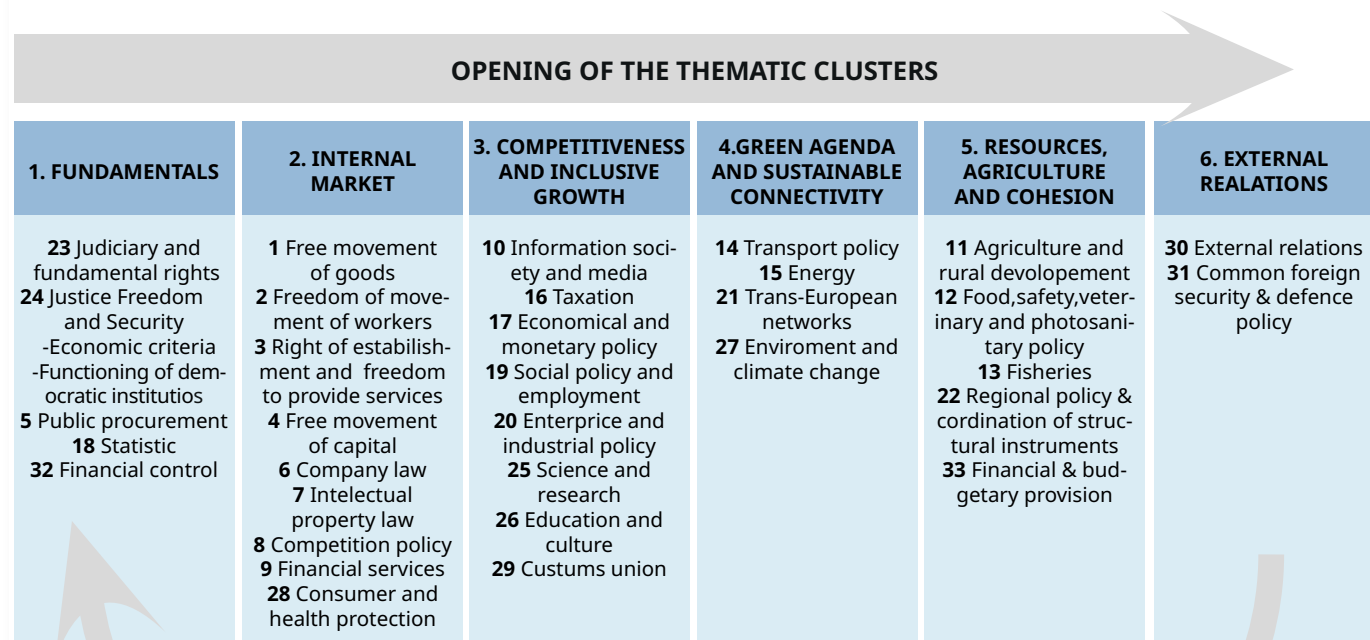
⁸ UNSDCF, the Republic of Moldova, *United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2027*, brief summary, 2022.



4 MAPPING OF SYNERGIES AND ALIGNMENT BETWEEN MOLDOVA EU ACCESSION AREAS OF WORK AND THE SDG FRAMEWORK

Following the introduction of the revised methodology for the accession negotiations in February 2020, the EU negotiating chapters are now divided into **six thematic clusters**. The Republic of Moldova, as an EU candidate country, is part of the 2023 enlargement package and a new methodology and clustering of the negotiating chapters is also applied.

Figure 1 . The thematic clusters of the revised enlargement methodology (2020)



CLOSING OF THE ACCESSION NEGOTIATIONS:
Negotiations on the fundamentals: opened first, closed last.
 No further chapters will be closed before the interim benchmarks for C23 & C24 are met. **C23 & C24** progress determines the overall pace of negotiations.
Negotiations on fundamentals will be guided by roadmaps for ROL chapters; functioning democratic institutions and **PAR strategies**



The next table presents a compilation of different sources, i.e. contributions of partners from the enlargement countries that analyse **connections between the SDG targets, EU negotiation chapters and EU negotiation clusters**. In some sources, the basis of the classification is the mapping of strategic documents according to SDG targets, while in other sources the focus is more on the connections between the SDG indicators and negotiation chapters.⁹

The SDGs are linked to numerous negotiation chapters and related clusters:

- In the first row for each SDG (within the column "Negotiating chapters"), key negotiation chapters are linked, and related clusters are indicated (within the column "Cluster", "Prevailing" and "Connected").
- Other significant chapters and clusters are proposed in the second row of both columns, for all SDGs (these are also important chapters that have a clear link to specific SDGs).
- An asterisk means that one chapter is repeated several times, in connection with different SDGs.
- In the second half of the table, clusters are presented and divided into chapters, including specific areas within Cluster 1.

Table 8 . Linking SDGs with the EU negotiation chapters and clusters

SDG	NEGOTIATING CHAPTERS	CLUSTER		CLUSTERS	NEGOTIATING CHAPTERS + economic criteria, democratic institutions and PAR	
		(Prevailing, connected)				
1 NO POVERTY	No poverty	19*	3	1. Fundamentals	23 – Judiciary and fundamental rights	Economic criteria
		2, 23, 17	2, 1		24 – Justice, freedom, security	Functioning of democratic institutions
2 ZERO HUNGER	Zero hunger (incl. sustainable agriculture)	11*	12*	13	5 – Public procurement	Public administration reform
		19*	5		18 – Statistics	
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	Good health and well-being	28*	2		32 – Financial control	
		1, 24	1, 4, 5	2. Internal market	1 – Free movement of goods	
4 QUALITY EDUCATION	Quality education	26	3		2 – Freedom of movement for workers	
		25, 23	1, 3		3 – Right of establishment and freedom to provide services	
5 GENDER EQUALITY	Gender equality	23*	1		4 – Free movement of capital	
		19	24	28	6 – Company law	
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	Clean water and sanitation	27*	4		7 – Intellectual property law	
		11, 13*	5			
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	Affordable and clean energy	15*	21*	27*	4	8 – Competition policy
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	Decent work and economic growth	19, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8*, 9, 28*	2		9 – Financial services	
		29, 20, 17 - (for all so-called "economic" negotiating chapters)	3		28 – Consumer and health protection	
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	Industry, innovation, and infrastructure		20	25*	3	3. Competitive-ness and inclusive growth
		14	15*	21*	4	10 – Digital transformation and media
						16 – Taxation

⁹ The table is an updated version of the mapping of linkages of these two agendas in the study prepared by Djurovic G. "Regional comparative study on linking a new EU enlargement methodology, implementation of SDGs, Agenda 2030" and "Green Agenda for Western Balkans", GIZ Open Regional Fund for Promotion of EU Integration in the Western Balkans Region, February 2023.



SDG	SDG Name	23*			1	17 – Economic and monetary policy
		17	19*	24		
10	Reduced inequalities	17	19*	24	3	19 – Social policy and employment
11	Sustainable cities and communities	22	21*	14	4	20 – Enterprise and industrial policy
		17			3	25 – Science and research
12	Responsible consumption and production	27*			4	26 – Education and culture
		5, 17, 20, 25			1	29 – Customs union
13	Climate action	27			4	14 – Transport policy
14	Life below water	27*			4	
		13*				
15	Life on land	27*			4	21 – Trans-European networks
		11				27 – Environment and climate change
16	Peace, justice and strong institutions	5	23*	24*	1	5. Resources, agriculture and cohesion
		10, 16*, 17*, 22*, 32*, 33			3, 5	11 – Agriculture and rural development
		- Public administration reform				12 – Food safety, veterinary, phytosanitary policy
		- Stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy				13 – Fisheries
		- Economic criteria (link with Economic Reform Programme and all economic chapters)				22 – Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments
		33 – Financial and budgetary provisions				
17	Partnerships for the goals	23*	24*	32	1	6. External relations
		16*, 17*, 30, 31			3, 6	30 – External relations
						31 – Foreign, security and defence policy

* Note- partially covered

In this part of the analysis, **all of the SDGs are covered and their linkages to specific chapters and clusters are highlighted**. Where a link is labelled “strong” it is because the SDG in question is linked to all so-called “economic” chapters, as well as to the area of green development.

4.1. Analysis by cluster

The table below presents a summary mapping analysis of SDG targets and UNSDCF indicators within each EU accession negotiations cluster. UNSDCF indicators are associated with specific SDG targets and provide a more detailed breakdown of the goals. The next section presents a detailed analysis of the synergies by each chapter and cluster separately.



Table 9 . Summary of the mapping analysis

CLUSTER 1		CLUSTER 2		CLUSTER 3		CLUSTER 4		CLUSTER 5	
SDG target	UNSDCF indicators	SDG target	UNSDCF indicators	SDG target	UNSDCF indicators	SDG target	UNSDCF indicators	SDG target	UNSDCF indicators
Chapter 23		Ch.1		Ch.10		Ch.14		Ch.11	
Ch.23 – 9 actions plan		8.2 3.1.a		4.4 1.2.c		3.6 3.4.a		2.3 3.1.a	
16.3	2.3.b	8.a	3.3.d	8.2	1.3.d	9.1	4.1.b	2.4	3.1.b
16.5	2.4.b	9.3	3.3.e	8.3	2.2.a	11.2		12.2	3.3.a
16.6	Outc.2 D)	9.5	3.3.b	9.c	3.3.c	11.5		12.a	3.3.d
16.7	Outc.2 E)	17.10	3.3.c	16.10	3.4.a	Ch.15		15.3	3.3.f
16.a		17.11		17.8	3.4.e	7.1	Outc.4 A)		4.1.d
Ch.23 – Elections		17.12		Ch.16		7.2	Outc.4 B)		4.2.c
16.3	2.3.d	Ch.2		10.4	1.3.d	7.3	4.2.a		4.3.a
16.5	2.3.c	8.3	1.1.b	10.5	2.3.h	7.a	4.2.e		4.3.b
16.6	Outc.2 D)	8.5	3.1.c	16.6	Outc.2 D)	7.b			4.3.c
16.7	Outc.2 E)	8.8	3.1.d	17.1	Outc.3 A)	9.4		Ch.12	
Ch.23 – CSOs		10.2	3.1.e	Ch.17		Ch.21		2.1	1,2,f
10.3	2.3.e	10.7	3.3.b	8.1	2.1.g	7.a		2.2	4.2.b
17.17	2.3.g		3.3.c	8.3	3.1.a	9.1		3.9	4.3.a
	2.3.h		3.3.d	8.10	3.1.b	9.a		12.2	4.3.b
Ch.23 – PAR			3.3.e	10.5	3.2.a	9.c		12.4	
16.6	1.3.d	Ch.3		16.5	3.3.c	11.2		15.1	
16.7	2.1.g	8.3	3.1.a	16.6	Outc.3 B)	Ch.27		Ch.13	
17.3	2.3.h	9.3	3.3.b	17.13	Outc.3 C)	3.9	Outc.4 A)	2.3	3.1.a
Ch.23 – Judiciary		9.4	3.3.c	Ch.19		6.3	Outc.4 C)	8.4	3.3.a
16.3	Outc.2 D)		3.3.e	1.3	Outc.1 A)	6.6	4.1.a	12.2	4.2.b
16.6	Outc.2 E)	Ch.4		1.4	Outc.3 A)	6.a	4.1.b	14.4	4.2.c
	2.4.b	8.10	3.1.e	3.8	Outc.3 B)	11.6	4.1.c	14.7	
	2.4.c	9.3	3.3.b	4.4	1.1.a	12.4	4.1.d	14.b	
Ch.23 – Anti-corruption		10.5	Outc.3 C)	5.5	1.1.d	12.5	4.1.e	Ch.22	
16.5	2.3.h	17.3		8.5	1.3.c	13.1	4.1.f	2.3	2.3.h
16.6	Outc.2 D)	17.4		8.8	1.3.e	13.2	4.2.a	8.1	3.1.a
	Outc.2 E)	Ch.6		8.9	1.3.f	13.3	4.2.b	8.3	3.1.c
Ch.23 – Fund. rights		8.10	3.1.e	8.b	1.3.g	13.a	4.4.a	9.1	3.3.a
4.7	Outc1. C)	9.3	3.3.b	10.2	2.1.d	13.b	4.4.b	9.a	3.3.c
5.1	Outc2. A)	12.6	3.3.c		2.3.a	14.1	4.4.c	10.1	
5.2	Outc2. B)	16.5	3.3.e		2.3.e	14.2		11.3	
5.5	Outc2. C)	Ch.7			3.1.a	14.3		16.6	
5.a	1.2.d	8.2	3.1.a		3.1.d	14.4		17.18	
5.b	1.5.a	9.5	3.3.c		3.1.e	14.5		Ch.33	
5.c	1.5.b	9.b	3.3.e		3.2.a	14.6		16.6	2.1.g
10.3	1.5.c	16.6			(3.2.c)	14.7		17.1	2.3.h
16.2	1.5.d	17.7			3.4.a	14.a		17.17	Outc.3 C)
	2.1.a	Ch.8			3.4.b	14.b			Outc.3 D)
	2.1.e	8.2	2.3.h		3.4.c	14.c			3.1.b
	2.1.f	9.3	3.1.a		3.4.e	15.1			
	2.3.a	9.b	3.3.b	Ch.20		15.2			
	2.3.b	10.a	3.3.c	8.2	Outc.3 E)	15.3		CLUSTER 6	
	3.2.a	16.6	3.3.e	8.3	3.1.a	15.4		Ch.30	
Ch.23 Freedom of expr.		Ch.9		8.4	3.1.e	15.5		10.6	2.4.b
16.10	2.3.b	8.3	2.1.g	9.2	3.3.b	15.6		16.3	3.1.a
	2.4.f	8.10	3.1.e	9.3	3.3.c	15.7		16.8	3.1.c
Ch.24		9.3	3.3.b	9.4	3.3.e	15.8		17.16	3.3.c
16.1	Outc2. C)	10.5	3.3.e	12.3	4.2.a	15.9		17.17	
16.2	Outc2. D)	17.3		12.8	3.1.f	15.a		Ch.31	
16.4	2.1.b	17.5		17.11		15.b		10.b	2.4.d.
16.6	2.4.d.	Ch.28		Ch.25		15.c		16.1	2.4.f
16.7	2.4.f	3.4	Outc.1 B)	7.a	4.2.a	15.8		16.2	2.4.e
16.a	2.3.b	3.8	Outc.1 D)	8.2	3.4.a	15.9		16.4	Outc.2 D)
16.b	2.3.h	3.9	Outc.1 E)	9.5		15.a		17.16	



Ch.5	
12.7	Outc.2. D)
16.3	Outc.2. E)
16.5	2.2.b
16.6	2.3.h
16.10	
17.17	
Ch.18	
16.6	1.1.c
17.18	2.2.a
17.19	2.2.b
	2.2.c
	2.2.d
	2.2.e
Ch.32	
16.5	2.1.g
16.6	2.2.e
17.1	Outc.3 C)
17.3	
Economic criteria	
4.4	Outc.3 A)
8.3	Outc.3 B)
8.5	Outc.3 C)
8.6	Outc.3 D)
8.8	Outc.3 E)
9.3	3.1.d
10.4	3.3.b
17.1	3.3.c
17.3	3.3.e
	3.4.a
4.3	1.2.c
4.4	1.2.g
4.5	3.1.a
9.1	Outc.4 B)
9.4	4.2.a
9.a	
7.1	
7.a	
17.5	

3.a	Outc.1 G)
3.d	1.2.b
12.8	1.2.p
16.6	1.3.a
	1.3.b
	1.3.f
	2.3.h
12.8	1.2.p
16.6	1.3.a
	1.3.b
	1.3.f
	2.3.h

17.6	
Ch.26	
4.1	Outc.1 F)
4.2	1.2.a
4.3	1.2.c
4.4	1.2.d
4.5	1.2.g
4.7	1.2.k
4.a	1.2.l
5.5	2.1.c
8.6	3.4.a
10.2	
11.4	
17.16	
Ch.29	
8.2	3.3.c
8.a	4.3.c
10.a	
12.2	
17.10	
17.11	
17.10	
17.11	

15.b	
15.c	



4.2. Cluster 1: Fundamentals

Under the revised enlargement methodology, Cluster 1 (Fundamentals) represents the mechanism for assessing the quality of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms within the scope of the EU enlargement process. In addition to referring to the functioning of democratic institutions, Cluster 1 also contains the negotiating Chapters 23 (Judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (Justice, freedom and security), which are both formally and in terms of substance at the centre of the EU accession negotiations. These chapters are joined by Chapter 5 (Public procurement), Chapter 18 (Statistics), and Chapter 32 (Financial control), under the “Fundamentals” cluster. One important novelty of the new methodology is that public administration reform and economic criteria are also part of Cluster 1. “Fundamentals”, as the heart of the renewed EU accession process, is the most complex cluster, and will certainly be the most difficult cluster to negotiate. Cluster 1 should lay down the foundation of trust and ensure a credible negotiation process. Negotiations on Cluster 1 will be the first to start and the last to finalize, within the accession process, which means this cluster will be the longest to negotiate.

The November 2023 EC report for Moldova presents key findings for Cluster 1. Regarding **political criteria**, the 2023 EC report covers elections, the Parliament, the Government, and the role of CSOs. The recommendations for these areas provide a road map for strengthening democratic institutions in the country. The 2023 EC report also covers an **assessment of the implementation of the nine steps** specified in the EC opinion. **Public administration reform** is one of the key fundamental pillars of the EU enlargement strategy. The overall objective of this action is to support Moldova in the establishment of effective, efficient, accountable, transparent, digital, and professional public administrations and public financial management systems that are able to deliver better services to citizens. In the 2023 report, the EC highlights several key recommendations in this area, as follows.

The key findings under **Chapter 23 – Judiciary and fundamental rights** cover the following areas: the judiciary, the fight against corruption (prevention and repression), fundamental rights and cooperation with CSOs. The main objective of the implementation of activities identified under **Chapter 24 – Justice, freedom and security** is to facilitate the free movement of people, while guaranteeing their safety. Such a wide framework includes a large number of issues, which are divided into the following sub-areas: migration, asylum, visa policy, external borders and Schengen, judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, police cooperation and the fight against organized crime, the fight against terrorism, and cooperation in the field of drugs, customs cooperation and counterfeiting of the euro.

Cluster 1 includes an **estimation of, and key findings on compliance with, and monitoring the progress in achieving, the economic criteria for EU accession** (the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU).¹⁰ **Finally**, Cluster 1 also refers to an estimation of **neighbourly relations and regional cooperation**.

¹⁰The economic criteria and sub-criteria for eligibility to join the EU are the following: 1) the existence of a functioning market economy (high quality of economic governance; macroeconomic stability, including adequate price stability as well as sustainable public finances and external accounts; proper functioning of the goods and services market, including business environment, state influence on product markets, and privatisation and restructuring; proper functioning of the financial market (including financial stability and access to finance; and proper functioning of the labour market); and 2) the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU (a sufficient amount of human capital, education, research, innovation, and future developments in this field, a sufficient amount and quality of physical capital and infrastructure; changes in the sector and enterprise structure in the economy, including the role of SMEs; a sufficient degree and pace of economic integration with the EU, and price competitiveness).

**Table 10. Cluster 1: Fundamentals. Chapter 23: Judiciary and fundamental rights (including political and PAR criteria)**

Policy recommendations/ Improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>1. Three out of nine steps to be completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1 – Justice system reform: Ensure a transparent and merit-based process for appointments to the main judicial and prosecutorial governance bodies, including for the appointment of a new Prosecutor General. • Step 3 – Fight against corruption at all levels: Ensure that anti-corruption institutions are functioning within a clear organizational structure and with adequate resources. • Step 4 – Implement the commitment to “de-oligarchization”: Continue updating and implementing the de-oligarchization action plan, including through relevant regulations, such as on cash payments and on financial flows. The existing coordination of actions should allow for timely review and to complement the action plan whenever needed. 	<p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>16.7. Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.</p> <p>16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels – in particular, in developing countries – to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.</p> <p>16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.</p>	<p>2.3.b Number of national participatory and inclusive review and monitoring processes in the context of the implementation of international human rights standards (contributing to SDG target 16.a).</p> <p>2.4.b Access to legal services and remedies: i) number of initiatives implemented to strengthen access to legal services and remedies; ii) number of people accessing legal services and remedies virtually (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (e.g. Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator E) WJP Rule of Law Index (selected factors) (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p>
<p>2. Elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The electoral legislation has been comprehensively amended to address inconsistencies, and a new Electoral Code has been adopted. Moldova needs to consult with the Venice Commission on the latest changes to the Electoral Code, to ensure alignment of the provisions related to the electoral ban with European standards. • Implement the electoral legislation by strengthening the Central Election Commission, to provide it with sufficient authority, resources and technical expertise to allow it to carry out its work effectively. • Ensure the transparency of political party funding and accountability in respect of campaign finance. • Reduce the risk of malign interference. Further options could be explored to regulate the involvement of third parties in election campaigns, in line with the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) recommendations. 	<p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.</p>	<p>2.3.d Percentage of people reached by election awareness-raising campaigns who voted during the (local/ national) elections (contributing to SDG target 16.7).</p> <p>2.3.c Percentage of out-of-country voters, out of the total number of voters (contributing to SDG target 16.7).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator, D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7) Note: migration status refers to persons with experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator E) WJP Rule of Law Index (selected factors) (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p>
<p>3. Civil society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further efforts should focus on adopting a national strategy on civil society development for 2024-2027 and improving the quality of public consultation processes to improve transparency and get CSOs more involved in policy dialogue, especially in parliamentary debates and at local level. 	<p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.</p> <p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private, and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.</p>	<p>2.3.e Number of CSOs working on human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment (especially women’s organizations) that have strengthened capacities to exercise their leadership role in relation to the achievement of gender equality and women’s empowerment rights, as well as human rights (contributing to SDG targets 5.1 and 10.3).</p> <p>2.3.g Number of community-based initiatives implemented by young people at local level that promote civic engagement, participation and gender equality.</p> <p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p>



<p>4. Public administration reform strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and monitor the public administration reform strategy effectively, including by adopting a complete regulatory framework for territorial reform through voluntary amalgamation: namely, a law and government decision on the methodology for voluntary amalgamation. Finalize the salary reform plans and start implementing them. Implement the new public finance management strategy, including by strengthening inter-institutional coordination. 	<p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.</p> <p>17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.</p>	<p>1.3.d Level of satisfaction of service users with the co-implemented digital services (contributing to SDG target 1.4).</p> <p>2.1.g Multi-stakeholder development financing mechanisms to strengthen public sector agility and efficient allocation of resources for policy implementation (contributing to SDG target 17.3).</p> <p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p>
<p>5. Judiciary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pursue implementation of the justice reform strategy, in particular, the pre-vetting and vetting processes in line with Venice Commission recommendations and the subsequent appointment of the remaining members of the Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM), the Superior Council of Prosecutors (SCP) and the Supreme Court of Justice but also the members of the SCM and SCP colleges and other judges and prosecutors, in an objective, transparent and merit-based procedure, in line with European standards. Demonstrate a clear track record in this regard. Improve the functioning of the National Institute of Justice, develop human resource strategies for the judiciary and prosecution services, and finalize the new judicial map following a systematic approach in line with European standards and based on a comprehensive analysis of the state of play. Consolidate the capacity of the judicial system and its self-governing institutions, including improving the quality and efficiency of the work of the SCM and SCP. 	<p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p>	<p>Outcome 2 indicator D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator E) WJP Rule of Law Index (selected factors) (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p> <p>2.4.b Access to legal services and remedies: i) number of initiatives implemented to strengthen access to legal services and remedies; number of people accessing legal services and remedies virtually (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p> <p>2.4.c Percentage of girls and boys in conflict with the law who are subject to a diversion order or alternative measure, as opposed to a custodial sentence (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p>
<p>6. Fight against corruption:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt the new National Integrity and Anti-Corruption Strategy 2024 and beyond and its implementation action plan; Finalize the reform of the anti-corruption institutional framework: in particular, increase the capacity of the institutions concerned. Implement pending GRECO recommendations and the ODIHR opinion and guidance on transparency and accountability. 	<p>16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p>	<p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad)</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator E) WJP Rule of Law Index (selected factors) (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p>
<p>7. Fundamental rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve gender equality, including by undertaking further measures to eliminate gender-based violence, including by adopting and implementing the new national programme on preventing and combating domestic violence and violence against women for 2023–2027 and the new national programme on the acceleration of gender equality for 2023–2027 and its corresponding action plan. Implement the programme in support of the Roma population over the period 2022–2025, at all levels of government. Implement the Committee for the Prevention of Torture’s recommendations on the prevention of torture and ill-treatment. 	<p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and an appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.</p> <p>5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.</p> <p>5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.</p> <p>5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.</p>	<p>Outcome 1 Indicator C) Prevalence of violence against women and girls (aged 15–65 years old) by partner/spouse in the last 12 months, by age and form of violence: a) physical, b) sexual, c) psychological (national SDG indicator 5.2.1).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator A) Proportion of the population reporting that in the last 12 months they have ever felt discriminated against or harassed on a ground prohibited under international human rights law (national SDG indicator 10.3.1/16.b.1).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator B) Gender mainstreaming in public policies index (contributing to SDG indicator 5.1.1).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator C) Number of children victims of any form of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking (VNET) (national SDG indicator proxy 16.2.1.2).</p>



	<p>5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.</p> <p>5.b. Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.</p> <p>5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.</p> <p>10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies, and action in this regard.</p> <p>16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.</p>	<p>1.2.d Existence in school curriculum of curricular modules/contents on the following: 1) human rights, 2) gender equality, 3) health education; and ensuring their quality implementation through an interdisciplinary approach in order to form the graduate profile and teacher training (based on national SDG indicator 4.7.1).</p> <p>1.5.a Share of women and girls who access services after experiencing violence or discrimination (contributing to SDG target 5.2).</p> <p>1.5.b Number of developed guidelines, protocols and standard operating procedures to strengthen EVAWG services in line with the Essential Services Package (contributing to SDG target 5.2).</p> <p>1.5.c Number of state institutions and CSOs with increased capacities to address discriminatory gender norms and violence against women and girls (contributing to SDG target 5.2).</p> <p>1.5.d Proportion of rayons covered with advocacy initiatives addressing gender social norms and male engagement programmes (contributing to SDG target 5.2).</p> <p>2.1.a Number of laws, policies, strategies, action plans and programmes adopted, revised and repealed to advance gender equality and international human rights standards (contributing to SDG targets 5.1 and 10.3).</p> <p>2.1.e Number of human rights initiatives implemented by civil society members trained on human rights, a human rights-based approach and gender equality (contributing to SDG targets 5.1 and 10.3).</p> <p>2.1.f Extent of alignment of the national legislative/ normative framework with international commitments to eliminate violence against women and girls, in particular under the Istanbul Convention (contributing to SDG target 5.2).</p> <p>2.3.a Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments, (b) local governments, and (c) executive positions/ministers (cabinets) (national SDG indicators 5.5.1.a & b).</p> <p>2.3.b Number of national participatory and inclusive review and monitoring processes in the context of the implementation of international human rights standards (contributing to SDG target 16.a).</p> <p>3.2.a Number of regulatory frameworks on women's economic empowerment revised/developed, in line with Leave No One Behind, and promoting a human rights-based approach (contributing to SDG target 5.c).</p>
<p>8. Freedom of expression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect journalists more effectively against intimidation and attacks, including by ensuring thorough law enforcement investigations are undertaken. • Extend ownership transparency requirements for print and on-line media. • Improve media self-regulation mechanisms. 	<p>16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.</p>	<p>2.3.b Number of national participatory and inclusive review and monitoring processes in the context of the implementation of international human rights standards (contributing to SDG target 16.a).</p> <p>2.4.f Percentage of people feeling safe in Moldova (contributing to SDG target 16.1).</p>



Table 11 . Cluster 1: Fundamentals. Chapter 24: Justice, freedom and security

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>1. Security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve inter-institutional cooperation and coordination, strengthen institutional capacity and strengthen sharing of information in the area of security to ensure effective prevention and response capabilities, including in a crisis. Strengthen the legal framework and institutional capacity for assessing risks and fighting cybercrime. <p>2. Fight against organized crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to intensify the fight against organized crime, including through cooperation with EU Member States and EU institutions and agencies, including Frontex (the European Border and Coast Guard Agency) and Europol, CEPOL (the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training), the European Medical Device Distributors Alliance, as well as in the context of the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) and the EU-Moldova Support Hub for Internal Security and Border Management. Increase and improve data exchange via the Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA), as well as data collection, analysis and sharing across services, supported through the proactive use of information exchange tools. Develop and approve the new National Strategy on Trafficking in Human beings. 	<p>16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.</p> <p>16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p> <p>16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.</p> <p>16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.</p> <p>16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.</p>	<p>Outcome 2 C) Number of children victims of any form of VNET (national SDG indicator proxy 16.2.1.2).</p> <p>Outcome 2 D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad).</p> <p>2.1.b Level of implementation of international human rights recommendations by Moldova (contributing to SDG target 16.b).</p> <p>2.4.d Number of initiatives, including on human rights and gender equality, aimed to strengthen confidence, trust and social cohesion, and to contribute to sustained peace.</p> <p>2.4.f Percentage of people feeling safe in Moldova (contributing to SDG target 16.1).</p> <p>2.3.b Number of national participatory and inclusive review and monitoring processes in the context of the implementation of international human rights standards (contributing to SDG target 16.a).</p> <p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p>

Table 12 . Cluster 1: Fundamentals. Chapter 5: Public procurement

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>A law on public-private partnership and a regulation on small-value procurement have been adopted. The country needs to further align its legislation with the EU acquis in the area of public procurement, especially the laws on concessions and public-private partnerships. It also needs to adopt specific legislation on the awarding of defence and security procurement contracts and amend secondary public procurement legislation. The efficiency and transparency of the public procurement system needs to be improved, and the e-procurement system needs to be overhauled. Professionalization in public procurement must be ensured.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt and implement a new public procurement programme, including initial benchmarks, annual targets, responsibility for implementation and reporting, together with the required human and budgetary resources; Take effective steps to reduce the volume of public procurement not subject to the law on public procurement and the regulation on small value procurement; Align laws on concessions and public-private partnerships with the EU acquis. 	<p>12.7 Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities.</p> <p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.</p> <p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.</p>	<p>Outcome 2 indicator D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator E) WJP Rule of Law Index (selected factors) (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p> <p>2.2.b Proportion of SDG indicators available at national level according to relevant disaggregation and the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (national SDG indicator 17.18.1).</p> <p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p>

Table 13 . Cluster 1: Fundamentals. Chapter 18: Statistics ¹¹

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Further alignment of sectoral statistics with EU standards is needed, including a better use of administrative sources. The adequacy of resources and the relatively small employee numbers are of concern. Data transmissions to Eurostat are limited.</p> <p>In the coming period, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a population and housing census in 2024 and a pilot census in 2023; Ensure the NBS has adequate staffing and financial resources; Increase the production and transmission of timely and high-quality data to Eurostat. 	<p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity- building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing states, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.</p> <p>17.19 By 2030, build on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement gross domestic product, and support statistical capacity- building in developing countries.</p>	<p>1.1.c Population projections at national and subnational level are developed to inform the policy framework (related to SDG indicator 17.19.2).</p> <p>2.2.a An informational system on demographic and social statistics is in place and is operational (managed by NBS) (contributing to SDG target 17.18).</p> <p>2.2.b Proportion of SDG indicators available at national level according to relevant disaggregation and the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (national SDG indicator 17.18.1).</p> <p>2.2.c Number of statistical and administrative data initiatives and statistical tools (methodologies, questionnaires) developed and/or revised to improve the availability and use of data, including disaggregation by sex, age, disability, ethnicity, migration and legal status and other characteristics, to inform, monitor and evaluate national policies and programmes and international commitments (contributing to SDG target 17.18).</p> <p>2.2.d SDG online monitoring platform, owned by government, makes up-to-date disaggregated data publicly available (contributing to SDG target 17.18).</p> <p>2.2.e Number of public authorities that have strengthened knowledge and skills and that use data as evidence in the policymaking process (contributing to SDG target 17.18).</p>

Table 14 . Cluster 1: Fundamentals. Chapter 32: Financial control ¹²

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The ongoing work in developing this area is in line with international standards and EU requirements. Resources dedicated to public internal financial control should be strengthened. Attracting and retaining qualified internal auditors remains a challenge. The supreme audit institution has improved its strategic framework based on international recommendations. The efficiency of parliamentary oversight of public funds management needs to be improved.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the development strategy for the Court of Accounts; Ratify the 1929 Geneva Convention for the Suppression of Counterfeiting Currency; Appoint an anti-fraud coordination body and develop an anti-fraud coordination network. 	<p>16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.</p> <p>17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.</p>	<p>2.1.g Multi-stakeholder development financing mechanisms that strengthen public sector agility and efficient allocation of resources for policy implementation (contributing to SDG target 17.3).</p> <p>2.2.e Number of public authorities that have strengthened knowledge and skills and that use data as evidence in the policymaking process (contributing to SDG target 17.18).</p> <p>Outcome 3 indicator C) Remittances as share of GDP (SDG indicator 17.3.2).</p>

¹¹ Sub-areas of Chapter 18: Statistics are the following: 1) demography and social statistics; 2) macroeconomic statistics; 3) short-term statistics and prices; 4) statistics of agriculture, environment and registries; and 5) coordination of the statistical system, in line with the international metrology and principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice.

¹² A key area within Chapter 32: Financial control is the system of own resources of the EU. This can be defined as a unilateral irreversible allocation of EU funds to finance the EU budget, which is carried out automatically without the need to make specific decisions by national authorities. Own resources of the EU are determined, collected, paid and controlled in accordance with the rules of the system of own resources.



Table 15 . Cluster 1: Fundamentals. Economic criteria

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>1. In order to improve the functioning of the market economy, and taking into account the difficult external environment, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further in improve the management of public finances, and in particular the planning and execution of public investment; • Continue to improve the business environment, reduce state interference in price setting and maintain a rapid pace of reforms to restructure and/ or privatizestate-owned enterprises; • Address the main weaknesses of the labour market, in particular by increasing incentives for labour force participation, and take measures to tackle informal employment. 	<p>4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-,small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.</p> <p>8.6 By 2030, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.</p> <p>8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers – in particular women migrants – and those in precarious employment.</p> <p>9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.</p> <p>17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through nternational support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.</p> <p>17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.</p>	<p>Outcome 3 indicator A) Gender pay gap (SDG indicator 8.5.1 and contributing to SDG target 10.4).</p> <p>Outcome 3 indicator B) Employment rate (15+, in %) (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>Outcome 3 indicator C) Remittances as share of GDP (SDG indicator 17.3.2).</p> <p>Outcome 3 indicator D) Share of remittances in household budgets of poorest 20% (related to SDG target 1.2).</p> <p>Outcome 3 indicator E) Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment, (%) (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.1.d Private sector adopts transparent and ethical recruitment standards and is enabled to apply these to ensure more transparent and ethical recruitment (including no discrimination) (contributing to SDG target 8.8).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans, during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.d Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.4.a Number of persons, including girls and boys who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), who receive tailored support for employment and skills development, including in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) areas (contributing to SDG targets 4.4, 8.5, 8.6).</p>
<p>2. The capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the EU – In order to improve its competitiveness and support long-term growth, Moldova should, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take steps to improve the quality of education and training to ensure outcomes align with labour market needs, including information and communication technology (ICT) skills and digital literacy; • Increase investment in infrastructure, especially to improve energy security and facilitate international trade and digitalization; • Implement measures to attract foreign direct investment, including addressing issues related to corruption and the rule of law, as well as investment incentives and promotion. 	<p>4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including at university.</p> <p>4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.</p> <p>9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.</p>	<p>1.2.c Student-to-computer ratio (primary and secondary education) (related to SDG indicator 4.4.1).</p> <p>1.2.g Share of students with special educational needs and disabilities in general education institutions (% out of total enrolled) (contributing to SDG indicator 4.5.1).</p> <p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>Outcome 4 Indicator B) Energy intensity (related to SDG indicator 7.3.1).</p> <p>4.2.a Number of private companies (women-led and men-led) that implement innovative solutions on low- emissions, climate-resilient and green development (contributing to SDG target 9.4).</p>



- 9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.
- 9.a Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states.
- 7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.
- 7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.
- 17.5 Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries.

4.3. Cluster 2: Internal market

In regard to Moldova's ability to assume the obligations of EU membership: Moldova is continuing its work on alignment with the EU acquis in many areas. These have recently been grouped into six clusters. Cluster 2: **Internal market** covers nine negotiating chapters, as follows:

- 1 Chapter **1: Free movement of goods** (with the following sub-areas: general principles; horizontal measures (standardization, metrology, accreditation, market surveillance); vertical measures (new approach, old approach) and procedural measures).
- 2 Chapter **2: Freedom of movement of workers** (with the following sub-areas: access to labour market; European Network of Employment Services (EURES); coordination of the social security system and European Health Insurance Card).
- 3 Chapter **3: Right of establishment and freedom to provide services** (with the following sub-areas: mutual recognition of professional qualifications; right of establishment; freedom to provide services; and postal services).
- 4 Chapter **4: Free movement of capital** (with the following sub-areas: free movement of capital and payment; payment operations services; and prevention of money-laundering and financing terrorism).
- 5 Chapter **6: Company law** (with the following sub-areas: company law; corporate accounting and auditing).
- 6 Chapter **7: Intellectual property law** (with the following sub-areas: copyright and related rights industrial property law; and provisions concerning their implementations).
- 7 Chapter **8: Competition policy** (with the following sub-areas: competition policy; and state aid).

- 8 Chapter **9: Financial services** (with the following sub-areas: banking and financial conglomerates; insurance and occupational pensions; securities markets and investment services; and financial market infrastructure).
- 9 Chapter **28: Consumer and health protection** (with the following sub-areas: consumer protection, and health protection).

In regard to Cluster 2: Internal market, Moldova is at the early stages of preparation regarding the freedom of movement for workers. On company law, Moldova sits between the early stage and some level of preparation. There has been a moderate level of preparation in the other areas under this cluster: the right of establishment and freedom to provide services, free movement of goods, intellectual property law, financial services, competition policy, and consumer and health protection. There has been limited to some progress during the assessment period in these areas: good progress has been made on financial services, and some progress has been made on the free movement of capital.¹³

¹³ Commission Staff Working Document, Republic of Moldova 2023 Report, Accompanying the document: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement policy.



Table 16 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 1: Free movement of goods

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen legislation and administrative practices in the non-harmonized areas and prepare a strategy to ensure compliance with Articles 34–36 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU and on case law of the Court of Justice of the EU. • Align legislation relating to vehicle emissions. • Strengthen administrative capacity to implement and enforce the EU acquis, especially in the sectors for which Moldova seeks to sign an Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA) with the EU. 	<p>8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors.</p> <p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>8.a. Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries.</p> <p>9.3. Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>9.5. Enhance scientific research, and upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.</p> <p>17.10. Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory, and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda.</p> <p>17.11. Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020.</p> <p>17.12 Realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all least developed countries, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, including by ensuring that preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from least developed countries are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access.</p>	<p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.d Share of agrifood processed products in the total exports (%) (contributing to SDG target 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>



Table 17 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 2. Freedom of movement for workers

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The country will need to align its legislation with the EU acquis, including its interpretation of case law of the Court of Justice of the EU.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on concluding additional agreements on social security coordination, notably with EU Member States. • Undertake the preparatory work for joining EURES upon accession. <p><i>Note: It is important to mention that the EU rules on supplementary pension rights of mobile workers are not incorporated into Moldovan law. The implementation of the European Health Insurance Card might therefore be challenging.</i></p>	<p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.</p> <p>8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers – in particular women migrants – and those in precarious employment.</p> <p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.</p> <p>10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.</p>	<p>1.1.b The country governance framework integrates migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people (SDG indicator 10.7.2).</p> <p>3.1.c Number of activities/ services implemented to support the achievement of livelihood and inclusion solutions for displacement-affected populations/ refugees (may be linked to SDG 8.5 and 10.7).</p> <p>3.1.d Private sector adopts transparent and ethical recruitment standards and is able to apply these for more transparent and ethical recruitment (including non-discrimination) (contributing to SDG target 8.8).</p> <p>3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.d Share of agrifood processed products in the total exports (%) (contributing to SDG target 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>

**Table 18 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 3: Right of establishment and freedom to provide services**

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The legal framework needs to be brought into line with the requirements of the EU Services Directive and the EU Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications. This needs to be complemented with non- legislative measures and structural reforms, such as setting up electronic platforms and procedures, and building administrative capacity. The legislation on postal services is compliant with relevant directives, and bylaws have been adopted. A regulation on cross-border parcel delivery services still needs to be adopted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring the legal framework into line with the requirements of the Directive on the recognition of professional qualifications, including Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications and Directive 2018/958 on conducting a proportionality test before the adoption of new regulation of professions. Continue aligning legislation with the Services Directive. Update the Association Agreement/DCFTA annex on the rules applicable to postal and courier services. 	<p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.</p>	<p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>

Table 19 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 4: Free movement of capital

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Some Moneyval recommendations still need to be implemented. National legislation has been aligned with the EU Payment Services Directive 2. Moldova is also preparing to apply to join the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA).</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align its rules with the EU Regulation on Interchange Fees for card-based payment transactions, and advance preparations to apply to join SEPA in line with the criteria of the European Payments Council; Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Office for the Prevention and Combating of Money Laundering in the Financial Intelligence Unit; Implement the outstanding Moneyval recommendations, including on anti-money-laundering. 	<p>8.10. Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.</p> <p>9.3. Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>10.5. Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.</p> <p>17.4. Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief, and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress.</p>	<p>3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>Outcome 3 indicator C) Remittances as share of GDP (SDG indicator 17.3.2).</p>



Table 20 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 6: Company law

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the administrative capacity of the Public Service Agency; Advance alignment with the EU acquis on financial reporting and audit, takeovers, single-member companies' provisions, shareholder rights, including the encouragement of long-term shareholder engagement, and on the disclosure of company information; Take further steps to improve the capacity and independence of the audit oversight systems. 	<p>8.10. Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all.</p> <p>9.3. Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>12.6. Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.</p> <p>16.5. Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p>	<p>3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>

Table 21 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 7: Intellectual property law

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The State Agency on Intellectual Property (AGEPI) has improved its cooperation with the EU Intellectual Property Office and is continuing to transpose the EU acquis.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation to fight counterfeiting and piracy; Improve collective rights management to safeguard appropriate royalties payments; Increase the administrative and institutional capacity of AGEPI and take advantage of the collaboration with the EU Intellectual Property Office to improve legislative and enforcement alignment. 	<p>8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors.</p> <p>9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.</p> <p>9.b Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>17.7 Promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed.</p>	<p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>

**Table 22 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 8: Competition policy**

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The Competition Council is understaffed and continues to face constraints in terms of human resources and its capacity to conduct investigations and monitor the implementation of legislation.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align the legislative framework with the acquis on antitrust, mergers and state aid; Increase the transparency of state aid granted by the government and further align state aid schemes in place with the EU acquis, including those applied in free economic zones; Strengthen the administrative and institutional capacity of the Competition Council. 	<p>8.3. Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>9.b. Support domestic technology development, research, and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities.</p> <p>10.a. Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p>	<p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p> <p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>

Table 23 . Cluster 2: Internal market. Chapter 9: Financial services

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The country should make further efforts to align with the financial services acquis, focusing on the priorities identified based on the current state of play.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the outstanding legislation on financial sector supervision to transfer the supervisory role in respect of the insurance sector, non-bank financial institutions, savings and credit associations and credit history bureaux to the National Bank of Moldova; Continue efforts in alignment with the EU acquis related to the regulation of the banking and insurance sectors (including bank resolution and bank deposits guarantee schemes) and to the regulation of securities markets, investment funds and investment services. 	<p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance, and financial services for all.</p> <p>9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, particularly in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>10.5 Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations.</p> <p>17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources.</p> <p>17.5 Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for least developed countries.</p>	<p>2.1.g Multi-stakeholder development financing mechanisms to strengthen public sector agility and efficient allocation of resources for policy implementation (contributing to SDG target 17.3).</p> <p>3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>



Table 24 . Cluster 2.: Internal market. Chapter 28: Consumer and health protection

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>EU rules protect consumers' economic interests and, in relation to product safety, protect them from dangerous imitations and liability for defective products. The EU also ensures stringent common standards for tobacco control, and blood, tissues, cells and organs, and medicines for human and veterinary use. The EU also has rules for upholding patients' rights in cross-border health care and in preparing for and responding to cross-border health threats, including communicable diseases. The national legislation on preventing alcohol abuse is partially aligned with the EU acquis.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the national health strategy; • Intensify efforts on tobacco control by implementing the provisions of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products effectively; • Align the legal framework with the acquis on consumer protection and product safety, and improve cooperation between the public institutions dealing with consumer protection; 	<p>3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being.</p> <p>3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.</p> <p>3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.</p> <p>3.a Strengthen the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries, as appropriate.</p> <p>3.d Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.</p> <p>12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p>	<p>Outcome 1. Indicator B) Share of households with access to basic services, including safe water, sanitation, and an Internet connection (based on national SDG indicator 1.4.1).</p> <p>Outcome 1. Indicator D) Maternal mortality ratio (SDG indicator 3.1.1).</p> <p>Outcome 1. Indicator E) Under-five mortality rate per 1,000 live births (national SDG indicator 3.2.1).</p> <p>Outcome 1. Indicator G) Universal Health Coverage Service Coverage Index (SDG indicator 3.8.1).</p> <p>1.2.b Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in the national programme (national SDG indicator 3.b.1).</p> <p>1.2.p Number of people benefiting from United Nations- supported health services in the following areas: a) communicable diseases; b) non-communicable diseases; c) sexual and reproductive health; d) integrated management of childhood illnesses services; e) other.</p> <p>1.3.a Percentage of individuals belonging to key populations (people who use drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men) who are covered by HIV prevention services (contributing to SDG target 3.3).</p> <p>1.3.b International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness (SDG indicator 3.d.1).</p> <p>1.3.f Percentage of migrants and refugees, including victims of trafficking, who are covered by national public health insurance scheme, by sex (contributing to SDG target 1.3).</p> <p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p>

4.4. Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth

Cluster 3: **Competitiveness and inclusive growth** covers eight negotiating chapters, as follows:

- 1** Chapter **10: Digital transformation and media** (with the following sub-areas: electronic communications; information society services; cybersecurity and audiovisual policy).
- 2** Chapter **16: Taxation** (with the following sub-areas: direct taxation; indirect taxation; and administrative cooperation and mutual).
- 3** Chapter **17: Economic and monetary policy** (covering monetary policy: central bank independence; the prohibition of privileged access of the public sector to financial institutions; and the use of banknotes and coins; and economic policy: fiscal policy and fiscal control).
- 4** Chapter **19: Social policy and employment** (with the following sub-areas: social policy and employment; labour law; health and safety at work; employment policy; social dialogue; social protection; social inclusion; and anti-discrimination and equal opportunities).

- 5** Chapter **20: Enterprise and industrial policy** (with the following sub-areas: industrial policy; SMEs; innovation policy; policy on improvement of the business environment; directive on payments in commercial transactions, as well as banking and finance; tourism; construction; air and maritime industries; and steel industry).
- 6** Chapter **25: Science and research** (with activities related to the European Research Area).
- 7** Chapter **26: Education and culture** (with the following sub-areas: education and training; youth and sport; culture; access to education programmes and other EU instruments).
- 8** Chapter **29: Customs union**.

Moldova has made from some level of preparation to a moderate level of preparation in areas linked to Cluster 3 on competitiveness and inclusive growth. It has made some progress in economic and monetary policy, enterprise and industrial policy, science and research and education and culture. It has achieved some level of preparation in digital transformation, media and taxation, where it has also made good progress. Moldova has made some level of preparation in social policy and employment, where some progress has been made. On customs union, Moldova sits in between some level of preparation and a moderate level of preparation, and has achieved some progress during the assessment period.¹⁴

¹⁴ Commission Staff Working Document, Republic of Moldova 2023 Report, Accompanying the document: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement policy.





Table 25 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 10. Information society and media

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The law on electronic identification and trust services has entered into force and is broadly aligned with the relevant EU acquis. The cybersecurity framework has been strengthened through passing the law on cybersecurity, which was adopted during the reporting period, but Moldova needs to start implementing this law. Moldova needs to align its legal framework with the Electronic Communications Code, and EU best practices on media need to be more widespread within the country. In addition, implementing legislation, including the laws on freedom of expression, personal data protection and access to information, needs to be amended to align with the EU acquis.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align with and implement the EU Roaming Regulation and other relevant EU acquis in the field of telecoms; Adopt the Digital Transformation Strategy 2023–2030 and ensure there is the institutional capacity to implement it; Adopt and implement market instruments to ensure anti-cartel measures and the de-oligarchization of the media market; 	<p>4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors.</p> <p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>9.c Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2030.</p> <p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.</p> <p>16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.</p> <p>17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology.</p>	<p>1.2.c Student-to-computer ratio (primary and secondary education) (related to SDG indicator 4.4.1)</p> <p>1.3.d Level of satisfaction of service users with the co-implemented digital services (contributing to SDG target 1.4).</p> <p>2.2.a An informational system on demographic and social statistics is in place and operational (managed by NBS) 34 (contributing to SDG target 17.18).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.4.a Number of persons, including NEET girls and boys, who receive tailored support for employment and skills development, including in STEM areas (contributing to SDG targets 4.4, 8.5, 8.6).</p> <p>3.4.d. Number of measures implemented with United Nations support to: a) eliminate gender-based discrimination and segregation in the labour market; b) increase women’s access to and use of digital technologies, digital finance, e-commerce and digital value chains; c) ensure women’s economic security and empowerment; d) address discriminatory gender and social norms, stereotypes and practices; and e) promote the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work.</p>



Table 26 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 16: Taxation

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moldova has joined the EU Fiscalis programme. - Moldova has yet to adopt the EU system of tax warehousing for excise duty suspension and the Excise Movement Control System. - Moldova does not provide deferral of taxation for status changes, such as those set out in the Merger Directive, and the rules on the consolidation of companies for tax purposes differ from those in the EU. - The country is not yet a member of the inclusive framework on base erosion and profit shifting and has not signed OECD's October 2021 Statement on a Two-Pillar Solution to Address the Tax Challenges Arising from the Digitalization of the Economy and no formal steps to join this framework have been taken place so far. - There is still no technical capacity or IT strategy to prepare for interconnectivity and interoperability with EU IT systems (such as the Excise Movement Control System and the VAT Information Exchange System). <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize excise duties and VAT regulations with the EU acquis, particularly the structure, exemptions and deductions, special schemes and scope of reduced rates; • Prepare to join the inclusive framework on base erosion and profit shifting to limit tax avoidance and increase tax revenue; • Strengthen the administrative and operational capacity of the tax administration, in particular by boosting digitalization and automation to ensure a proper degree of preparation for interconnection and interoperability with EU systems. 	<p>10.4 Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.</p> <p>10.5 Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.</p>	<p>1.3.d. Level of satisfaction of service users with the co- implemented digital services (contributing to SDG target 1.4).</p> <p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability and transparency of, and participation in, decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p> <p>Outcome 2 Indicator D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad).</p> <p>Outcome 3 indicator A) Gender pay gap (SDG indicator 8.5.1 and contributing to SDG target 10.4).</p>



Table 27 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 17: Economic and monetary policy

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moldova has to set up an independent fiscal council to improve fiscal policymaking. - The country is not yet fully in line with the EU's integrated surveillance framework, in particular regarding the identification and assessment of fiscal risks stemming from the large state-owned enterprises sector. - Moldova has strengthened the central bank's capacity as part of its financial sector supervision reform. <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the independence of the central bank and align the prohibition of monetizing public debt with EU rules; • Improve budget execution, in particular in respect of capital investments, by applying the project pipeline approach to identify public investment projects that are eligible for funding; • Improve budgetary transparency and macroeconomic decision-making by aligning with the requirements of the European System of National and Regional Accounts (ESA 2010) and take steps towards creating an independent fiscal council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7% gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries. 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services. 8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance, and financial services for all. 10.5 Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations. 16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms. 16.6 Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels. 17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.g Multi-stakeholder development financing mechanisms to strengthen public sector agility and efficient allocation of resources for policy implementation (contributing to SDG target 17.3). 3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3). 3.1.b Volume of financial means allocated by the Government for fostering activities to promote local agricultural and agrifood products on foreign markets (nationalized SDG indicator 2.b.1.1). 3.2.a Number of regulatory frameworks on women's economic empowerment revised/developed, in line with Leave No One Behind and promoting a human rights-based approaches (contributing to SDG target 5.c). 3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3). Outcome 3 Indicator B) Employment rate (15+,in %) (contributing to SDG target 8.5). Outcome 3 Indicator C) Remittances as share of GDP (SDG indicator 17.3.2).

**Table 28 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 19: Social policy and employment**

Policy recommendations / Improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>EU rules in the social field include minimum standards for labour law, equality, health and safety at work and non-discrimination. They also promote social dialogue at the EU level.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop, adopt and implement the measures set out in the concept paper on reforming the National Employment Agency, ensuring adequate capacity and setting up a monitoring and evaluation system; • Reform social assistance, with stronger links to employment; • Take concrete steps to strengthen the mandate and administrative and institutional capacity of the State Labour Inspectorate. 	<p>1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.</p> <p>1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.</p> <p>3.8 Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.</p> <p>4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.</p> <p>8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.</p> <p>8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment.</p> <p>8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products.</p> <p>8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the ILO.</p> <p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.</p>	<p>Outcome 1 Indicator A) Absolute poverty rate, by sex of head of household, age (children under 18) (based on national SDG indicator 1.2.1).</p> <p>Outcome 3 Indicator A) Gender pay gap (SDG indicator 8.5.1 and contributing to SDG target 10.4).</p> <p>Outcome 3 Indicator B) Employment rate (15+, in %) (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>1.1.a Government budget allocations to social sectoral policies and programmes as percentage of total government budget allocations (related to SDG indicator 1.a.2).</p> <p>1.1.d Number of budgeted, evidence-informed national (multi-) sectoral strategies, policies and/or action plans targeting social protection and equal access to basic services, with a focus on those left furthest behind, developed and implemented between 2023 and 2027 (contributing to SDG targets 1.3 and 1.4).</p> <p>1.3.c Number of institutions and service providers with strengthened capacities and knowledge to improve the provision of essential services, goods and/or resources for all, with a focus on vulnerable groups (contributing to SDG target 1.4).</p> <p>1.3.e Percentage of displaced persons (including refugees and disaster- affected population) covered by social protection floors/ systems, by sex (contributing to SDG indicator 1.3.1).</p> <p>1.3.f Percentage of migrants and refugees, including victims of trafficking, who are covered by national public health insurance scheme, by sex (contributing to SDG target 1.3).</p> <p>1.3.g Number of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes (contributing to SDG target 1.3).</p> <p>2.1.d Number of national partners with capacities to apply gender- responsive budgeting tools in the budget cycle (contributing to SDG indicator 5.c.1).</p> <p>2.3.a Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments, (b) local governments and (c) executive positions/ministers (cabinets)(national SDG indicator 5.5.1.a & b).</p>



		<p>2.3.e Number of CSOs working on human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment (especially women's organizations) that have strengthened capacities to exercise their leadership role towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment rights, as well as human rights (contributing to SDG targets 5.1 and 10.3).</p> <p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment, in rural areas, including for engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.1.d Private sector adopts transparent and ethical recruitment standards and is enabled to apply them for more transparent and ethical recruitment (including non-discrimination) (contributing to SDG target 8.8).</p> <p>3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.2.a Number of regulatory frameworks on women's economic empowerment revised/developed, in line with Leave No One Behind and promoting a human rights-based approach (contributing to SDG target 5.c).</p> <p>(3.2.c) Number of women-led business with improved performance increased business transactions, and/or income generation as a result of United Nations support.</p> <p>3.4.a Number of persons, including NEET girls and boys, who receive tailored support for employment and skills development, including in STEM areas (contributing to SDG targets 4.4, 8.5, 8.6).</p> <p>3.4.b. National Employment Agency applies monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the service delivery (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.4.c Number of refugees accessing short-term and long-term employment through policy support and employment creation programmes, vocational training and skills recognition mechanism (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p>
		<p>3.4.e (oi 5.2) Number of measures implemented with United Nations support to: a) eliminate gender-based discrimination and segregation in the labour market; b) increase women's access to and use of digital technologies, digital finance, e-commerce and digital value chains; c) ensure women's economic security and empowerment; d) address discriminatory gender and social norms, stereotypes and practices; and e) promote the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work.</p>



Table 29 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 20: Enterprise and industrial policy

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Moldova needs to better align its legislation with the EU Late Payment Directive and make the business environment more attractive, notably for inward foreign direct investment.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start implementing the National Programme for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship and Increasing Competitiveness for 2023–26, the National Industrialization Programme for 2023–2027, and the National Strategy for the Development of the Economy; • Reduce the administrative burden by enacting available proposals to cut red tape, simplify, and digitalize processes; • Accelerate the implementation of the Strategy on the Management of State Property, state enterprises and entities with state capital, and delineate the role of the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization in regulatory and policymaking functions and the role of the Public Property Agency in exercising corporate governance functions with respect to state-owned enterprises. 	<p>8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value added and labour-intensive sectors.</p> <p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.</p> <p>9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry’s share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.</p> <p>9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets.</p> <p>9.4 Upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.</p> <p>12.8 Ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.</p> <p>17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries’ share of global exports by 2020.</p>	<p>Outcome 3 Indicator E) Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment, (%) (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants’ economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans, during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>4.2.a Number of private companies (women-led and men-led) that implement innovative solutions on low-emissions, climate-resilient and green development (contributing to SDG target 9.4).</p> <p>(oi 8.2) Number of private sector entities (including MSMEs) with improved performance, business transactions, and/or income generation as a result of United Nations support.</p>



Table 30 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 25: Science and research

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Moldova is active in the European Research Area and is finalizing a smart specialization strategy. A more integrated approach to governing innovation would create economic opportunities, investment and start-ups. The absorption capacity for research and innovation is still limited, and infrastructure development is required to implement open science. There is no formal national strategy for promoting gender equality and the diaspora in research and innovation and reducing the brain drain. The gender dimension in research needs to be further integrated, and careers in research need to be made more attractive.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the smart specialization strategy and develop a multiannual action plan with measures for implementation; • Ensure sufficient financing for research and innovation under national programmes and adopt measures to promote innovation in line with the new European innovation agenda. 	<p>7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.</p> <p>8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading, and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors.</p> <p>9.5 Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and development spending.</p> <p>17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism.</p>	<p>4.2.a Number of private companies (women- led and men-led) that implement innovative solutions on low-emissions, climate-resilient and green development (contributing to SDG target 9.4).</p> <p>3.4.a Number of persons, including NEET girls and boys, who receive tailored support for employment and skills development, including in STEM areas (contributing to SDG targets 4.4, 8.5, 8.6).</p>



Table 31 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 26: Education and culture

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Moldova's education system is broadly aligned with EU policy and practice, although students' learning outcomes lag behind the European average. The accessibility and inclusiveness of education vary across the country's urban and rural areas, as does the quality of teaching and learning. Further efforts are needed to better match the vocational education and training (VET) skills on offer with labour market needs. Cultural policies generally suffer from a lack of funding. More attention needs to be paid to vulnerable groups, such as Roma, among whom half of all children are not in school. Overall access to education is an issue for Ukrainian children in Moldova, which hosts a large number of Ukrainian refugees. Limited numbers of asylum applications, as well as other constraints, such as an insufficient number of teachers and insufficient school infrastructure, impact the integration of Ukrainian students. There is a lack of oversight on the part of Moldovan authorities. There is limited public financing for the cultural sector, which undermines the access to opportunities for artists and other cultural practitioners.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote reforms to consolidate the quality and efficiency of the school network in both general education and VET; Strengthen the continuous professional development of teachers and school leaders in line with the recently adopted national education strategy for 2030; Implement the youth strategy and ensure efficient funding for sport and culture. 	<p>4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.</p> <p>4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education.</p> <p>4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including at university.</p> <p>4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.</p> <p>4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.</p> <p>4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.</p> <p>4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.</p> <p>5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.</p> <p>8.6 By 2030, substantially reduce the proportion of youth who are NEET.</p> <p>10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.</p> <p>11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.</p> <p>17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, in particular developing countries.</p>	<p>Outcome 1 Indicator F) Gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education (contributing to SDG indicator 4.2.2).</p> <p>1.2.a Percentage of pupils in the last grade of secondary school with minimum literacy skills and minimum knowledge of mathematics (national SDG indicators 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.1.2).</p> <p>1.2.c Student-to-computer ratio (primary and secondary education) (related to SDG indicator 4.4.1).</p> <p>1.2.d Existence in school curriculum of curricular modules/ contents on 1) human rights, 2) gender equality, 3) health education; and ensuring their quality implementation through an interdisciplinary approach in order to form the graduate profile and teacher training (based on national SDG indicator 4.7.1).</p> <p>1.2.g Share of students with special educational needs and disabilities in general education institutions (% out of total enrolled) (contributing to SDG indicator 4.5.1).</p> <p>1.2.k Number of technical and vocational education and training institutions with improved capacity to deliver training and assessments with United Nations support.</p> <p>1.2.l Number of people directly benefiting from improved access to skills and lifelong learning programmes, including for comprehensive sexuality education, developed and implemented with United Nations support.</p> <p>2.1.c Youth action plans: a) a national multisectoral, gender-responsive adolescent policy/youth action plan exists (reflecting sectoral commitments for adolescents), and b) the proportion of local public authorities with evidence-informed, human rights-based annual youth action plans that are budgeted.</p> <p>3.4.a Number of persons, including NEET girls and boys, who receive tailored support for employment and skills development, including in STEM areas (contributing to SDG targets 4.4, 8.5, 8.6).</p>

**Table 32 . Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth. Chapter 29: Customs union**

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Moldova has joined the EU customs programme, which will lead to additional capacity for, and knowledge of, the enlargement process. Moldova and the EU have signed a Mutual Recognition of Authorized Economic Operators programme, which facilitates trade and ensures security for both sides.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all of the implementing standards, IT systems, staff training and communication activities so that the new Customs Code will fully enter into force on 1 January 2024; • Prepare an IT strategy and further develop IT systems to enable a full paperless environment and interconnection and interoperability with EU IT systems; • Finalize the development of the IT system necessary to enter the Common Transit Convention and ensure smooth and secure transit of goods via Moldovan territory. 	<p>8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors.</p> <p>8.a Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries.</p> <p>10.a Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements.</p> <p>12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.</p> <p>17.10 Promote a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, including through the conclusion of negotiations under its Doha Development Agenda.</p> <p>17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2030.</p>	<p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p> <p>4.3.c Export value of local organic agrifood products (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p>

4.5. Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity

Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity covers four negotiating chapters, as follows:

- 1 Chapter **14: Transport policy** (with the following sub-areas: 1) road transport; 2) railway transport; 3) satellite navigation; 4) road infrastructure; 5) combined transport; 6) air transport; 7) maritime transport; and 8) inland navigation).
- 2 Chapter **15: Energy** (with the following sub-areas: 1) electrical energy; 2) gas; 3) hydrocarbons; 4) renewable energy sources; 5) energy efficiency; and 6) nuclear energy).
- 3 Chapter **21: Trans-European networks** (with the following sub-areas: 1) trans-European transport network (TEN-T), which covers road and intermodal transport, waterways and sea ports, air transport, as well as the network of European high-speed rail) 2) Trans-European energy network (TEN-E), which covers the electricity and gas; and 3) Trans-European telecommunications network (eTEN), covering telecommunications network set up as services).
- 4 Chapter **27: Environment and climate change** (with the following sub-areas: 1) horizontal legislation; 2) air quality; 3) waste management; 4) water quality; 5) nature protection; 6) control of industrial pollution and risk management; 7) chemicals; 8) noise; 9) civil protection; and 10) climate change).

On **Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity**, Moldova is at an early stage of preparation in regard to the environment and climate change. It has made some progress during the reporting period by passing cross-cutting environmental legislation and implementing laws on nature protection and industrial emissions. Moldova has shown some level of preparation in the areas of transport and trans-European networks, including the association with the Connecting Europe Facility and gaining observer status in the Transport Community. On energy, Moldova has made good progress: it had the highest progress performance rate among contracting parties in the Energy Community Annual Implementation Report 2022.¹⁵

¹⁵ Commission Staff Working Document, Republic of Moldova 2023 Report, Accompanying the document: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement policy.ts.

**Table 33 . Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity. Chapter 14: Transport policy**

Policy recommendations / Needed improvements for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Progress has been severely hampered by Russia's continued war of aggression against Ukraine, which has had a direct impact on Moldova's ability to progress. Moldova has been granted observer status in the Transport Community Treaty, which will facilitate closer integration in the EU transport market. The country needs to continue its alignment with the EU acquis on all modes of transport and implement it effectively.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make progress on ensuring it is removed from the blacklist of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control; • Implement the Railway Transport Code in a timely fashion; • Adopt the new national mobility strategy 2023–2030, covering all transport modes, and prepare an action plan to implement it, alongside a new road safety strategy. 	<p>3.6 By 2030, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.</p> <p>9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.</p> <p>11.2 Provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.</p> <p>11.5 Significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations.</p>	<p>4.1.a Disaster risk reduction strategies: ¹⁶ (a) a national disaster risk reduction strategy adopted and implemented in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (SDG indicator 13.1.2); (b) number of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies (SDG indicator 13.1.3).</p> <p>4.1.b Moldova collects disaster risk data and reports it in the Sendai Framework Monitor (contributing to SDG indicator 13.b.1).</p>

Table 34 . Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity. Chapter 15: Energy

Policy recommendations / Needed improvements for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>The diversification of gas and electricity supply routes has reduced Russian energy supplies, replacing them with western supplies.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align with and implement the “Clean energy for all Europeans” package, including with the EU Renewable Energy Directive and the Electricity Integration Package adopted by the Energy Community Ministerial Council in December 2022, and should start setting up an electricity market operator; • Adopt the Energy Strategy for 2050, and finalize and adopt the National Energy and Climate Plan, in line with the Energy Community 2030 energy and climate targets; • Set up the national energy efficiency fund, with a focus on interventions in the residential sector, considering the best regional practices. 	<p>7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services.</p> <p>7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.</p> <p>7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.</p> <p>7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.</p> <p>7.b By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing states, and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support.</p> <p>9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.</p>	<p>Outcome 4 Indicator A) Greenhouse gas emissions reduced at national level (global SDG indicator 13.2.2).</p> <p>Outcome 4 Indicator B) Energy intensity (related to SDG indicator 7.3.1).</p> <p>4.2.a Number of private companies (women-led and men-led) that implement innovative solutions on low-emissions, climate-resilient and green development (contributing to SDG target 9.4).</p> <p>4.2.e Number of people who, with United Nations support: a) gained access to clean, affordable, and sustainable energy; and b) benefited from services from clean, affordable, and sustainable energy sources.</p>

¹⁶ Disaster risk reduction strategies are part of the civil protection sub-area of Chapter 27: Environment and climate change. However, part of a disaster risk reduction strategy is the improvement of critical infrastructure, including all modes of transport. Critical infrastructure refers to the physical structures, facilities, networks and other assets which provide services that are essential to the social and economic functioning of a community or society (<https://www.undrr.org/terminology/critical-infrastructure>).

**Table 35 . Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity. Chapter 21: Trans-European networks ¹⁷**

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>On energy, Moldova has succeeded in diversifying its electricity and gas supply routes. It has done so through implementing emergency synchronization with the European Network of Transmission System Operators (ENTSO-E) continental grid. Moldova needs to align its legislative framework with the Trans-European Network for Transport and the Trans-European Network for Energy regulations, and to develop its infrastructure.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make progress in completing the urgent priority infrastructure projects on Solidarity Lanes, in particular rehabilitating the north-south railway corridor and mobilizing resources to absorb Connecting Europe Facility funds to support, in particular, the alignment with the EU gauge; • Speed up the construction of the Vulcănești-Chișinău 400 kV power line, and secure project financing for and start building a new 400 kV electricity interconnection between Suceava in Romania and Bălți in Moldova. 	<p>7.a By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology.</p> <p>9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.</p> <p>9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries.</p> <p>11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transport systems for all.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>

¹⁷ The EU promotes Trans-European networks (TENs) in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy to strengthen the internal market and contribute to growth and employment (Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report, p. 104)



Table 36 . Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity. Chapter 27: Environment and climate change

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Moldova should be more ambitious and should strengthen its coordinated action on the green transition, especially by prioritizing the mainstreaming of the European Green Deal in all policy areas. Climate-related commitments under the Energy Community, in view of the need to move towards carbon pricing, require urgent action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moldova needs to strengthen implementation and enforcement in most of concerned areas. In addition, more sectoral involvement and responsibility in developing an integrated environmental and climate policy is required. The current air quality monitoring system is fragmented, and the country needs to invest heavily in technical equipment, develop air quality plans and build capacity to collect, process and report data. The country still needs to harmonize legislation with several directives, including the directives on ship recycling and managing waste from extractive industries. Significant parts of the population still lack access to quality water supply and sanitation services. Systemic investments are required, especially in wastewater treatment infrastructure. Created in 2016, the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register is not fully operational. Overall, Moldova should strengthen the coordination of inter-institutional actions and build capacity to check and validate data, check companies' reporting, and improve legal liability. Moldova should continue its efforts in strengthening its civil protection and disaster risk management system, particularly on disaster prevention and preparedness. Moldova has not submitted either a long-term low-emissions strategy or a national adaptation plan under the Paris Agreement. <p>In the coming years, the country should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the implementation and enforcement of legislation, with a focus on horizontal legislation, nature protection, water management and waste management; Allocate the necessary human and financial resources to the Ministry of Environment and to subordinate bodies; Implement commitments under the Energy Community's Decarbonization Road map. 	<p>3.9 Reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing the release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.</p> <p>6.6 By 2030, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.</p> <p>6.a By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies.</p> <p>11.6 Reduce the adverse environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and waste management.</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes.</p> <p>12.5 Substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling, and reuse.</p> <p>13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity in relation to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.</p> <p>13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.</p> <p>13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.</p> <p>13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation, and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.</p> <p>Goal 14 : Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development (all 10 targets).</p>	<p>Outcome 4 Indicator A) Greenhouse gas emissions reduced at national level (global SDG indicator 13.2.2).</p> <p>Outcome 4 Indicator C) Share of land area covered by forest and forest vegetation (%) (SDG indicator 15.1.1; indicator included in Moldova 2030 National Development Strategy).</p> <p>4.1.a Disaster risk reduction strategies: (a) national disaster risk reduction strategy adopted and implemented in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (SDG indicator 13.1.2); (b) number of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies (SDG indicator 13.1.3).</p> <p>4.1.b Moldova collects disaster risk data and reports it in the Sendai Framework Monitor (contributing to SDG indicator 13.b.1).</p> <p>4.1.c Number of sectors that integrate climate change considerations that are gender- and migration-sensitive in the development planning frameworks (UNFCCC and EU) (contributing to SDG target 13.2).</p> <p>4.1.d Number of national adaptation plans validated by the government that include migration-, agriculture-, environment- and gender- sensitive climate change nexus considerations (contributing to SDG target 13.1).</p> <p>4.1.e Number of institutions reformed to deliver enhanced environmental services (contributing to SDG target 13.3).</p> <p>4.1.f National climate change coordination mechanism is operational and reflects gender- balanced representation of delegated officials (contributing to SDG targets 5.5 and 13.b).</p> <p>4.2.a Number of private companies (women-led and men-led) that implement innovative solutions on low-emissions, climate-resilient and green development (contributing to SDG target 9.4).</p> <p>4.2.b Number of people benefiting from sustainable natural resource practices (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p> <p>4.4.a Number of non-governmental organization (NGOs), LPAs, CBOs, and women's NGOs, including grass roots organizations, with increased capacities to engage in climate and green development areas (contributing to SDG target 13.b).</p>



Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (**all 12 targets**).

4.4.b Number of sustainable platforms (owned by state institutions) operational to facilitate the participation of CSOs, CBOs, women and youth in decision-making process on environment and climate issues (contributing to SDG target **13.b**).

4.4.c Number of people with enhanced awareness on environment, climate and green development (contributing to SDG target **13.3**).

4.6. Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion

Cluster 5: “Resource, agriculture and cohesion” covers five negotiating chapters, as follows:

- 1 Chapter **11: Agriculture and rural development** (with the following sub-areas: 1) horizontal issues (direct payments and common market organization); 2) state aid; 3) rural development (management body and paying agency); 4) policy; and 5) organic production).
- 2 Chapter **12: Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy** (with the following sub-areas: 1) food safety; 2) veterinary policy; and 3) phytosanitary policy).
- 3 Chapter **13: Fishery (with the following sub-areas:** 1) resources and fleet management; 2) inspection and control; 3) structural measures; 4) state aid; and 5) market measures and international agreements).
- 4 Chapter **22: Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments** (with the following sub-areas: 1) legislative framework; 2) institutional framework; 3) administrative capacity; 4) programming; and 5) monitoring and evaluation).

- 5 Chapter 33: Financial and budgetary provisions (with the following sub-area: rules on own resources, which are the EU budget revenues).

Moldova is mainly at an early stage of preparation for all chapters of **Cluster 5 on resources, agriculture, and cohesion**, except food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy, in regard to which it has achieved some level of preparation. Overall, during the reporting period, there was good progress on food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy. In regard to the remaining chapters, Moldova has achieved some or limited progress. Further efforts are needed in all of these areas.¹⁸

¹⁸ Commission Staff Working Document, Republic of Moldova 2023 Report, Accompanying the document: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement policy.



Table 37 . Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion. Chapter 11: Agriculture and rural development

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no Farm Accountancy Data Network in place. Strategies for collecting and monitoring data need to be further developed. - Regarding common market organization, efforts are needed to prepare and set up the regulatory framework in line with the EU acquis. <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw up an action plan to set up an Integrated Administration and Control System, and progress in creating the farm register; • Take concrete steps to strengthen the administrative capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, and of the Agency for Interventions and Payments in Agriculture. 	<p>2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.</p> <p>2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality.</p> <p>12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.</p> <p>12.a Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.</p> <p>15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world.</p>	<p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment, in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.1.b Volume of financial means allocated by the Government for fostering activities to promote local agricultural and agrifood products on foreign markets (nationalized SDG indicator 2.b.1.1).</p> <p>3.3.a Share of the volume of agricultural production of small agricultural producers (women and men) in total agricultural production (national SDG indicator 2.3.2).</p> <p>3.3.d Share of agrifood processed products in the total exports (%) (contributing to SDG target 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.f Number of farming households that have benefited from emergency support in response to crises (contributing to SDG target 2.4).</p> <p>4.1.d Number of national adaptation plans validated by the Government that include migration-, agriculture-, environment- and gender-sensitive climate change nexus considerations (contributing to SDG target 13.1).</p> <p>4.2.c Share of agriculture areas under conservation practices, including land certified as organic (related to SDG indicator 2.4.1).</p> <p>4.3.a Number of farmers receiving advisory and technical support on sustainable and resilient practices (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p> <p>4.3.b Export value of local organic agrifood products (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p> <p>4.3.c Export value of local organic agrifood products (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p>

**Table 38 . Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion. Chapter 12: Food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary policy**

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Monitoring and enforcement of the domestic market food quality need to be strengthened.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the diagnostic resources of competent authorities and broaden the scope of the national monitoring and surveillance programme for food safety, animal feed and veterinary drugs, to increase the level of assurance for animal origin products; Draw up a human resource development strategy for the National Food Safety Agency and a specialized training programme for inspectors from territorial subdivisions. 	<p>2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round.</p> <p>2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.</p> <p>3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and contamination of air, water, and soil.</p> <p>12.2 By 2030, achieve sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.</p> <p>12.4 By 2020, achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.</p> <p>15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland fresh water ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements.</p>	<p>1.2.f Food consumption per capita (daily average) (SDG indicator 2.2.1).</p> <p>4.2.b Number of people benefiting from sustainable natural resource practices (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p> <p>4.3.a Number of farmers receiving advisory and technical support on sustainable and resilient practices (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p> <p>4.3.b Export value of local organic agrifood products (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p>



Table 39 . Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion. Chapter 13: Fisheries

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a national strategy dedicated to aquaculture; • Progress on aligning its quality and marking standards with those under the EU Common Market Organization; • Improve the traceability of fishery and aquaculture products and strengthen import inspections to prevent importation of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. 	<p>2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.</p> <p>8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead.</p> <p>12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.</p> <p>14.4 By 2030, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.</p> <p>14.b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.</p>	<p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment, in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants’ economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.3.a Share of the volume of agricultural production of small agricultural producers (women and men) in total agricultural production (national SDG indicator 2.3.2).</p> <p>4.2.b Number of people benefiting from sustainable natural resource practices (contributing to SDG target 12.2).</p> <p>4.2.c Share of agriculture areas under conservation practices, including land certified as organic (related to SDG indicator 2.4.1).</p>



Table 40 . Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion. Chapter 22: Regional policy and coordination of structural instruments

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Moldova's legislative framework is partially aligned with the EU acquis in some areas. Moldova's administrative capacity and experience is insufficient to meet the requirements of EU regional policy in implementing large-scale funds. Regional development and cohesion are hampered by the inefficient administrative- territorial structure.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operationalize the IT system through which mature investment projects are submitted for approval; Ensure sufficient administrative capacity for the implementation of the cross-border and transnational cooperation (Interreg) programmes; Set up audit structures specialized in auditing European funds. 	<p>2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.</p> <p>8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7% gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries.</p> <p>8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of MSMEs, including through access to financial services.</p> <p>9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all.</p> <p>9.a Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological, and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states.</p> <p>10.1 By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average.</p> <p>11.3 Enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated, and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>17.18 By 2030, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing states, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely, and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts.</p>	<p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p> <p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment, in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3).</p> <p>3.1.c Number of activities/ services implemented to support the achievement of livelihood and inclusion solutions for displacement-affected populations/ refugees (may be linked to SDG 8.5 and 10.7).</p> <p>3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5).</p> <p>3.3.a Share of the volume of agricultural production of small agricultural producers (women and men) in total agricultural production (national SDG indicator 2.3.2).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>



Table 41 . Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion. Chapter 33: Financial and budgetary provisions

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Amendments adopted in March 2023 to the customs legislation will increase alignment with the EU acquis. The institutional environment required for an efficient own resources system has yet to be set up.</p> <p>In the coming years Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in capacity-building activities on the traditional own resources system in the EU; Set up a coordinating body to implement the administrative processes for an own resources system. 	<p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection.</p> <p>17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.</p>	<p>2.1.g Multi-stakeholder development financing mechanisms to strengthen public sector agility and efficient allocation of resources for policy implementation (contributing to SDG target 17.3).</p> <p>2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p> <p>Outcome 3 Indicator C) Remittances as share of GDP (SDG indicator 17.3.2).</p> <p>Outcome 3 Indicator D) Share of remittances in household budgets of poorest 20% (related to SDG target 1.2).</p> <p>3.1.b Volume of financial means allocated by government for fostering activities to promote local agricultural and agrifood products on foreign markets (nationalized SDG indicator 2.b.1.1).</p>

4.7. Cluster 6: External relations

Cluster 6: “External relations”, Moldova is moderately prepared in the area of external relations, on which it made some progress during the reporting period. In the area of a common, foreign, security and defence policy, the country is situated between a moderate and a good level of preparation. In regard to the latter, good progress has been made during the reporting period. Moldova's alignment with declarations by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and Council decisions under the EU's EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) was at 54% in 2022 but increased to 78% in 2023. Following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Moldova aligned with EU positions in international fora, including in the United Nations General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and the Council of Europe.

On **migration**, since the outbreak of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Moldova has faced unprecedented inflows of refugees (the highest number of refugees per capita in Europe). As of 31 July 2023, after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, out of the 792,605 individuals who entered Moldova across the Ukrainian border, 86,363 Ukrainian citizens and 7,624 third-country nationals remained on its territory. Since 1 March 2023, the Government has implemented a decree granting temporary protection to displaced persons from Ukraine, enabling its beneficiaries to obtain an identity document issued free of charge for one year. Following the unprecedented influx of people fleeing Ukraine, which put Moldova's already limited capacity under pressure, the country's authorities have maintained their efforts and have mobilized resources to provide immediate humanitarian assistance, as prescribed under the state of emergency.¹⁹

¹⁹ Commission Staff Working Document, Republic of Moldova 2023 Report, Accompanying the document: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2023 Communication on EU Enlargement policy.



Table 42 . Cluster 6: External relations. Chapter 30: External relations

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>On bilateral trade, free trade agreement negotiations with the European Free Trade Association have been concluded. Further action is expected on administrative capacity and alignment with the EU acquis on dual-use export controls and export credits.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize aligning the national legislation on export controls for dual-use items with the EU acquis; Set out a legal framework on international cooperation, development and humanitarian aid towards non-EU countries, aligned with EU policies and principles. 	<p>10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions.</p> <p>16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.</p> <p>17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, in particular developing countries.</p> <p>17.17 Encourage effective public, public-private, and civil society partnerships.</p>	<p>2.4.b Access to legal services and remedies: i) number of initiatives implemented to strengthen access to legal services and remedies; ii) number of people accessing legal services and remedies virtually (contributing to SDG target 16.3).</p> <p>3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG target 2.3).</p> <p>3.1.c Number of activities/ services implemented to support the achievement of livelihood and inclusion solutions for displacement-affected populations/ refugees (may be linked to SDG 8.5 and 10.7).</p> <p>3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3).</p>

Table 43 . Cluster 6: External relations. Chapter 31: Foreign, security and defence policy

Policy recommendations / improvements needed for EU accession/negotiations	SDGs targets	UNSDCF indicators
<p>Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report:</p> <p>Moldova's rate of alignment with relevant declarations by the High Representative on behalf of the EU and Council decisions has increased. Following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Moldova has aligned with EU positions in international fora, including in the UN General Assembly. In 2023, Moldova started its gradual alignment with some of the EU restrictive measures related to Russia/ Russian activities abroad. Moldova has continued to participate in EU crisis management missions and operations under the common security and defence policy.</p> <p>In the coming years, Moldova should in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to further increase the alignment rate with the EU CFSP and ensure the implementation of restrictive measures stemming from EU alignment; Continue its efforts to counter hybrid threats and enhance its resilience, including by following up on the recommendations from the hybrid risk survey and implementing actions in line with a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. 	<p>16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.</p> <p>16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p> <p>16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.</p> <p>17.16 Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the SDGs in all countries, in particular developing countries.</p>	<p>2.4.d Number of initiatives, including on human rights and gender equality, that aim to strengthen confidence, trust and social cohesion and contribute to sustained peace.</p> <p>2.4.f Percentage of people feeling safe in Moldova (contributing to SDG target 16.1).</p> <p>2.4.e Number of border management authorities enabled to ensure migrants' and refugees' protection and aviation security, and to carry out special investigation operations, integrating anti-corruption, gender and human rights commitments (contributing to SDG target 16.6).</p> <p>Outcome 2 indicator D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad).</p>



5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mapping the synergies between the EU accession process and the SDGs under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offers the opportunity of applying a smart approach to the implementation of both development agendas. If both agendas are addressed at the same time, greater benefits may be achieved.

There is strong complementarity and strong synergy between the EU accession agenda, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, as these are mutually reinforcing processes.

As presented in Table 44, the mapping process shows that **128 SDG targets** are connected to individual EU accession negotiation chapters or clusters (76%).

Table 44 . An overview of the SDG targets that link to EU accession negotiating chapters

SDG 1	SDG 2	SDG 3	SDG 4	SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 7	SDG 8	SDG 9	SDG 10	SDG 11	SDG 12	SDG 13	SDG 14	SDG 15	SDG 16	SDG 17	Total
1.3.	2.1	3.4	4.1	5.1	6.3	7.1	8.1	9.1	10.1	11.2	12.2	13.1	14.1	15.1	16.1	17.1	
1.4.	2.2	3.6	4.2	5.2	6.6	7.2	8.2	9.2	10.2	11.3	12.3	13.2	14.2	15.2	16.2	17.2	
	2.3	3.8	4.3	5.5	6.a	7.3	8.3	9.3	10.3	11.4	12.4	13.3	14.3	15.3	16.3	17.3	
	2.4	3.9	4.4	5.a		7.a	8.4	9.4	10.4	11.5	12.5	13.a	14.4	15.4	16.4	17.4	
		3.a	4.5	5.b		7.b	8.5	9.5	10.5	11.6	12.6	13.b	14.5	15.5	16.5	17.5	
		3.d	4.7	5.c			8.6	9.a	10.6		12.7		14.6	15.6	16.6	17.6	
			4.a				8.8	9.b	10.7		12.8		14.7	15.7	16.7	17.7	
							8.9	9.c	10.a		12.a		14.a	15.8	16.8	17.8	
							8.1		10.b				14.b	15.9	16.1	17.1	
							8.a						14.c	15.a	16.a	17.11	
							8.b							15.b	16.b	17.12	
														15.c		17.13	
																17.16	
																17.17	
																17.18	
																17.19	
2	4	6	7	6	3	5	11	8	9	5	8	5	10	12	11	16	128
7	8	13	10	9	8	5	12	8	10	10	11	5	10	12	12	19	169
29%	50%	46%	70%	67%	38%	100%	92%	100%	90%	50%	73%	100%	100%	100%	92%	84%	76%



The UNSDCF is the most important instrument for the planning and implementation of United Nations development activities at country level, in agreement with the Government. It transforms the way the United Nations works with the Republic of Moldova by building a functional platform for greater coordination, coherence and effectiveness.

In the detailed mapping analysis, in the **34 tables** presented earlier, SDG targets and 111 UNSDCF indicators were compared with 33 EU accession negotiating chapters, grouped in six clusters, alongside key recommendations from the Republic of Moldova 2023 EC report (policy recommendations and needed improvements).

The mapping analysis results are as follows:

- **128 SDG targets (76%) are linked** to the policy recommendations from 33 negotiating chapters from the 2023 EC report (some of them have multiple links: in total, 259 links are established).
- **103 UNSDCF 2023–2027 indicators out of 111 (93%) are linked** to the policy recommendations from the 2023 EC report; (some of them have multiple links: in total, 233 links are established).
- Only eight output indicators of the UNSDCF document are not directly linked with the EU accession negotiating chapters.
- **The scope for links is greatest for three key chapters.** The crucial chapters that would have the greatest impact on the achievement of the 2030 SDGs Agenda are Chapter 27 on the environment, Chapter 23 on justice and fundamental rights, and Chapter 19 on social policy and employment.

When it comes to a comparison of **the UNSDCF 2023–2027 strategic priorities, the SDGs and the policy areas of the EU chapters (Table 6)**, the following is found: Cluster 1: Fundamentals, Cluster 2: Internal market, and Cluster 4: Green agenda and sustainable connectivity are fully covered/linked, while Cluster 3: Competitiveness and inclusive growth, Cluster 5: Resources, agriculture and cohesion and Cluster 6: External relations are partially covered/linked (24 out of 33 chapters). Areas that are more evident in the synergies are as follows:

- ➊ Fundamentals – the rule of law area (Chapters 23, 24);
- ➋ Social inclusion chapters (Chapters 19, 26, 28);

- ➌ Environment and climate change (Chapter 27, but also Chapters 14, 15, 21);
- ➍ Food and food security (Chapters 11, 12, 13);
- ➎ Economic development (all co-called economic chapters).

However, it is important to mention that the UNSDCF cooperation document covers five years, and will be further extended through consecutive Cooperation Frameworks, while the Government of Moldova has declared its objective of joining the EU by 2030.

Areas of supporting competencies need special consideration (supporting EU competencies where the Member States' governments are the main players in policy formulation and implementation). For instance, in areas such as education, health, agriculture, internal market, economic, social and territorial cohesion, employment, and social policy that mainly fall under supporting or shared competencies, more effort is expected from the national government to increase standards and improve the quality of services. Further work is required to examine the links in these areas more closely.

Implementation is important. Any results in achieving sustainable development rely not only on adopting a legal framework such as the *acquis* but also on dedicated implementation (administrative capacity-building, enforcement).

As evidenced by the experiences of other candidate countries, **the United Nations is a unique partner for the implementation of the EU agenda.** With recognized complementarities in strategic documents such as "Building a European Moldova" and the UNSDCF 2023–2027, as well as the key priorities from the 2023 EC report, by working together and creating synergies, greater benefits for the overall prosperity of the Republic of Moldova can be achieved.



ANNEX 1: Application of the revised EU enlargement methodology

On 25 March 2020, the European Council endorsed the Commission Communication on "Enhancing the accession process – A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans" of 5 February 2020, aiming to reinvigorate the accession process²⁰ by making it more predictable, more credible, more dynamic and subject to stronger political steering, based on objective criteria and rigorous positive and negative conditionality, and reversibility. At the same time, it reiterated that fundamental democratic, rule of law and economic reforms represent the core objective of the accession process.²¹

Table 45. Elements of a new enlargement methodology (2020)

1	Accession criteria and a process guided by the merits of each country individually (the own merits approach remained unchanged but with increased conditionality)
2	Chapter clustering for more efficient analytical examination of the acquis (screening)
3	Faster opening of chapters by cluster, by cluster thematic areas
The EU defines opening priorities/clusters; one of the key features of the Communication is that multiple clusters and chapters may be open simultaneously (for instance, since Chapter 8, as one of the most sensitive economic chapters, is already in Cluster 2, the EC can propose opening on another cluster before Cluster 2)	
4	Structure of thematic chapters by planned opening dynamics (Core/Fundamental chapters, Internal market, Competitiveness and inclusive growth, Green agenda and sustainable connectivity, Resources, agriculture and cohesion, External relations); better horizontal connectivity of negotiating positions; preparation for structural and investment funds in the final phase of the accession negotiations
5	Closing of chapters:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no obligation of closure in a group of chapters; closing benchmarks are set for each chapter; each chapter is individually evaluated in regard to achieving closing conditions. - Each chapter must be open for at least one year; each chapter has closing benchmarks. (The biggest changes are for Chapter 26: Education and Culture and Chapter 25: Science and research, which must be open for at least one year). - Update of the existing benchmarks – if the negotiations take longer or if the chapter is revised in order to incorporate new elements, such as a new acquis. 	
6	Greater involvement of EU Member States in the process:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation of EU Member States in Intergovernmental Conferences (IGCs) and stronger political steer of the whole negotiation process; the introduction of the principle of "shared responsibility". - Regular EU-Western Balkans Summits and intensified ministerial contacts. - EU Member State expert missions on the ground, direct contributions to the EC annual report, preparation of sectoral expertise, the possibility of "more frequent"/regular review of progress in negotiations. 	
7	Even greater focus on fundamental chapters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthened and clear Balance Clause – tying the closure of any chapter with achieving the interim benchmark for the rule of law area; "No other chapter will be provisionally closed before interim benchmarks for C23 and C24 are met". - Cluster extended – in addition to C23 and C24, there are C5 and C32 (Public procurement and Financial control), C23 and C24, opened first/closed last. 	
8	Expanding the Fundamentals cluster with the key accession criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Road map for the rule of law area, as an opening benchmark for the C23 and C24 negotiations. - Economic criteria (establish a stronger link with Economic Reform Programme documents, i.e. economic reform programmes). - Functioning of democratic institutions (create a road map for the functioning of democratic institutions). - Public administration reform (develop a road map for public administration reform). 	

²⁰ The political decision to open accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania is also adopted.

²¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Region, "Enhancing the accession process – A credible EU perspective for the Western Balkans, Brussels", 5.2.2020 COM(2020) 57 final.



9	Stronger monitoring through the SAA interim bodies cluster compliance with the work of the SAA/ Association Agreement Committees:
- All SAA/Association Agreement bodies to focus more on political issues and reforms.	
10	More detailed, clear, and precise EC annual reports (EC enlargement package).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A greater number of indicators; performance-based indicators for evaluation of progress. - Only after the EC report – annual IGC scheduling plan and a possible opening/closing is certain. - Possible proposal for corrective measures to be included in the report, with EU Member States to agree with it. 	
11	POSITIVE CONDITIONALITY
- Closer integration of the country with the EU , working towards accelerated integration and the gradual introduction of common EU policies, access to EU markets, and joining EU programmes, ensuring equal conditions for all.	
- Increased funding and investment – including through a performance-based and reform-oriented instrument for pre-accession support and closer cooperation with IFIs to leverage support.	
12	NEGATIVE CONDITIONALITY – sanctioning cases of "serious or prolonged stagnation or backsliding", which should be based on a much more detailed EC report.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU Member States can decide that negotiations can be put on hold in certain areas, or, in the most serious cases, suspend the overall process. - Previously closed chapters can be reopened or reset if the issues need to be reassessed. - The scope and intensity of EU funding can be adjusted downward, with the exception of support to CSOs. - Benefits from closer integration, e.g. accession to EU programmes, and unilateral concessions for market access, can be paused or withdrawn. 	
13	Chapter work can also be organized in clusters, while respecting the existing negotiating framework (to focus on key sectors, and key issues of alignment, with political momentum and stronger political scrutiny).
14	The possibility will be offered of engaging in an exercise to identify areas of interest for accelerated sectoral alignment and integration , with common road maps to be agreed upon and followed up in the SAA structures.
15	Chapter 35 is not covered by the new proposals – it will be handled separately.

The presented range of measures substantially extends the ability of the EU to halt the process if the implementation of the chapters on the rule of law stalls.²²

Stronger political steer should include creating new opportunities for political and policy dialogue and intensified high-level contacts with the candidate countries. Political stocktaking will continue and can be deepened at key moments and at the highest political level, including at meetings of the Stabilization and Association Council. The timing of political IGCs and the Stabilization and Association Councils should be planned to allow the political dialogue to take place on a regular basis.

The CFSP alignment should also continue to be regularly monitored throughout the negotiation process and promoted through regular political engagement, including CFSP dialogues, and during political IGCs.²³

Based on the foregoing, one can conclude that the new methodology is designed to restore confidence in the accession process itself, speed up integration, accelerate both democratic and economic reforms, and make the whole process politically transparent.

In addition to setting out the implementation of the enhancement enlargement methodology for Montenegro and Serbia, the Commission Communication contains the following additional items on North Macedonia and Albania:

²² Fallon N., "Can the EU enlargement to the Western Balkans be revitalised?", IIEA, Ireland, February 2020; <https://www.iiea.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Can-EU-Enlargement-to-the-Western-Balkans-be-revitalised-compressed.pdf>

²³ General Secretariat of the Council, "Application of the revised enlargement methodology to the accession negotiations with Montenegro and Serbia", Brussels, 6 May 2021, 8536/21.



ANNEX 2: UNSDCF 2023–2027 result matrix: national SDG indicators/performance indicators

Table 47. National SDG indicators/performance indicators (disaggregated)²⁷

Outcome 1: By 2027, institutions deliver human rights-based, evidence-informed and gender-responsive services for all, with a focus on those who are left behind	A) Absolute poverty rate, by sex of head of household, age (children under 18) (based on national SDG indicator 1.2.1)
	B) Share of households with access to basic services, including safe water, sanitation and Internet connection (based on national SDG indicator 1.4.1)
	C) Prevalence of violence against women and girls (aged 15–65 years old) by partner/spouse in the last 12 months, by age and form of violence: a) physical, b) sexual, c) psychological (national SDG indicators 5.2.1)
	D) Maternal mortality ratio (SDG indicator 3.1.1)
	E) Under-five mortality rate per 1,000 live births (national SDG indicator 3.2.1)
	F) Gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education (contributing to SDG indicator 4.2.2)
	G) Universal Health Coverage Service Coverage Index (SDG indicator 3.8.1)
Output 1.1. Regulatory and policy framework that is evidence-informed and takes into account demographic trends and promotes gender-responsive and human rights-based social protection and equal access to basic services	1.1.a Government budget allocations to social sectoral policies and programmes as percentage of total government budget allocations (related to SDG indicator 1.a.2)
	1.1.b The country governance framework integrates migration policies that facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people (SDG indicator 10.7.2)
	1.1.c Population projections at national and subnational level are developed to inform policy framework (related to SDG indicator 17.19.2)
	1.1.d Number of budgeted, evidence-informed national (multi-) sectoral strategies, policies and/or action plans targeting social protection and equal access to basic services, with a focus on those furthest left behind, developed and implemented between 2023–2027 (contributing to SDG targets 1.3 and 1.4)
Output 1.2. Health, education and food systems are strengthened and become more resilient to ensure universal access and quality of services and to respond to humanitarian needs	1.2.a Percentage of pupils in the last grade of secondary school with minimum literacy skills and minimum knowledge of mathematics (national SDG indicators 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.1.2)
	1.2.b Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme (national SDG indicator 3.b.1)
	1.2.c Student-to-computer ratio (primary and secondary education) (related to SDG indicator 4.4.1)
	1.2.d Existence in school curriculum of the curricular modules/contents on 1) human rights, 2) gender equality, 3) health education; and ensuring their quality implementation through an interdisciplinary approach in order to form the graduate profile and teacher training (based on national SDG indicator 4.7.1)
	1.2.e Adolescent birth rate (age 15–19) per 1,000 women in same age group, urban/rural (usual resident population) (national SDG indicator 3.7.2)
	1.2.f Food consumption per capita (daily average) (SDG indicator 2.2.1)
	1.2.g Share of students with special educational needs and disabilities in general education institutions (% out of total enrolled) (contributing to SDG indicator 4.5.1)
	1.2.h Number of refugee children enrolled in formal education (by educational levels, by sex and disability) (contributing to SDG indicator 4.5.1)



	1.2.k Number of technical and vocational education and training institutions with improved capacity to deliver training and assessments with United Nations support
	1.2.l Number of people directly benefiting from improved access to skills and lifelong learning programmes, including for comprehensive sexuality education, developed and implemented with United Nations support
	1.2.p Number of people benefiting from United Nations-supported health services relating to a) communicable diseases, b) non-communicable diseases, c) sexual and reproductive health, d) integrated management of childhood illnesses services, and e) other,
Output 1.3. Public institutions and CSOs/CBOs have enhanced capacities to ensure quality sustainable people-centred service delivery that is responsive to social, economic and environmental shocks and emergencies	1.3.a Percentage of individuals belonging to key populations (people who use drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men), who are covered by HIV prevention services (contributing to SDG target 3.3)
	1.3.b International Health Regulations capacity and health emergency preparedness (SDG indicator 3.d.1)
	1.3.c Number of institutions and service providers with strengthened capacities and knowledge to improve the provision of essential services, goods and/or resources for all, with a focus on vulnerable groups (contributing to SDG target 1.4)
	1.3.d Level of satisfaction of service users with the co-implemented digital services (contributing to SDG target 1.4)
	1.3.e Percentage of displaced persons (including refugees and disaster-affected population) covered by social protection floors/ systems, by sex (contributing to SDG indicator 1.3.1)
	1.3.f Percentage of migrants and refugees, including victims of trafficking, who are covered by national public health insurance scheme, by sex (contributing to SDG target 1.3)
	1.3.g Number of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes (contributing to SDG target 1.3)
Output 1.4. Rights holders, in particular from vulnerable groups, are empowered to access and claim quality public services	1.4.a Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (SDG indicator 5.6.1)
	1.4.b Percentage of people living with HIV who know their status; percentage of persons with HIV enrolled in treatment, and percentage of those with viral suppression (contributing to SDG target 3.3)
	1.4.c Proportion of vulnerable women, such as women who use drugs and people who use drugs with children accessing crisis services, including shelter and rehabilitation (related to SDG indicator 3.5.1)
Output 1.5 State institutions and CSOs ensure effective prevention and improved multisectoral response to address all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful practices and discriminatory gender norms and stereotypes	1.5.a Share of women and girls who access services after experiencing violence or discrimination (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.b Number of developed guidelines, protocols and standard operating procedures to strengthen EVAWG services in line with the Essential Services Package (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.c Number of state institutions and CSOs with increased capacities to address discriminatory gender norms and violence against women and girls (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.d Proportion of rayons covered by advocacy initiatives addressing gender social norms and male engagement programmes (contributing to SDG target 5.2)

²⁷ https://moldova.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/UNSDCF%202023_2027%20final%20ENG.pdf (slightly expanded).



	1.2.k Number of technical and vocational education and training institutions with improved capacity to deliver training and assessments with United Nations support
	1.2.l Number of people directly benefiting from improved access to skills and lifelong learning programmes, including for comprehensive sexuality education, developed and implemented with United Nations support
	1.2.p Number of people benefiting from United Nations-supported health services relating to a) communicable diseases, b) non-communicable diseases, c) sexual and reproductive health, d) integrated management of childhood illnesses services, and e) other,
Output 1.3. Public institutions and CSOs/ CBOs have enhanced capacities to ensure quality sustainable people-centred service delivery that is responsive to social, economic and environmental shocks and emergencies	1.3.a Percentage of individuals belonging to key populations (people who use drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men), who are covered by HIV prevention services (contributing to SDG target 3.3)
	1.3.b International Health Regulations capacity and health emergency preparedness (SDG indicator 3.d.1)
	1.3.c Number of institutions and service providers with strengthened capacities and knowledge to improve the provision of essential services, goods and/or resources for all, with a focus on vulnerable groups (contributing to SDG target 1.4)
	1.3.d Level of satisfaction of service users with the co-implemented digital services (contributing to SDG target 1.4)
	1.3.e Percentage of displaced persons (including refugees and disaster-affected population) covered by social protection floors/ systems, by sex (contributing to SDG indicator 1.3.1)
	1.3.f Percentage of migrants and refugees, including victims of trafficking, who are covered by national public health insurance scheme, by sex (contributing to SDG target 1.3)
	1.3.g Number of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes (contributing to SDG target 1.3)
Output 1.4. Rights holders, in particular from vulnerable groups, are empowered to access and claim quality public services	1.4.a Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (SDG indicator 5.6.1)
	1.4.b Percentage of people living with HIV who know their status; percentage of persons with HIV enrolled in treatment, and percentage of those with viral suppression (contributing to SDG target 3.3)
	1.4. c Proportion of vulnerable women, such as women who use drugs and people who use drugs with children accessing crisis services, including shelter and rehabilitation (related to SDG indicator 3.5.1)
Output 1.5 State institutions and CSOs ensure effective prevention and improved multisectoral response to address all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful practices and discriminatory gender norms and stereotypes	1.5.a Share of women and girls who access services after experiencing violence or discrimination (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.b Number of developed guidelines, protocols and standard operating procedures to strengthen EAWG services in line with the Essential Services Package (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.c Number of state institutions and CSOs with increased capacities to address discriminatory gender norms and violence against women and girls (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.d Proportion of rayons covered by advocacy initiatives addressing gender social norms and male engagement programmes (contributing to SDG target 5.2)



	1.2.k Number of technical and vocational education and training institutions with improved capacity to deliver training and assessments with United Nations support
	1.2.l Number of people directly benefiting from improved access to skills and lifelong learning programmes, including for comprehensive sexuality education, developed and implemented with United Nations support
	1.2.p Number of people benefiting from United Nations-supported health services relating to a) communicable diseases, b) non-communicable diseases, c) sexual and reproductive health, d) integrated management of childhood illnesses services, and e) other,
Output 1.3. Public institutions and CSOs/ CBOs have enhanced capacities to ensure quality sustainable people-centred service delivery that is responsive to social, economic and environmental shocks and emergencies	1.3.a Percentage of individuals belonging to key populations (people who use drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men), who are covered by HIV prevention services (contributing to SDG target 3.3)
	1.3.b International Health Regulations capacity and health emergency preparedness (SDG indicator 3.d.1)
	1.3.c Number of institutions and service providers with strengthened capacities and knowledge to improve the provision of essential services, goods and/or resources for all, with a focus on vulnerable groups (contributing to SDG target 1.4)
	1.3.d Level of satisfaction of service users with the co-implemented digital services (contributing to SDG target 1.4)
	1.3.e Percentage of displaced persons (including refugees and disaster-affected population) covered by social protection floors/ systems, by sex (contributing to SDG indicator 1.3.1)
	1.3.f Percentage of migrants and refugees, including victims of trafficking, who are covered by national public health insurance scheme, by sex (contributing to SDG target 1.3)
	1.3.g Number of children who participate in community-based child protection programmes (contributing to SDG target 1.3)
Output 1.4. Rights holders, in particular from vulnerable groups, are empowered to access and claim quality public services	1.4.a Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care (SDG indicator 5.6.1)
	1.4.b Percentage of people living with HIV who know their status; percentage of persons with HIV enrolled in treatment, and percentage of those with viral suppression (contributing to SDG target 3.3)
	1.4. c Proportion of vulnerable women, such as women who use drugs and people who use drugs with children accessing crisis services, including shelter and rehabilitation (related to SDG indicator 3.5.1)
Output 1.5 State institutions and CSOs ensure effective prevention and improved multisectoral response to address all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful practices and discriminatory gender norms and stereotypes	1.5.a Share of women and girls who access services after experiencing violence or discrimination (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.b Number of developed guidelines, protocols and standard operating procedures to strengthen EAWG services in line with the Essential Services Package (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.c Number of state institutions and CSOs with increased capacities to address discriminatory gender norms and violence against women and girls (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	1.5.d Proportion of rayons covered by advocacy initiatives addressing gender social norms and male engagement programmes (contributing to SDG target 5.2)



Outcome 2: By 2027, more accountable and transparent human rights-based and gender-responsive governance empowers all people of Moldova to participate in and to contribute to development processes	A) Proportion of the population reporting that in the last 12 months they have ever felt discriminated against or harassed on a ground prohibited under international human rights law (national SDG indicator 10.3.1/16.b.1)
	B) Gender mainstreaming in public policies index (contributing to SDG indicator 5.1.1)
	C) Number of children victims of any form of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking (national SDG indicator proxy 16.2.1.2)
	D) Percentage of people who trust governance institutions (parliament, government, justice) by sex, urban/rural location and migration status (contributing to SDG target 16.7). Note: migration status refers to persons with migration experience (Moldovan migrants who have returned from abroad)
	E) WJP Rule of Law Index (selected factors) (contributing to SDG target 16.3)
Output 2.1. Regulatory framework and capacities of government and non-government institutions are enhanced to promote human rights, gender equality, non-discrimination and accountability	2.1.a Number of laws, policies, strategies, action plans and programmes adopted, revised and repealed to advance gender equality and international human rights standards (contributing to SDG targets 5.1 and 10.3)
	2.1.b Level of implementation of international human rights recommendations by Moldova (contributing to SDG target 16.b)
	2.1.c Youth action plans: a) a national multisectoral, gender-responsive adolescent policy/youth action plan exists (reflecting sectoral commitments for adolescents); b) proportion of local public authorities with evidence-informed, human rights-based annual youth action plans that are budgeted
	2.1.d Number of national partners with capacities to apply gender-responsive budgeting tools in the budget cycle (contributing to SDG indicator 5.c.1)
	2.1.e Number of human rights initiatives implemented by civil society members trained on human rights, a human rights-based approach and gender equality (contributing to SDG targets 5.1 and 10.3)
	2.1.f Extent of alignment of the national legislative/ normative framework to international commitments to eliminate violence against women and girls, in particular under the Istanbul Convention (contributing to SDG target 5.2)
	2.1.g Multi-stakeholder development financing mechanisms to strengthen public sector agility and efficient allocation of resources for policy implementation (contributing to SDG target 17.3)
Output 2.2. Institutions at all levels have increased capacities to produce, share and utilize quality disaggregated data in line with national priorities and in accordance with international standards and methodologies	2.2.a Informational system on demographic and social statistics is in place and operational (managed by NBS) 34 (contributing to SDG target 17.18)
	2.2.b Proportion of SDG indicators available at national level according to relevant disaggregations and the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (national SDG indicator 17.18.1)
	2.2.c Number of statistical and administrative data initiatives and statistical tools (methodologies; questionnaires) developed and/or revised to improve the availability and use of data, including disaggregation by sex, age, disability, ethnicity, migration and legal status and other characteristics to inform, monitor and evaluate national policies and programmes and international commitments (contributing to SDG target 17.18)
	2.2.d SDG online monitoring platform, owned by government, makes up-to date disaggregated data publicly available (contributing to SDG target 17.18)
	2.2.e Number of public authorities that have strengthened knowledge and skills and use data as evidence in the policymaking process (contributing to SDG target 17.18)



Output 2.3. The people of Moldova, in particular most vulnerable and marginalized, are empowered to claim and exercise their human rights and meaningfully participate in public life, governance and decision-making processes	2.3.a Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments, (b) local governments and (c) executive positions/ministers (cabinets) (national SDG indicator 5.5.1.a&b)
	2.3.b Number of national participatory and inclusive review and monitoring processes in the context of the implementation of international human rights standards (contributing to SDG target 16.a)
	2.3.c Percentage of out-of-country voters, out of the total number of voters (contributing to SDG target 16.7)
	2.3.d Percentage of people reached by election awareness-raising campaigns who voted during the (local/ national) elections (contributing to SDG target 16.7)
	2.3.e Number of CSOs working on human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment (especially women's organizations) that have strengthened capacities to exercise their leadership role towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment rights, as well as human rights (contributing to SDG targets 5.1 and 10.3)
	2.3.f Number of sustainable participatory mechanisms, as well as new programmes and services for diaspora engagement, supported by the government
	2.3.g Number of community-based initiatives implemented by young people at local level that promote civic engagement, participation and gender equality
	2.3.h Number of national and local initiatives implemented to enhance accountability, transparency and participation in decision-making (contributing to SDG target 16.6)
Output 2.4. Government and non-government actors have strengthened capacities and resources to address the humanitarian crisis, sustain peace and security at the national and regional level and ensure access to justice for all	2.4.a Share of women in leadership roles of the Thematic Working Groups for the Transnistrian conflict settlement process (contributing to SDG target 5.5)
	2.4.b Access to legal services and remedies: i) number of initiatives implemented to strengthen access to legal services and remedies; ii) number of people accessing legal services and remedies virtually (contributing to SDG target 16.3)
	2.4.c Percentage of girls and boys in conflict with the law who are subject to a diversion order or alternative measure, as opposed to a custodial sentence (contributing to SDG target 16.3)
	2.4.d Number of initiatives, including on human rights and gender equality, that aim to strengthen confidence, trust and social cohesion, and contribute to sustained peace
	2.4.e Number of border management authorities enabled to ensure migrants' and refugees' protection and aviation security, and to carry out special investigation operations, integrating anti-corruption, gender and human rights commitments (contributing to SDG target 16.6)
	2.4.f Percentage of people feeling safe in Moldova (contributing to SDG target 16.1)
Outcome 3: By 2027, all people of Moldova, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from inclusive, competitive and sustainable economic development and equal access to decent work and productive employment	A) Gender pay gap (SDG indicator 8.5.1 and contributing to SDG target 10.4)
	B) Employment rate (15+, in %) (contributing to SDG target 8.5)
	C) Remittances as share of GDP (SDG indicator 17.3.2)
	D) Share of remittances in household budgets of poorest 20% (related to SDG target 1.2)
	E) Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment, (%) (contributing to SDG target 8.5)



Output 3.1. Policy and institutional frameworks create an empowering environment for inclusive and sustainable economic development that promotes the creation of productive and decent work	3.1.a Number of policies and innovative programmes (and legal acts) facilitating inclusive and sustainable economic development and employment in rural areas, including the engagement of migrants' economic resources for productive investment in the Moldovan economy (contributing to SDG targets 2.3)
	3.1.b Volume of financial means allocated by government for fostering activities to promote local agricultural and agrifood products on foreign markets (nationalized SDG indicator 2.b.1.1)
	3.1.c Number of activities/ services implemented to support the achievement of livelihood and inclusion solutions for displacement-affected populations/ refugees (may be linked to SDGs 8.5 and 10.7)
	3.1.d Private sector adopts transparent and ethical recruitment standards and is enabled to apply them for more transparent and ethical recruitment (including non-discrimination) (contributing to SDG target 8.8)
	3.1.e Number of new jobs created by the private sector, with a focus on youth and women, including in special status regions (contributing to SDG target 8.5)
	3.1.f (oi 8.2) Number of private sector entities (including MSMEs) with improved performance, business transactions, and/or income generation as a result of United Nations support
Output 3.2. The regulatory framework and institutions promote the economic empowerment of women and their equal access to decent work	3.2.a Number of regulatory frameworks on women's economic empowerment revised/developed, in line with Leave No One Behind, and promoting a human rights-based approach (contributing to SDG target 5.c)
	3.2.b Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work by sex, age and areas of residence (SDG indicator 5.4.1)
	(3.2.c) Number of women-led business with improved performance increased business transactions, and/or income generation as a result of United Nations support
Output 3.3. Enterprises are more resilient to crises and have strengthened capacities to efficiently utilize resources, generate decent employment and integrate innovations to enhance productivity and competitiveness	3.3.a Share of the volume of agricultural production of small agricultural producers (women and men) in total agricultural production (national SDG indicator 2.3.2)
	3.3.b Share of small enterprises (up to 49 employees) that accessed credit and/or loans during the year, including by industry sector (national SDG indicator 9.3.2.1)
	3.3.c Number of new and existing MSMEs with improved capacity to expand, innovate and increase resource use and export their products (contributing to SDG target 8.3)
	3.3.d Share of agrifood processed products in the total exports (%) (contributing to SDG target 2.3)
	3.3.e Number of new businesses established (contributing to SDG target 8.3)
	3.3.f Number of farming households that have benefited from emergency support in response to crises (contributing to SDG target 2.4)
Output 3.4. The people of Moldova, in particular those left behind, have improved access to adequate protection and safe working conditions, knowledge, in-demand skills and resources to foster employability, competitiveness and entrepreneurship culture.	3.4.a Number of persons, including NEET girls and boys, who receive tailored support for employment and skills development, including in STEM areas (contributing to SDG targets 4.4, 8.5, 8.6)
	3.4.b. National Employment Agency applies monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the service delivery (contributing to SDG target 8.5)
	3.4.c Number of refugees accessing short-term and long-term employment through policy support and employment creation programmes, vocational training and skills recognition mechanism (contributing to SDG target 8.5)



	3.4.e (oi 5.2). Number of measures implemented with United Nations support to: a) eliminate gender-based discrimination and segregation in the labour market; b) increase women's access to and use of digital technologies, digital finance, e-commerce and digital value chains; c) ensure women's economic security and empowerment; d) address discriminatory gender and social norms, stereotypes and practices; and e) promote the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work
Outcome 4: By 2027, institutions and all the people of Moldova benefit from and contribute to green and resilient development, sustainable use of natural resources and effective gender-responsive climate change action and disaster risk management	A) Greenhouse gas emissions reduced at national level (global SDG indicator 13.2.2)
	B) Energy intensity (related to SDG indicator 7.3.1)
	C) Share of land area covered by forest and forest vegetation (%) (SDG indicator 15.1.1; indicator included in Moldova 2030 National Development Strategy)
Output 4.1. Public authorities have enhanced environmental governance capacity to implement gender-responsive policy frameworks that promote climate-resilient and green development and disaster risk reduction	4.1.a Disaster risk reduction strategies: (a) a national disaster risk reduction strategy adopted and implemented in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (SDG indicator 13.1.2); (b) number of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies (SDG indicator 13.1.3)
	4.1.b Moldova collects disaster risk data and reports it in the Sendai Framework Monitor (contributing to SDG indicator 13.b.1)
	4.1.c Number of sectors that integrate climate change considerations that are gender- and migration-sensitive in the development planning frameworks (UNFCCC and EU) (contributing to SDG target 13.2)
	4.1.d Number of national adaptation plans validated by the government that include migration-, agriculture-, environment- and gender-sensitive climate change nexus considerations (contributing to SDG target 13.1)
	4.1.e Number of reformed institutions to deliver enhanced environmental services (contributing to SDG target 13.3)
	4.1.f National climate change coordination mechanism is operational and reflects gender-balanced representation of delegated officials (contributing to SDG targets 5.5 and 13.b)
Output 4.2. Public and private institutions have increased capacities to ensure effective sustainable management, protection and use of natural resources, improved energy resources efficiency and climate, emergency and disaster resilience that benefit the most vulnerable and poor	4.2.a Number of private companies (women-led and men-led) that implement innovative solutions on low-emissions, climate-resilient and green development (contributing to SDG target 9.4)
	4.2.b Number of people benefiting from sustainable natural resource practices (contributing to SDG target 12.2)
	4.2.c Share of agriculture areas subject to conservation practices, including land certified as organic (related to SDG indicator 2.4.1)
	4.2.d Amount of resources from migrants utilized for climate change mitigation and adaptation actions (contributing to SDG target 15.b)
	4.2.e (o.i 7.3) Number of people who, with United Nations support: a) have gained access to clean, affordable, and sustainable energy; and b) have benefited from services from clean, affordable, and sustainable energy



Output 4.3. Agricultural producers have strengthened capacities to engage in sustainable and resilient agricultural practices, integrate renewable energy sources and access new markets	4.3.a Number of farmers receiving advisory and technical support on sustainable and resilient practices (contributing to SDG target 12.2)
	4.3.b Export value of the local organic agrifood products (contributing to SDG target 12.2)
	4.3.c Export value of the local organic agrifood products (contributing to SDG target 12.2)
Output 4.4. Public institutions and civil society have increased capacities to promote meaningful engagement of local communities and other rights holders in the development and deployment of sustainable solutions to address environmental degradation, climate change and natural disasters and hazards	4.4.a Number of NGOs, LPAs, CBOs, and women’s NGOs, including grass roots organizations, with increased capacities to engage in climate and green development areas (contributing to SDG target 13.b)
	4.4.b Number of sustainable platforms (owned by state institutions) operational to facilitate CSOs, CBOs, women and youth participation in decision-making process on environment and climate issues (contributing to SDG target 13.b)
	4.4.c Number of people with enhanced awareness on environment, climate and green development (contributing to SDG target 13.3)