



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Czech Republic

ARE WE UP TO THE TASK?



Alexei Buzu
Victor Lutenco



ASSESSMENT REPORT OF THE NATIONAL STRATEGIC
PROGRAMME ON DEMOGRAPHIC SECURITY 2011–2025

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Photo credit: UNFPA Moldova

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CT	Coordination Team
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ET	Evaluation Team
IAPPD	International Advisory Panel on Population and Development
MLSPF	Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family
NCPD	National Commission on Population and Development
NSPDS	National Strategic Programme on Demographic Security 2011-2025
NEA	National Employment Agency
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
GE	Gender Equality
HR	Human Rights

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **purpose** of this evaluation is to assess the progress in implementation of the National Strategic Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan for 2014-2016. The assessment will offer all relevant stakeholders an opportunity to rethink and correct course the policy response to the key demographic challenges in Moldova.

Methodology. The following assessment elements were considered: (i) Programme relevancy - how the Strategic Program on Demographic Security and its Action Plan respond to the key demographic challenges that Moldova faces. (ii) Program effectiveness – the implementation rate of the Programme action plan. (iii) Program Impact – how the Programme improved Moldova's demographic trends. (iv) Human Rights and Gender Equality Perspective of the Programme – how HR and gender inequalities were addressed by the Programme and (v) Institutional Leadership and Coordination – the effectiveness of the institutional framework responsible for the Programme implementation.

Main conclusions: (i) The overall relevancy of the Programme is low, measured from 0 (low relevancy) to 4 (high relevancy) the relevancy score for the period of 2014-2016 was 1,6. However, during this period some reforms proved to be relevant (the introduction of paternal leave, the adoption of anti-tobacco measures), (ii) Overall implementation was close to 45% and uneven with migration, science and innovation, environment protection and water and sanitation having the highest implementation rate and civil society partnership, statistics and labor market sectors having the lowest implementation rate. (iii) Most of the policy interventions within the Strategic Programme were generic, with almost no costing or budget allocation. (iv) the Strategic Program has a weak M&E system (no baseline and targets, no clear ways to measure policy impact). (v) Significant gender and human rights inequalities were not systematically addressed within the Programme. (vi) the assessment found that the existing institutional set up needs significant rethinking. Cooperation platform for single-purpose organizations – NCPD – is insufficient for proper implementation of the demographic strategic framework.

Main recommendations: (i) Improve relevancy by developing a new theory of change that will focus on the key demographic challenges (low fertility, demographic ageing, relative low life expectancy and significant migration) but will have to be more ambitious, (ii) Improve the design of the Programme by: being very specific in terms of planned activities/interventions, introducing targets and only actions that were proved to be feasible and enjoy the overall support of the Government for implementation, (iii) clarify implementation roles and clear accountability framework, (iv) Improve the M&E framework by developing clear indicators and baselines, use annual reporting as a performance management tool to increase institutional accountability, (v) reduce inequalities via comprehensive gender and HR mainstreaming, (vi) introduce a “whole of the government” approach to Programme implementation.



II. INTRODUCTION

2.1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

Demographic trends in Moldova pose significant policy challenges. The base scenario for 2035¹ is that Moldova will have 28,4% fewer citizens as compared to 2014. Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Moldova is the lowest compared to UE 28², Balkan States and Eastern Partnership Countries³. It is estimated⁴ that increasing TFR to replacement levels (2,1) will nevertheless result in a loss of 11,8% of population by 2035. This means that population loss will be inevitable, and policies need to take this into consideration. I.e. increase labor force participation rates, or find other ways to cover or reduce government spending. According to the same analysis the share of working population (15-59) peaked in 2008 at 66,6% (indicating the presence of a demographic window of opportunity), and the dependency ration (share of active population related to inactive population both young and old) will increase from 55,2 in 2014 to 65 in 2035 (marking the closure of the demographic window of opportunity for Moldova). According to the same analysis, life expectancy in Moldova is lowest in Eastern Partnership Countries and life expectancy of men in Moldova did not improve since 1965. In terms of ageing, the share of elderly is anticipated to increase from 12% to 30% in 2015-60. The negative demographic trends were exacerbated by significant outward migration. It is estimated that annually, 1% of Moldovan population is migrating.

The National Strategic Programme on Demographic Security 2011-2025⁵ is the key strategic policy response to mounting demographic challenges of Moldova. The role of the Program is to guide Government's interventions in tackling population and development challenges that Republic of Moldova is facing. The Programme was long overdue and its development and implementation was expressly demanded also in 2009 when the Green Book of Population was published - the most recent comprehensive compilation of demographic trends that affect Republic of Moldova⁶. The NSPDS was adopted by the Government in October 2011 along with an Action Plan for the period of 2011-2013. After the expiration, another Plan of Actions was developed for the period 2014-2016 and adopted in July 2014.

The Programme entails policy interventions covering twelve policy areas. These are: (1) Social Protection of Child and Family, (2) Health Care, (3) Labor Market, (4) Migration, (5) Education, (6) Housing, (7) Regional Development, (8) Science and Innovation, (9) Statistics, (10) Environment Protection, (11) Water and Sanitation and (12) Partnership with Civil Society.

1. Population Analysis, Center for Demographic Research Moldova

2. Moldova's TFR for 2014 is 1,3. TFR in EU28 for 2014 was 1,58 (Portugal's TFR was 1,23).

3. [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Total_fertility_rate,_2004%E2%80%9314_\(average_number_of_children_per_woman\)_ENPE15.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Total_fertility_rate,_2004%E2%80%9314_(average_number_of_children_per_woman)_ENPE15.png)

4. Population Analysis, Center for Demographic Research Moldova

5. <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?action=view&view=doc&id=340745&lang=1>

6. The Green Paper of the Population of the Republic of Moldova, <http://unfpa.md/images/stories/pdf/Green%20Paper%20of%20the%20Population-RM.pdf>

The Program's implementation rests on multiple stakeholders. The NSPDS establishes 3-year Action Plans as mechanisms to implement its provisions. Being cross-sectoral, the demographic policies are coordinated in Moldova by a collective body - National Commission for Population and Development chaired by Deputy Prime-Minister. The ministerial level institution that takes the lead in working on demographic policies is the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family. The Programme states the following institutions as responsible for implementations of its actions:

- a) MLSPF, as coordinator of demographic policies
- b) Central public administration
- c) Local public administration
- d) UNFPA
- e) Academy of Science
- f) Academy of Public Administration
- g) Universities
- h) Trade-unions, employers
- i) Media
- j) Civil society

The M&E framework of the Program further depends on the inputs of other public institutions. The monitoring mechanism is based on annual, 3 years and final report. Annually, all the line ministries are submitting a report on the implementation of the NSPDS to the MLSPF (by March 1st), which is responsible to present to the Parliament a report of implementation of the NSPDS by April 1st. The National Commission on Population and Development is tasked with M&E and adapting the content of the NSPDS, while the MLSPF has the role of inter-sectoral coordinator of the implementation process. The NSPDS states that the following institutions are responsible for offering necessary data for M&E purposes: National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family, Ministry of Information Technology and Communications, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Environment, National Chamber of Social Insurance

2.2. NEED, PURPOSE, OBJECTIVE OF EVALUATION

The need for the evaluation. As the term of the second Action Plan 2014-2016 of the NSPDS is coming to an end, there is a need to independently assess the quality of implementation of both the Programme and the Action Plan. The conclusions and recommendations resulting from this evaluation shall serve the purposes of amending the NSPDS and assist development of the next Action Plan 2017-2019.

The purpose of the evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the progress in implementation of the National Strategic Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan for 2014-2016. The evaluation assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact, leadership and institutional management and human rights based approach and relevant cross-cutting issues in implementation of the National Programme

on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan, results achieved, factors that facilitated/hindered the achievements, documents good practices and lessons learned and provides recommendations for review the Programme and for development of a new Action Plan.

The specific objectives of the evaluation. More specifically, the evaluation is to achieve the following objectives:

- Evaluate the progress in implementation of the Programme and results achieved so far towards initially set objectives and targets.
- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, leadership and institutional management and human rights based approach and relevant cross-cutting issues in implementation of the Programme.
- Analyze and describe the extent to which the national ownership is ensured, including domestic financial allocations to accelerate Programme implementation.
- Describe good practices and provide factors that facilitated and/or hindered the achievements of the results so far and elaborate lessons learned to be considered in reviewing of the Programme;
- Present specific recommendations to be incorporated in the next Action Plan of the Programme.

2.3. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was conducted by two consultants: one with expertise in social policy/demography and another in monitoring and evaluation. The evaluation process was steered by responsible persons from UNFPA and MLSPF (Demographic and Migration Policies Department) and the intermediary products were coordinated within the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) which gathered most important stakeholders in the process of implementing the NSPDS. An International Advisory Panel on Population and Development, composed by pro-eminent specialists in P&D field, have also reviewed the evaluation and provided its feed-back.

2.3.1. DATA SOURCES AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The evaluation team made conclusions based on triangulation of evidence from different data collection methods and both primary and secondary data sources, the main ones being the group interviews and desk review.

- **Desk review** of related demographic policy documents, work plans, surveys, reviews, progress reports, monitoring visit reports, normative documents;
- Based on an interview guide and the structure of the scorecards, semi-structured group interviews were organized with 3 key groups of experts: Government officials, civil society representatives and academia.
- **Two consultation sessions** of the ERG platform were organized to validate the Inception Report and the first draft of the Evaluation Report.

2.3.2. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

RELEVANCY

This part of the methodology is developed to assess how the Programme on Demographic Security and its Action Plan respond to the demographic challenges that Moldova faces. To assess relevancy, one needs to: (i) understand the key demographic challenges and (ii) what are the best policies to address them given the structural, economic constraints of the country – these are summarized in the table below. Both of these are developed in order to provide a benchmark against which the policies in the NSPDS are being assessed. Within this assessment, relevancy was measured based on three policy tests: (i) Policy adequacy. Did we plan for the right policies? How proposed measures under the 12 strategic objectives address the key demographic challenges. (ii) Reform Intensity. Are we reformist enough? How ambitious are the measures under each strategic objective, given the degree of the key demographic challenges. (iii) Strong Implementation. Did we ensure the right implementation? What is the likelihood of implementation given how well formulated, measured and financed are the measures under each strategic objective. The scoring range was from 0 (no relevancy to key demographic challenges) to 4 (core relationship to demographic challenges). Annex 1 provides a detailed description of the relevancy evaluation grid. In the case of the other components of the Program (Statistics, Housing, Science and Innovation, Environment and Regional Development) the assessment considered the most relevant policy interventions within these sectors as potential benchmarks.

Thus relevancy component of the evaluation answered the following questions: (i) Do the twelve strategic objectives are relevant and how relevant to the demographic challenges of Moldova? (ii) Are implemented activities consistent with the objectives of the expected results? (iii) to what extent the Action Plan in its present form is likely to contribute to the longer-term objectives of the Programme?

EFFECTIVENESS

This component focused first of all on assessing the implementation rate. This assessment is based on the annual implementation reports of the line ministries and the compiled report of the coordinator-institution (MLSPF) as well as on interviews with key persons in line ministries. The implementation rate was assessed at all the structural levels of the 2014-2016 Plan of Actions: objectives, specific objectives, activities, sub-activities. Each of the sub-activities was given a rank from 0 to 4 based on the level of completion of those activities (Annex 3). The rest of the structural elements of the Plan received their score based on the average of the elements immediately inferior.

The evaluation answered the questions: (i) what is the implementation rate for the most relevant policy interventions from the Programme – what was

implemented? (ii) what are the key achievements of the Programs in terms of most relevant policy interventions? (iii) what are the most important missed opportunities and failures? (iv) what were the key factors that undermined and contributed to the Program implementation?

IMPACT

The impact evaluation was restricted to the four demographic challenges against which the relevancy of NSPDS was assessed. The overall framework for impact assessment can be summarized here:

Key demographic challenges	Indicators	Establish the trend	Establish perceived attribution
Sharp fall in fertility rates.	Indicators related to work and life balance (ex: employment rate of mothers) Preschool (0-3 years) education service coverage. Reproductive health indicators (ex: prevalence of infertility in women).	Increasing Constant Decreasing	Attributed to policy interventions or structural factors
Demographic ageing of population.	Employment rate of the elderly including women, Fiscal sustainability of the pension system Access to lifelong education of the elderly.	Increasing Constant Decreasing	Attributed to policy interventions or structural factors
Low life expectancy and high mortality rate.	Gender gaps in health outcomes Poverty gaps in health outcomes Rural gaps in health outcomes. Prevalence rates of NCDs	Increasing Constant Decreasing	Attributed to policy interventions or structural factors
Migration, especially migration of younger and productive population.	Indicators concerning trafficking and forced labor in migration. Rate of remittances invested in to productive means. Nr. agreements between the Moldovan government and “destination” or “host” countries with regards to social and economic aspects of Moldovan migrants (rights to pension, family unification	Increasing Constant Decreasing	Attributed to policy interventions or structural factors

Impact assessment strived to answer the following questions: (i) what is the overall assessment in terms of demographic security in Moldova as compared to 2011? (ii) What is the attribution if any to policy interventions and structural factors? What can be improved to better measure the Impact of the Programme?

LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The assessment used the method of benchmark analysis and evaluated the institutional framework that supports the coordination and implementation of NSPDS against the other institutional models existing in Moldova and abroad. The central counter-model is the “Whole-of-Government” used currently to coordinate and implement Diaspora policies and which sets a substantially different approach for institutional leadership and management. The assessment had also used three different approaches from other countries that are being put in place to coordinate the implementation of population and development policies:

- the executive approach – Philippines
- the academic approach – Poland
- the mixt approach – Romania

The detailed comparison of the models against the CNPD one is presented in the Annex 5. The authors had also tracked all the issues debated by the NCPD since the adoption of NSPDS and the leading institutions for those issues in order to identify the predominant activity patterns (Annex 6).

This part of the evaluation answered the following questions: (i) what is the weakest link in the institutional set up? (ii) What is the weakest link in ensuring institutional accountability? (iii) what are the best existing methods to ensure better coordination and accountability?

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE

The methodology is based first of all on identifying the key HR and GE issues for the most important demographic challenges and how they relate to the Strategic Programme. For the purpose of the present evaluation, those challenges are defined as any inequalities that arise from discrepancies as: income (poorest/richest quintile), rural and urban, age cohort, and male and female population. In multiple cases the fault line can overlap income and gender or place of residence and gender. Those are summarized in the table below:

Key demographic challenges	Potential Human Rights Concerns	Potential Gender Equality Concerns
Sharp fall in fertility rates.	Access gaps to reproductive health services for the poor and disabled.	Gaps in employment for the working mothers.
Demographic ageing of population.	Significant part of the elderly are concentrated in agriculture this will pose serious policy tradeoffs: pension reform, few opportunities to enter more productive sectors of economy. Gaps in access to long term care in rural versus urban areas.	Employment rate among elderly women is lower. Significant gender pension gaps. Poverty rate among elderly men and women.

Low life expectancy and high mortality rate.	Access gaps to quality health care services.	High gender gaps for health in terms of addressability, healthy life style.
Migration, especially migration of younger and productive population.	Gaps in access to quality social services in rural town and small communities for children of migrants.	Increased risk of sexual abuse of migrants' daughters

The assessment used these potential HR and GE concerns as a starting point in the analysis in which the evaluation team will make sure to: (i) establish the HR and GE gaps for each key demographic challenge (ii) understand to what extent the proposed action plan addresses each gap and (iii) formulate specific recommendations.

2.3.3. LIMITATIONS

The evaluation team specified in the Inception Report that assessing efficiency of the Programme will be next to impossible because the M&E Framework lack critical elements: (i) lack of baselines and targets (ii) lack of costing for activities as well as financial reporting for the implementation of the Programme. Alternatively it was suggested to focus on effectiveness only and reflect the „implementation rate”. The one limitation here is the fact that the Action Plan includes activities until the end of 2016, while this assessment was done in mid-2016.

The impact evaluation was also limited by the same poor M&E Framework, but also two additional facts: (i) policy attribution will be hard to measure given the nature of low relevancy and structural demographic factors in Moldova, (ii) demographic policy interventions usually take time to have effect.



III. PROGRAM RELEVANCY

3.1. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Within this assessment, relevancy (the potential impact of the Program) is defined as following: how the Strategic Program on Demographic Security and its Action Plan respond to the key demographic challenges that Moldova faces. The assessment concluded that the key demographic challenges that Moldova faces are: (i) low fertility, (ii) low life expectancy, (iii) demographic ageing and (iv) significant outward migration of working age population. To assess policy relevancy, the assessment considered the following elements: (a) identify what are the best policies to address demographic challenges, given the structure of the population and structural economic constraints of the country, (b) to assess policy ambition and (c) the likelihood that policy interventions will be implemented.

The assessment finds that demographic challenges in Moldova are significant, worsening and worsening quickly. Moldova completed the Demographic Transition Process – it has low fertility, relative low mortality and shrinking population without having the parallel economic development that demographic dividends could entail. The necessary economic transformation, which most of the countries at the end of the demographic transition used to have did not happen in Moldova. Given that the economic development relies on the growing share of working population and increasing economic productivity, Moldova finds itself in a very dire situation. Moldova's demographic Window of Opportunity is rapidly closing without having made the investments that could lead to harnessing a potential demographic dividend.

Given the above described challenges, the Strategic Program on Demographic Security has low relevancy – Program implementation will not lead to improved demographic security. Applying the three policy tests (policy adequacy, policy ambition and policy feasibility) the assessment finds that the Strategic Program fails on all three counts. The Program entails a lot of policy initiatives that are of generic and neutral essence, with no targets to be achieved, no adequate funding and little sense of how profound the proposed reforms will be.

3.2. WHAT IS THE BEST POLICY APPROPRIATENESS IN THE CONTEXT OF DEMOGRAPHIC DECLINE?

This assessment argues that Moldova faces four main demographic challenges. These are: (i) low and falling fertility rates, (ii) demographic ageing of the population and (iii) low life expectancy and high mortality compared to EU countries. These demographic challenges are amplified by a fourth challenge – outward migration of working age population. All these challenges were acknowledged and well documented during the Program elaboration.

When deciding what policies are needed to address the key demographic challenges, several issues need to be considered: (i) that there are pro

active population policies (those that target root causes, for instance policies that address the root causes of low fertility rates) and reactive/adaptive population policies (those that address the consequence of demographic challenges, policies that deal with the consequences of ageing population by making pension systems more sustainable for example), (ii) that prioritization is needed since resources of all kinds are limited, (iii) that some policies are more effective and cost efficient than others and therefore one needs adequate policy evidences to make trade-offs.

3.2.1. POLICIES TO ADRESS LOW AND FALLING FERTILITY RATE

Ensuring work and life balance seems to be one of the most effective policies to boost fertility. Multiple cross country studies⁷ showed that one of the best ways to encourage women and parents to reach the number of desired children is to provide ways by which the opportunity costs of having children are offset. One of the most lasting and effective ways to offset the costs of raising children is to increase work and life balance for parents and especially for the mothers. In terms of policy initiatives this will mean: (i) reform child care leave to make it shorter and better paid, (ii) increase fathers up take in child care leave, (iii) increase access to child care services for the 0-3 olds.

Given its median age, Moldova has a very low fertility rate. In the context of Moldova, relative lower median age is partly explained by lower life expectancy as compared to other EU countries. However, overall low median age and low fertility rate in Moldova suggests some potential to increase fertility, given the right policy interventions.

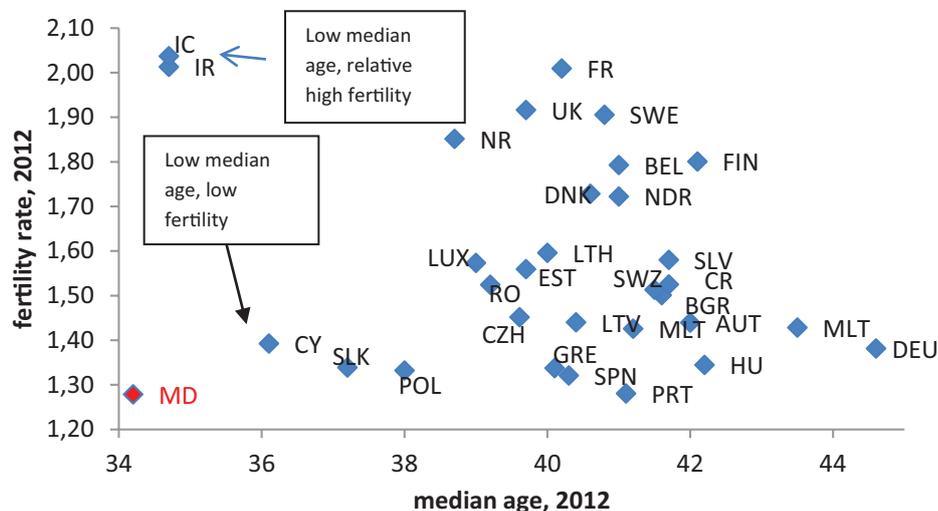


Figure 1: Median age and fertility rate in EU+EU economic Area and Moldova. Source: Eurostat

Moldova has the worst of the two worlds – low fertility rate and low female employment rate. This suggests that under the right policy mix, Moldova can actually improve both the employment rate of women (which is one of the lowest compared to EU countries) and still increase total fertility rate.

7. The Impact of Family Policies on Fertility Trends in Developed Countries, Angela Luci-Greulich, Olivier Thévenon or Trends and Determinants of Fertility Rates in OECD Countries: The Role of Policies, Anna Cristina d'Addio and Marco Mira d'Ercole

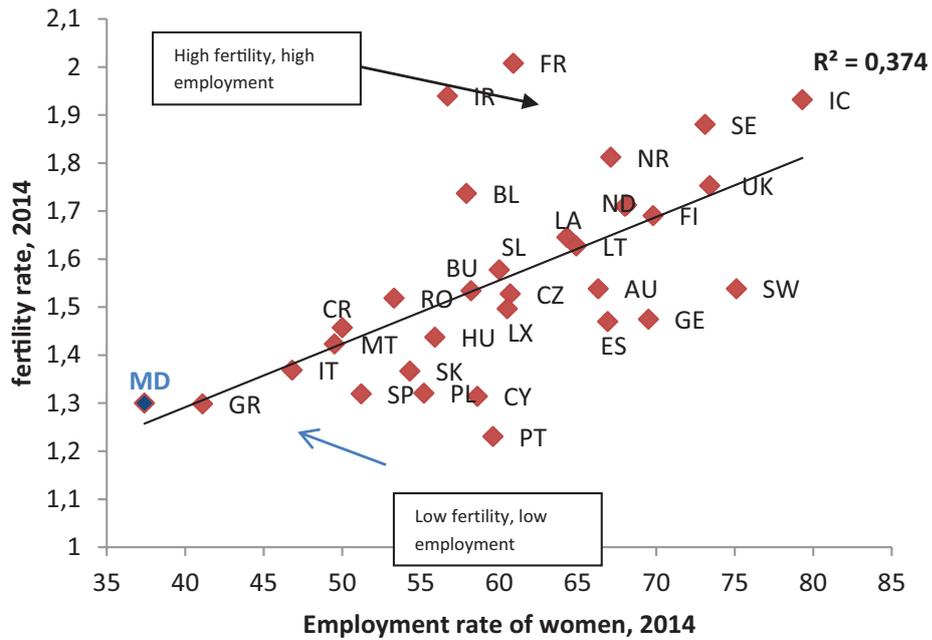


Figure 2: Employment rate and fertility rate in EU+EU economic Area and Moldova. 2014
Source: Eurostat

3.2.2. POLICIES TO INCREASE LIFE EXPECTANCY

In the medium to long term, Moldova will have to both increase health care expenditures and increase system efficiency. In relative terms, Moldovan public expenditures seem to be less efficient compared to EU countries and especially Baltic countries. Given the fiscal and demographic pressures to come, Moldovan authorities will have to improve effectiveness of the health care system (figure 3). However, in the long term for Moldovan to achieve European levels of life expectancy, health care expenditures will have to rise in real terms too (figure 4).

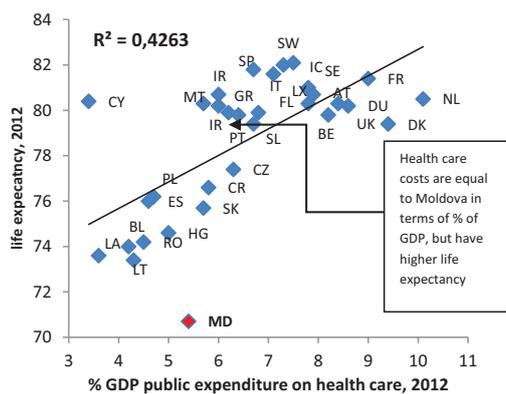


Figure 3: Efficiency of health care expenditures, EU, MD
Source: World Bank

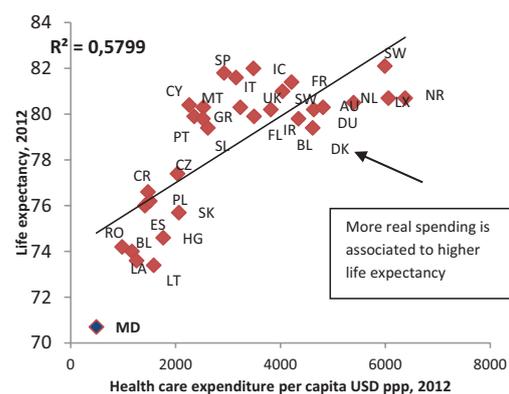


Figure 4: Per capita health care expenditures, EU, MD
Source: World bank

To increase life expectancy a profound health care system reform is needed, along with a “cardiovascular revolution”. Beyond increased and more effective funding, a reform of the health system should be achieved (figure 5). One of the key objectives of the reform should be the reduction of health inequities based on gender, income level and rural/urban divide. Also,

the health system in Moldova should achieve the “cardiovascular revolution”⁸ since the leading cause of death in Moldova is due to cardiovascular diseases. The gap with EU and other western countries is significant (figure 6)⁹.

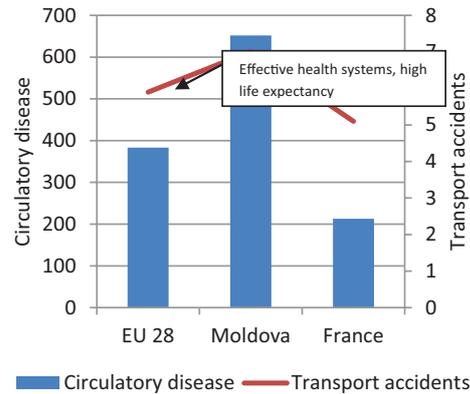
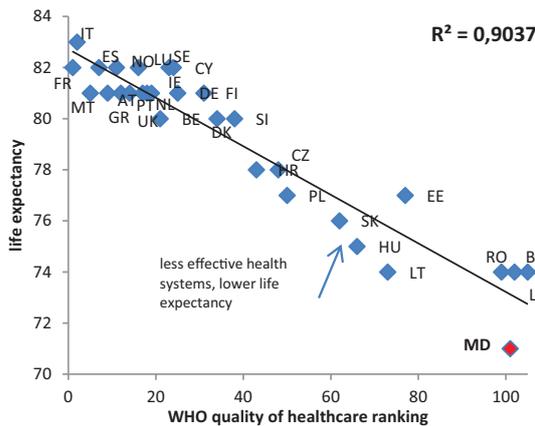
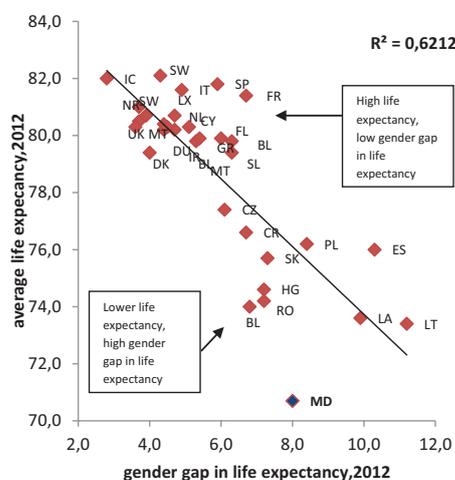


Figure 5: Life expectancy and quality of health systems
Source: WHO

Figure 6: Gaps in standard cardiovascular mortality rate
Source: Eurostat

A relevant part of the life expectancy differentials of Moldova and EU countries can be explained by the gender gap in life expectancy. Moldova has one of the largest gender gaps in life expectancy in EU, this being a common trend with other ex soviet countries. Along with a more efficient and better resourced health care system, reducing gender gaps in life expectancy would improve overall life expectancy in Moldova.

Significant gender gaps indicate the existence of relevant and deep gender



Causes of death per 10 000	Male	Female	Gender differentials Male/Female
Infectious diseases	21,1	5,96	3,54
Malignant tumors	200,13	136,49	1,47
Heart diseases	600,1	681,81	0,88
Heart attack	72,48	32,35	2,24
Respiratory system	69,29	28,28	2,45
Acute pneumonia	37,17	12,63	2,94
Digestive system	109,01	94,99	1,15
Liver cirrhosis	78,44	72,28	1,09
Accidents, traumas, poisoning.	139,81	34,84	4,01
Self provoked injuries	29,11	4,5	6,47
Aggressions, deaths.	7,66	2,87	2,67

Figure 7: Gender gaps in life expectancy
Source: Eurostat

Table 1: Gender differentials by cause of death in Moldova
Source: NBS

based inequalities within the health system (table 1)¹⁰, hence from demographic security perspective, they have to be approached in a significant way.

3.2.3. POLICIES TO ADAPT TO DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING

Given its relative low old age dependency ratio, Moldova spends too much

8. Golden Aging, Prospects for Healthy, Active and Prosperous Aging in Europe and Central Asia, World Bank
9. France is taken as a comparison because of two main reasons: (i) to give an understanding of the health gaps beyond an average of 28 different countries and (ii) France is consistently ranked to have one of the best health care systems by WHO.
10. The figures presented in the table are not adjusted to account for the differences of men and women especially in the 60+ age cohort. The age adjustment could reshape some of the gaps but not change them fundamentally.

on pensions. Old age dependency ratio is the number of old dependants (64+) relative to 100 of working age population. Given the relationship between old age dependency and cost of pensions in other EU countries, Moldova spends more as a percentage of GDP. This indicates more opportunities and the need to reform the pension system.

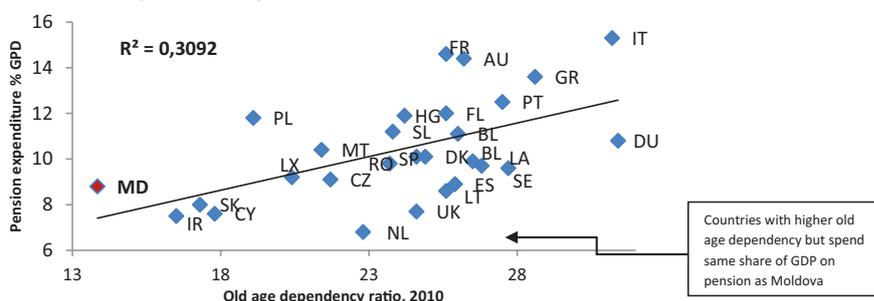


Figure 8: Old age dependency ratio and pensions expenditures relative to GDP. Source: Eurostat, EU Commission,

Gender gap in pension age is quite significant. Moldova has both low and unequal pension ages as compared with other countries in EU. It might seem unfair to compare Moldova with EU since most of EU countries' overall life expectancy is higher, still most of the EU countries are considered to be laggards in terms of pension reform, so the comparison still seems relevant. Pension reform is needed for several reasons: (i) it discourages old age employment especially among women; (ii) the Moldovan pension system is financially unsustainable, (iii) pension system is not fair for honest contributors and it has one of the lowest income replacements as compared with other countries from the region.

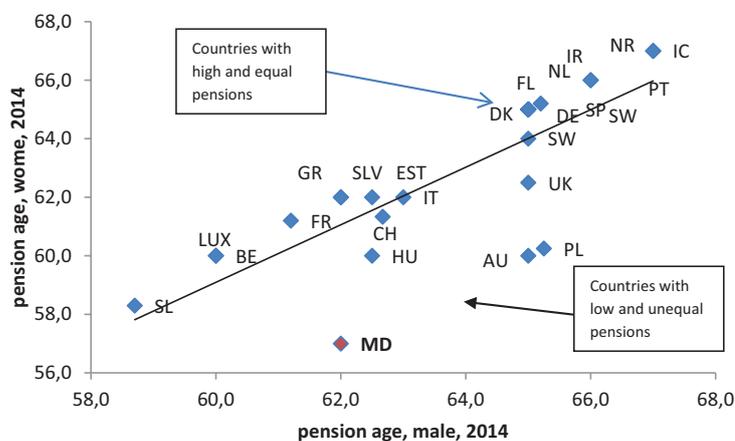


Figure 9: Gender differentials in pension age, EU and Moldova, 2014 Source: OECD

3.2.4. WHAT IS THE BEST POLICY MIX FOR THE MOLDOVAN DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT?

In order to assess the appropriateness of the Strategic Program for Demographic Security, an alternative theory of change was developed. The theory of change is based on the most relevant demography challenges, trends and prospects, most appropriate policies to address these challenges, see the table below.

Demographic challenges	Trend/ Prospects	Policy interventions to address demographic challenges	Ensuring the best policy mix
Sharp fall in fertility rates.	<p>Trend: low levels in the last decade.</p> <p>Prospect: With no policy interventions, it is expected to remain relative low.</p>	<p>Proactive policy interventions</p> <p>Improve work and life balance of women (reform child care leave)</p> <p>Expand preschool education services.</p> <p>Improve access to high quality reproductive services.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: better work and life balance will increase female employment, will give more choice to the working parents.</p> <p>Expected Impact: more secure employment prospects and more choice for parents can lead to increased fertility.</p>	<p>Under the right policy mix fertility rate can improve, but it is a long term process. Given the specific Moldovan context, it is the only policy option to improve demographic shrinkage. It should be given a high priority.</p>
Demographic ageing of population.	<p>Trends: increasing.</p> <p>Prospects: Given the structural composition of the age cohorts and continued migration it will increase.</p>	<p>Adaptive policy interventions</p> <p>Introduce gradual but bold pension reform.</p> <p>Improve preventive health care systems.</p> <p>Introduce lifelong learning for older workers</p> <p>Develop a long term fiscal strategy amid ageing and shrinking population.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: there will be more incentives for the elderly workers to remain in the labor market, improved health care and lifelong learning will make elderly workers increasing more productive and healthy.</p> <p>Expected Impact: pension system more sustainable, employment for the elderly will increase, risk at poverty for the elderly will decrease.</p>	<p>Under the right policy mix, the consequences of demographic ageing can be contained, but not reversed. The right sequence will be the key: (i) ensure fiscal sustainability via pension reform, (ii) implement radical active labor market policies to increase labor participation rate, (iii) reform health care to make long term care more affordable and fiscally sustainable. It should be given a high priority.</p>

<p>Low life expectancy and high mortality rate.</p>	<p>Trend: over the last decade it increased, still large gender gaps in life expectancy persist Prospects: significant differentials in comparison with EU countries</p>	<p>Pro active policy interventions Reduce health care inequalities primarily for: (i) men – ensure behavioral changes to increase addressability, improve healthy life style. (ii) poor – improve access to high quality health services. (iii) rural population – improve access to high quality health services. Increase effectiveness and better implementation of the alcohol control policies. Expected Outcomes: decrease in alcohol consumption, increased addressability and access of the rural poor and men to health services. Expected Impact: significant gaps in health outcomes start to decrease, this leads to increase in overall life expectancy.</p>	<p>Effective policy implementation can yield significant result, which is improving life expectancy. Among all policy options, this will entail the lowest relative cost. It should be given a high priority</p>
<p>Migration, especially migration of younger and productive population.</p>	<p>Trends: in the midterm it will remains relative high</p>	<p>Adaptive policy interventions Make migration safe. Ensure migrants social protection. Increase benefits from Diaspora (investment opportunities for remittances). Ensure effective integration of returning migrants.</p>	<p>Migration is the issue where Moldova has very few policy options. It should be given a low-medium priority from demographic perspective.</p>

Table 2: Theory of change of how to deal with the demographic challenges from a policy perspective.

3.3. WHY POPULATION POLICIES IN MOLDOVA SHOULD BE AMBITIOUS?

A starting point is to understand where Moldova is on the demographic transition model¹¹. This model describes four main stages, with countries moving from high fertility and low life expectancy (as in the first stage) to a stage when fertility remains relative high but mortality rates start to decline (stage two). In the third stage, fertility starts to fall and population growth starts to decline too. During this stage, dependency rate is shrinking (due to fewer children being born) but the working age population is growing. Phase four begins when these two elements are reversed – working age population shrinking and dependency ratio growing (due to the increasing share of the elderly in overall population). Given the description above, it is clear that Moldova is in the fourth stage of the Demographic Transition Model, with one caveat though.

Demographic challenges of Moldova are far greater when compared to other countries from the region. To allow for comparison across relevant demographics outcomes and to provide a sense of urgency in terms of demographic security the World Bank calculated the z-score, calculated for each country as a standard deviation from the average. The bigger the z-score the further away the country is from the average and the bigger the policy challenge is for the decision makers. The z-score for 2012 calculated across 8 dimensions¹² and it was highest for Moldova. This indicates a significant policy challenge hence a need for high policy relevancy towards demographic security.

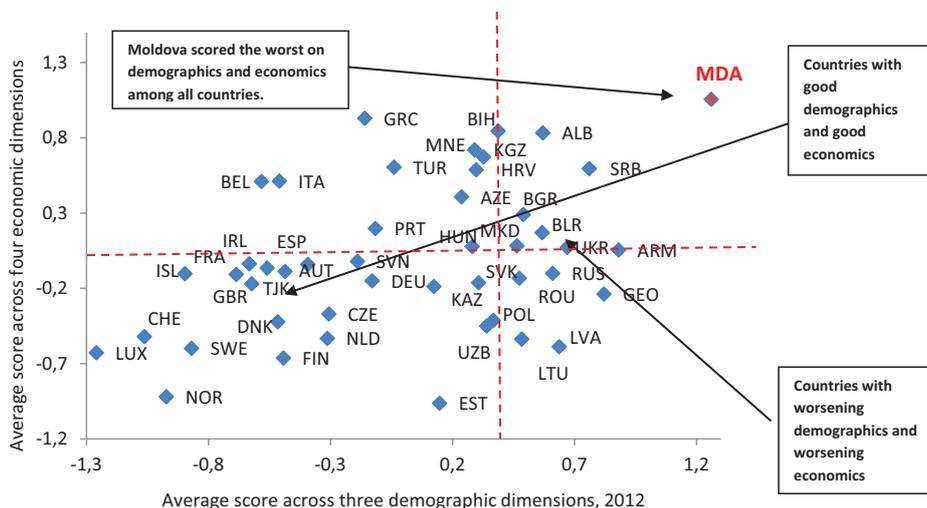


Figure 10: Moldova has the highest policy challenge in the region in terms of demographic security

Source: World Bank, *Golden Ageing, Promoting Healthy, Active and Prosperous Aging*.

Moldova got old before it got rich. A classical interpretation of the Demographic Transition Model is that the demographic transition provides the

11. Development Goals in an Era of Demographic Change. Global Monitoring Report 2015/2016. World Bank
 12. These are: voting participation gap, total fertility rate, healthy life expectancy, net immigration per 1000, PISA score in science, gross debt as share of GDP and relative poverty rate. More details: *Golden Ageing: Prospects for Healthy, Active and Prosperous Aging in Europe and Central Asia*

country with the opportunity for to economic development¹³. With a couple of exceptions, countries that are in the third or fourth stage of demographic transition are relative developed countries. The usual perspective is that an ageing developed country has a robust, productive and innovative economy that can offset the increasing cost of shrinking working population. The caveat for Moldova is that the demographic transition happened without the economic development. In a sense, Moldova has a significant mismatch in terms of demographic stance and economic development - it has a pre second phase economy and a phase four population context. Therefore the challenge for Moldova will be to do what very few countries actually did – to improve economic and demographic stance at the same time. The difficulty in terms of demography is that outward migration magnified all existing demographic challenges: ageing, low fertility. At present, there is no effective policy tool at disposal for Moldovan authorities to reduce push factors of migration. From the economic side, Moldova will have to overcome tremendous structural challenges to become more productive. Moldova will have to deal with: high share of employment and economic output in agriculture (a sector with low productivity potential), significant share of rural population and ultimately a shrinking and ageing population.

3.4. HOW RELEVANT IS THE PROGRAM TO THE KEY DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES?

How to measure policy relevancy? Within this assessment, relevancy is measured based on three policy tests: (i) policy should be adequate, did we plan for the right policies? How proposed measures under the 12 strategic objectives address the key demographic challenges. (ii) Reform Intensity. Are we reformist enough? How ambitious are the measures under each strategic objective, given the degree of the key demographic challenges. (iii) Strong Implementation. Did we ensure the right implementation? What is the likelihood of implementation given how well formulated, measured and financed are the measures under each strategic objective. The scoring range was from 0 (no relevancy to key demographic challenges) to 4 (core relationship to demographic challenges). Annex 1 provides a detailed description of the relevancy evaluation grid. In the case of the other components of the Program (Statistics, Housing, Science and Innovation, Environment and Regional Development) the assessment considered the most relevant policy interventions within these sectors as potential benchmarks. .

Given the demographic challenges in Moldova, the overall relevancy of the Strategic Program is low. Based on the overall scoring –the assessment concludes that the policy interventions within the Strategic Program, even if fully implemented, will have a limited impact on the demographic stance in Moldova. Relevancy improved a bit in the second planning cycle (2014-2016), but still the implementation process does not match the demographic challenges that Moldova faces – a real commitment to reform is needed.

13. IMF, What Is the Demographic Dividend? Ronald Lee and Andrew Mason <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2006/09/basics.htm>

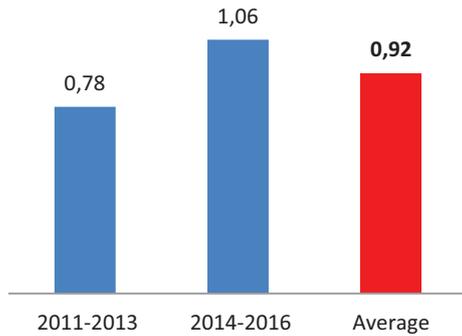


Figure 11: Relevancy scoring 2011-2016

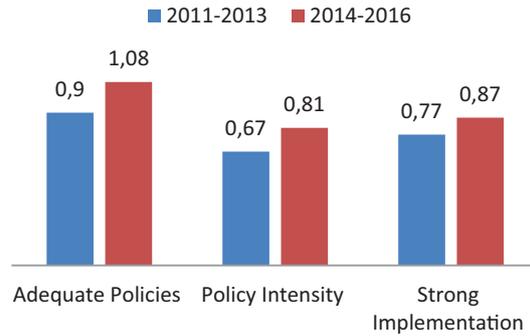


Figure 12: Relevancy scoring by relevancy element.

Relevancy by policy area varies, but it is still low. The action plan for the Strategic Program was structured based on 12 thematic areas. This policy design approach gives a sense of lack of priorities. Among the most relevant 5 thematic areas, it seems that migration and health sectors are reluctant outliers – they got a bigger score than the overall average. Most of the activities under the migration refer to social protection of migrants, their integration and involvement in socioeconomic life of Moldova. Relevant activities under health thematic group refer to tobacco and alcohol reduction/control and equal access to reproductive health services.

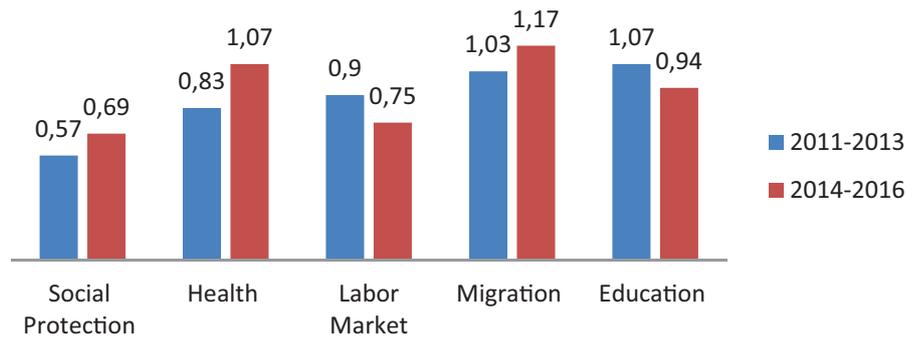


Figure 13: Relevancy by Program's most relevant components

Policy ambition and implementation frameworks are very weak. Given the urgency and the pervasive nature of the demographic challenges it

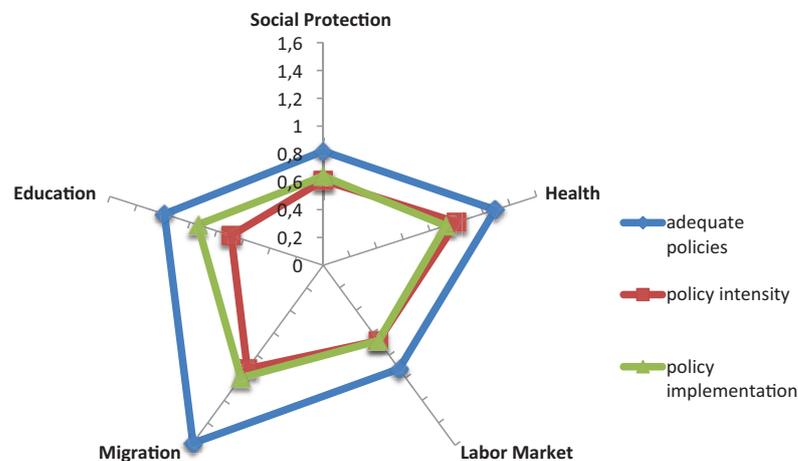


Figure 14: How relevancy benchmarks differentiate by sector?

seems unsuitable for the most policy interventions to be lacking intensity: no ambitious targets, no structural reforms envisaged and no specificity. The same assessment is true in terms of implementation framework: little or generic costing, no clear M&E.

What was the theory of change proposed by the Programme? Another important part of the assessment is to understand what was the theory of change envisioned by the authorities if we consider only those policy interventions that are directly related to the four demographic challenges? These policy interventions would score above 0, 5 on evaluation's adequacy policy benchmark.

The assessment found 38 policy interventions out of 116 planned for the period of 2014-2016. That is close to 33% of total. It is important to mention two issues: (i) that the 38 interventions still have low relevancy (only one true structural reform was planned – the paternal leave), and (ii) that the other interventions are judged to be less reliable in terms of demography, but they are relevant in terms of other worthy goals like reducing poverty and inequality.

Low fertility	High mortality and low life expectancy	Demographic ageing	Migration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce paternal leave. - Develop reproductive health programs at the community level with a focus on men. - Implement programs on healthy life style for youth and extend youth friendly health services. - Ensure equal and non discriminatory access to all for reproductive health. - Develop the network of pre-school education institutions and alternative centers for preschool education. - Repair and improve pre-school education institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote healthy life style. - Realize preventive work on non communicable diseases. - Reduce morbidity and mortality among children through vaccination. - Monitor control policies on tobacco and alcohol. - Provide consultative assistance in organization of activities aimed at reducing tobacco and alcohol consumption. - Edit and distribute reports on the situation of road accidents. - Organize TV and radio shows on the topic of preventing road accidents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve capacities of the multi-disciplinary teams to prevent and combat elderly abuse. - Realize preventive and combative work on elderly abuse. - Implement the pension level on the basis of insured income gained after 1999. - Realize a study on cumulative pension system. - Analyze the option of excluding the period for child care (0-3 years) in establishing the average monthly income. - Organize debates on the need to reform the pension system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Repatriation of lone children in Moldova. - Improve social services for children at risk. - Negotiate bilateral accords on social insurance with destination countries for Moldovan migrants. - Information campaigns for migrant on their social protection rights in their countries of destination. - Provide reintegration in labor market services for returned migrants. - Implement existing bilateral accord on migration. - Publish information on the employment opportunities of migrants. - Promote Moldova interest in terms of migration within UN system.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase awareness o the need to pay social contribution and taxes. -Extend geriatric health services. -Develop home care type of services. - Develop community based mental health services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improve data collection on migration cycles. - Produce and update a migration profile of Moldova. - Analyze sectors that are in need of foreign employment. - Engage with diasporas' organization fir on-line platform. - Create the professional based Diaspora organizations. - Promote Diaspora's initiatives in social, economic and agricultural sectors.
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Table 3: Reconstructed theory of change based in the policy interventions from the Action Plan 2014-2016.





IV. PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

4.1. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The effectiveness component will focus first of all on the implementation rate. This chapter will present the implementation of the activities and sub-activities included in the Action Plan 2014-2016 assessed on a scale from 1 to 4 according to the methodology presented in the Annex 3.

Program implementation rate is rather low. The general implementation rate for all the Action Plan 2014-2016 is 1.80 (as measured from 0 to 4) or 45% of all planned activities. The highest implementation rates are in the fields of migration (2.54), science and innovation (2.50), environment protection (2.44) and water and sanitation (2.5). The lowest implementation rate was registered for activities dealing with civil society partnership (0.83), statistics (1.25) and labor force market (1.42).

The Government has succeeded in completing mostly those activities that are of little or no relevance for the implementation of NSPDS goals. Thus annual implementation reports indicate that a lot of time and efforts was invested in numerous social campaigns that usually involved support from civil society and/or donor community and never referred to the root causes of the key demographic challenges. A significant part of the Plan includes activities that are simply imported from other strategic documents or openly state as an activity implementation of a strategy (on Reproductive Health, on Regional development, Water and Sanitation etc.). While this overlapping is not necessarily bad in principle, the evaluation concludes that the Programme didn't have any significant contribution to implementation of any of those activities. Thus the repetition did not result in value added, if this was the initial purpose. While the Government has succeeded in implementing a lot from what it planned for Diaspora and Migration, mostly realizing programs to strengthen cooperation and dialogue with this part of the population, too little was done to cope with population challenges at home.

Some important achievements were realized. With all this being said, there are some important achievements of the Government that are relevant for the demographic policies and have to be mentioned. First of all the introduction of paternal leave is one of those activities implemented fully and that also marks a transformation in the way policy makers think. Secondly, the adoption of the anti-tobacco package was a very big achievement considering the very serious opposition of the tobacco industry and the unpreparedness of the state institutions to radical changes. Thirdly, the reforms initiated in the educational sector, specifically the change of the financing formula, already brought changes felt by many.

The Plan implementation offered several important opportunities that were missed both because the actions were formulated in a vague manner and because of weak implementation. Thus the Government didn't succeed in advancing with the pension reform, adapting and improving the

Social Aid mechanism, building a cooperation framework with civil society or bringing back life-skills education to schools. Much more could be done also in capitalizing on some Government achievements like the anti-tobacco awareness campaign or Diaspora investment activities.

Strong leadership from MLSPF and donor's support are among the key enabling factors. The important factors that contributed to implementation of the Plan were increased interest for the matter from the public at large, strong leadership and institutional support from MLSPF and NCPD, development of R&D capacities and permanent support from bi-lateral and international partners.

Implementation was undermined by the flawed design of the Plan and other weaknesses. The most important undermining factors were the very problematic internal structure of the Plan, complicated economical and social situation in the country, lack of trust in public institutions, lack of understanding of the key demographic challenges and knowledge for producing effective solutions. Another weakness was the lack of information about the resources that are allocated for implementation and the information on financial delivery. It is impossible to estimate the efficiency of implementation in absence of this information. The lack of targets makes even the assessment of implementation a very inaccurate exercise. Further on- the unbalanced structure - three strategic objectives: social protection, health and migration have the same number of sub-activities as the rest 9 objectives. And finally- the formulation and the scale of sub-activities differ significantly from one objective to another. For example, there is a big difference between implementing the regional development strategy and compensating the price of textbooks for national minorities.

4.2. MAIN FINDINGS

4.2.1. WHAT IS THE IMPLEMENTATION RATE FOR THE MOST RELEVANT POLICY INTERVENTIONS FROM THE PROGRAMME – WHAT WAS IMPLEMENTED?

Overall implementation rate is low. The general implementation rate for the entire Action Plan – 12 strategic objectives, 32 specific objectives, 66 actions and 114 sub-actions - was 1.8 (45%).

There is an uneven implementation progress for social protection and social assistance. The overall implementation rate for the Social Protection, Family and Child activities is 45% or 1.79 points out of a maximum of 4. Overall there was a high degree of implementation for the social protection activities (about 68%) and a much lower one for the activities dealing with social security (11%). Government reports mostly on three types of activities in this part of the plan: (i) development of by-laws and in particular those setting standards for new social services, (ii) different types of information campaigns, (iii) activities that are mostly due to interventions by NGOs. The overall low implementation rate under this particular objective is mostly due to the fact that 10 out of 25 activities and sub-activities were not implemented at all.

Judging only by the activities that were reported on, the implementation rate would be 2.8 or 70%.

The *Health Care* component reached an implementation rate of 1.79, which corresponds to 45%. The reports from the Government indicate that the system performed best in the field of promoting a healthy life-style (2.75) and in preventing non-communicable diseases (2.5). Government reported interventions on all the planned activities and sub-activities in which Ministry of Health had a leading role.

The implementation rate of activities in the field of Labor Market stalled. The overall implementation rate was 1.42, which corresponds to 36%. Except starting drafting the new Employment strategy, the Government didn't report any advancement in the field.

On the other hand the activities under the Migration Objective have progressed significantly. The overall implementation rate for this specific chapter was 2.54, which corresponds to 64%. The Government scored best on activities to engage Diaspora – 2.92 (73%) and had results to report for all activities and sub-activities in the plan.

The *Education* component of the Action Plan were implemented at a general rate of 1.58 that means 40%. The Government gained more implementation points in ensuring better access to education and lost in rating because of non-implementation of some training activities as: demography for local public servants, family councilors or traffic rules education.

The *Housing and Regional Development* chapters seem to be very poor parts of the Action Plan in terms of activities. In case of the former, the author used a rather old approach of building infrastructure instead of increasing access to financing instruments that would allow those vulnerable to have access to decent housing. The overall implementation rate is 1.5 that corresponds to 38%. At the same time activities included in the Regional Development chapter scored in terms of implementation 2.5 points, which means about 63% implementation rate. And here you won't see any new approach to regional development – just the implementation of the current strategy and the current programs included as activities. Recognizing that it is not intrinsically bad, the evaluators didn't identify any value added that the NSPDS provided for the implementation of the Regional Development Strategy or other sectorial programs.

Most of the planned activities and sub-activities under the *Science and Innovation, Environment Protection and Water and Sanitation* were completed. The activities envisaged for this priority were implemented at a rate of 2.5 which corresponds to 68%. At the same time the Government reports a significant under-implementation for the Statistics chapter – 1.25 or 31%. The Government reported a high degree of implementation for the activities pertaining for Environment Protection – 2.44 which equals to 61%. The Water and Sanitation objective scored 2.5 that equals to 68%, while the cooperation with Civil Society could only reach 0.83 or 21%.

4.2.2. WHAT ARE THE KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM IN TERMS OF MOST RELEVANT POLICY INTERVENTIONS?

Implementation has been uneven among different Programme priorities. The figure below, which tries to relate the implementation scores and relevancy score for the Programme priorities, shows that both relevancy and implementation rate were above relative average, these are Migration, Water and Sanitation and Health priorities. Statistics sector was a classic case of over planning and under delivering. The assessment found relative high implementation, but low relevancy among Environment, Innovation, Regional Development and Social Protection sectors. The Programme relative underperformers were Housing, Education, Labor Market and Civil Society priorities.

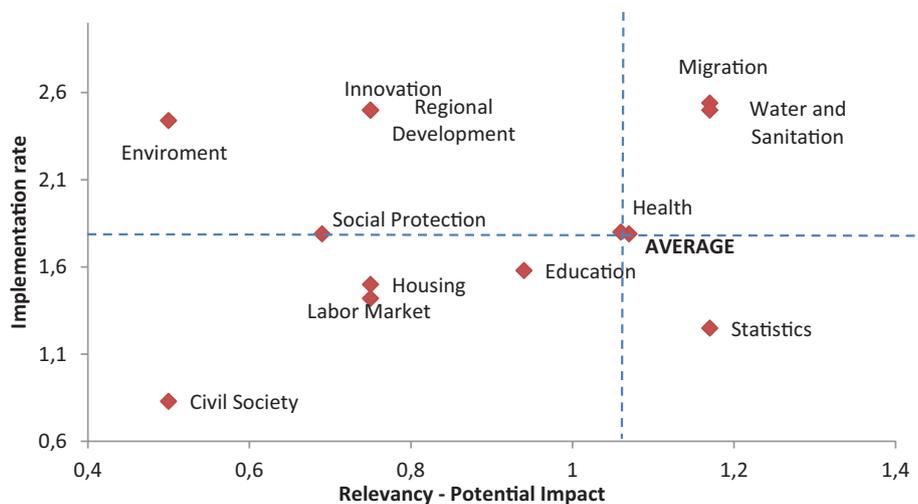


Figure 15: How Programme Priorities were implemented, relative to each other?

In social protection component, most of the achievements are due to organized social campaigns and introduction of the paternal leave. For *Social Protection, Family and Child* there were two objectives that saw relatively highest implementation rate: Specific Objective 3 - Prevention of child victimization and (3.5) and Specific Objective 2 - Improved life and work balance. The Government reported numerous social campaigns under Specific Objective 3 most of which were implemented with considerable input from civil society/NGOs/ As for Specific Objective 2 Government most notable achievement is adoption of the law on paternal leave.

Under the *Health Care* objective the Government registered several important achievements. It succeeded in building two nation-wide systems: of mental health facilities and of community centers for TB patients. Even if the sustainability issue comes immediately up, it is a rather positive development that will depend on the Government capacity to manage it and integrate in the general system. The work of the Ministry of Health with some of the donors in concrete fields like with Czech Republic in home-care services or SDC on building mental health facilities shows a promising progress in donor coordination and labor division.

Tobacco control is another important result. Mainly due to the entry into force on May 31, 2016 of the comprehensive legal provisions restricting smoking. Moldova had a long way towards this end and after all the legislative phases the initial structure and content of the package changed significantly. The Government failed to implement a large-scale information campaign on the most important provisions of the new amendments. Nevertheless the changes had a significant initial impact.

Improved management and planning tools in health sector. The Government delivered on its commitment to build a database on human resources in the medical sector mostly to better plan medical education expenditures and monitor closely the impact of migration on the sector. It has also doubled the number of geriatric beds but it is not very clear how this increase influenced the general system of health care for the elderly

The only progress perceived in the *Labor Force* chapter is the one referring to the development of the new Employment Strategy. Otherwise the rest of the activities are just expressing perfectly routine, even stagnant activities of the MLSPF and the National Employment Agency. This is particularly bad considering the importance of this sector for demographic security. The Government didn't come up with improvement of its Labor Force policy and did not implement activities that would set the basis for a change of situation in the field.

In the field of *Migration* the Government succeeded by taking the maximum advantage out of institutional break-through archived by creating the Bureau for Relations with Diaspora – an entity within the State Chancellery responsible for coordinating all the policies that concern Diaspora at the central administration level. The Government's overall presence in relations with Diaspora increased dramatically as well as the number of programs dedicated to engaging Moldovans abroad. The biggest achievements here were the cultural and educational programs. The National Employment Agency had also engaged actively in creating better internal capacities to assist the reintegration of returned migrants.

In the *Education* sector the Government showed that those transformations in this sector are in a very big demand. The implemented activities and the results obtained confirm that with financial support from donors and with a good management the pre-school infrastructure could be significantly improved. Changing the financing formula for schools had also brought results that are becoming tangible little by little. The Government had also reported sustained efforts to implement the reform in the residential care institutions, though it is not very clear what are the net consequences of these efforts.

The creation of Centre for Demographic research was a relevant achievement. As for the Statistics chapter, one would notice improved capacities, specifically in population forecasting even if this is not a direct result of the Government's intervention but rather an individual activism on behalf of the personnel from the Centre for Demographic Research. The Government also succeeded in improving cooperation between different of

its entities that produce and analyze data that overall contributed to better population statistics.

Donor support explains relevant achievement under Environment component. As in other fields, the Government did well at social campaigning in the Environment Protection sector, but also scored quite high in evacuating pesticides and planning waste management infrastructure. It should be noted that those were the activities benefitted heavily from foreign assistance.

4.3. WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT MISSED OPPORTUNITIES AND FAILURES?

The Program and the Plan of actions offered a perfect opportunity to *rethink the pension system reform and conceptualize a new vision*. But all of the actions in the specific part of the Plan that is concerned with pensions are formulated in terms like “analyzing the options..” or “evaluating the opportunities...” or “expanding the discussion space for...” which is absolutely discouraging for any serious interventions. More recently, in August 2016, the Government approved a Concept for the Pension System Reform, but it was not made public making it impossible for us to offer an opinion. The Government had also reviewed only in a superficial manner the Social Aid mechanism that does not correspond to significant criticism existent in the society mostly regarding the lack of graduation mechanisms and activation policies. The Government also failed to build a cohesive mechanism of cooperation with civil society specifically in the field of providing social services. The actions continued to be scattered without clear rules and procedures and lacking a clear view on the common goals.

On the side of health care policies, the failure of going back to the implementation of the *life-skills education* was probably the most important missed opportunity to improve some of the education and health indicators that regard youth. The Government reported implementation of numerous, costly, labor intensive and geographically scattered information and awareness raising campaigns that are more indicative for an absence of a systemic approach in promoting healthy life-style and no evaluation machinery to show inefficiency and demand radical change.

The authors also consider that the entry into force of the anti-tobacco legislative package created a window of opportunity based on an increased demand for counseling services for quitters. But the Government failed to implement a wide information campaign on both the legal provisions and advantages of quitting smoking. It had also failed to offer those counseling services when the incentives were the strongest. The Government didn't report any activities for raising awareness on and preventing traffic accidents.

Insufficient development of economic engagement programs for Diaspora is probably the biggest missed opportunity of this period in the migration field. Considering the huge potential that the Moldovan migrants have in terms of savings, the Government didn't succeed in implementing

instruments to compete for these resources for the purposes of investing them in Moldova. The Government had also paid too little attention to analyze both the opportunities and the threats that immigration poses in front of Moldova now. It has also proved to be too slow in adapting its legislation and immigration requirements to the need of improving the business climate and the priority of attracting more investments from abroad.

In the *Education* sector seems like the Government didn't succeed in obtaining any progresses in better linking the content of education to the labor market needs.

Housing and the *Regional Development* chapters offered an opportunity to rethink the Government instruments to incentivize procurement or renting of housing for young families giving also a boost for the industry. The Housing part lacks a wider vision or approach to solving this problem not only for the most vulnerable, but for the very many who are not necessarily in a vulnerable stance but still cannot afford a dwelling of their own. The Government also missed the opportunity to tackle the issue of important regional discrepancies in terms of population and development and address them with targeted policies or use generic interventions that could be fine-tuned for the needs of a specific region.

Population census – a missed opportunity. From the research perspective it was a limitation in itself to confine the Science and Innovation chapter to demographic field only. Because the results of the census are still not available, it was impossible to produce updated population forecasts.

Demographic statistics and research are rarely linked to demography relevant policies. Another significant challenge that persists is the fact that Moldova does not have the necessary mechanisms and human resources to transform the research results into specific policy interventions. Demographic Statistics are not developed at their full potential because of imperfect institutional cooperation within the Government, insufficient data use by policy-makers as well as insufficient speed in adapting modern methods of data gathering and analysis. The Government also failed in creating an efficient mechanism to track the implementation of the NSPPD and its Action Plan from the perspective of key demographic indicators.

In what regards *Environment Protection* and despite a lot efforts and resources invested in social campaigning, the authors believe that the Government failed in creating a sense of urgency in the public at large. Moldovan people have very little information on the environment situation and are not aware of the potential risks and the way those will impact everyone's life.

Collaboration with CSOs was shortsighted. Except several consultations with academia and think-tanks, the Government failed to establish a permanent policy dialogue with civil society or to build a functional communication platform.

4.4. WHAT WERE THE KEY FACTORS THAT UNDERMINED AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION?

Contributing factors

Increased interest from the society at large and mass media for the demographic situation and demographic subject (mostly de-population) could be one of those factors that have positively influenced prioritization and implementation of some activities from the Action Plan.

Strong Leadership from MLSPF. Strong leadership from the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family and the functioning coordination mechanism of the National Commission on Population and Development also encouraged implementation of the Plan. This issue will be developed in the last part of this assessment.

Centre for Demographic Research. As a stand-alone R&D institution significantly contributed to moving the demographic debate from populist to fact-based. The papers produced by this institution are helping to better understand the demographic challenges that Moldova is facing and creates important pre-requisites for a policy analysis and development.

Donor's support. Another key element that contributed positively to the implementation of the demographic strategic framework was the support from donor organizations and countries. UNFPA and its long-time assistance should be the first to mention as the help it offered not only contributed to the development of most important directions in demographic sector, but also contributed to setting the ground for the entry of other donors.

Undermining factors

Weak economy and tight fiscal envelope reduced investments necessary for successful Program implementation. The overall stagnant economy and the very complicated political situation have also influenced the overall implementation of the Action Plan. It translated into fewer resources available for implementation and lack of focused attention from the responsible institutions because of multiple changes in the Government top management level. This also translated into an increased feeling of estrangement and lack of trust on behalf of the Moldovans abroad. Diaspora welcomed the programs implemented by the Government, but didn't trust the people and the purposes that are behind those programs. And this is exactly why Moldovan migrants, being very potent in terms of financial resources, knowledge and skills, are still very reluctant in investing in Moldova.

Weak structure of the Program as a Public Policy. The authors believe that one of the most crucial factors that undermined Programme implementation is first of all its *own structure and formulation*. Without clear priorities, targets, without resources allocated, with a confused and complicated internal structure, repeating activities from other strategic document – the NSPDS and its plans of actions was sentenced to non-implementation. The Plan has also employed a structure that is just too big for the content that was provided. For

19 out of 30 specific objectives just 1-2 actions were proposed.

Generic results framework reduced accountability of other implementing stakeholders. Another aspect is the overall institutional arrangement for the implementation of the Plan of Actions. The Programme sets quite confusing objectives and targets that allow key Ministries like MLSPF and MoH to insert in the Plan of Actions mostly activities from other strategic documents, a move that does not translate in better implementation or synergies. The situation is also imposed by the fact that the biggest implementation pressure is placed on the same institutions.

The authorities took a narrow view of the vulnerable men and women that can be affected by the Program. The Government perceived discrimination only through the lenses of offering better services to those in extreme vulnerability like victims of trafficking or domestic violence. This hampered its ability to see wider access gaps to services, like in healthcare, for rural population, women, youth and address the accordingly.

Unfinished population census keeps undermining evidence based policies relevant for demographics. The fact that Moldova has not finished yet analyzing the 2014 Census data constitutes a serious impediment for the demographic research in general and for policy formulation. Lack of an unified approach to data production and analysis within the Government had also hampered efforts to effectively modernize the statistical system, including its demographic part.



V. PROGRAMME IMPACT

5.1. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Program impact is presumed to be low. The Program's impact is difficult to assess because of two main reasons: (i) demographic policy interventions usually take time to have effect, (ii) impact attribution of the Program is hard to assess since it has a no effective M&E framework in place: no baseline, no targets. If the M&E set up will not be improved, future impact evaluations will be challenging. Given the low relevancy described in the previous chapter the assessment concludes that the Program's impact is rather low.

5.2. WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM?

In the context of demographic policies, measuring direct policy impact is challenging.

Meaningful policy interventions in terms of demography, take a lot of time to make a lasting effect. The way to measure impact is to refer to intermediary policy results described in the alternative theory of change. In the medium term, authorities, can measure if Moldova is on the right track in terms of work and life balance or it improves or the employment rate of elderly. These types of indicators have a smaller policy lag (the time to take effect from any policy interventions) so it is more appropriate to measure the policy impact that way.

The policy response has been irrelevant to key demographic challenges. A relevancy policy review of the Program (based on policy appropriateness, policy ambition and policy implementation framework) concluded that policy interventions within the Strategic Program, even if fully implemented, would have a limited impact on the demographic stance in Moldova. The relevancy policy review (which assigned a relevancy scoring from 0 to max 4), found that the overall score for the 2014-2016 Action Plan was 1,06. Program implementation rate is also rather low. The general implementation rate for all the Action Plan 2014-2016 is 1.80 (as measured from 0 to 4) or 45% of all planned activities. Relevancy and Implementation are the key elements of transformative policy (figure 14). When policy interventions have high relevancy and high implementation rate, they achieve positive outcomes and lasting transformation. The assessment found that none of the 12 Program priorities reached that. Program's policy priorities rather were of tokenism nature (low relevancy but higher implementation) and status quo (low relevancy and low implementation).

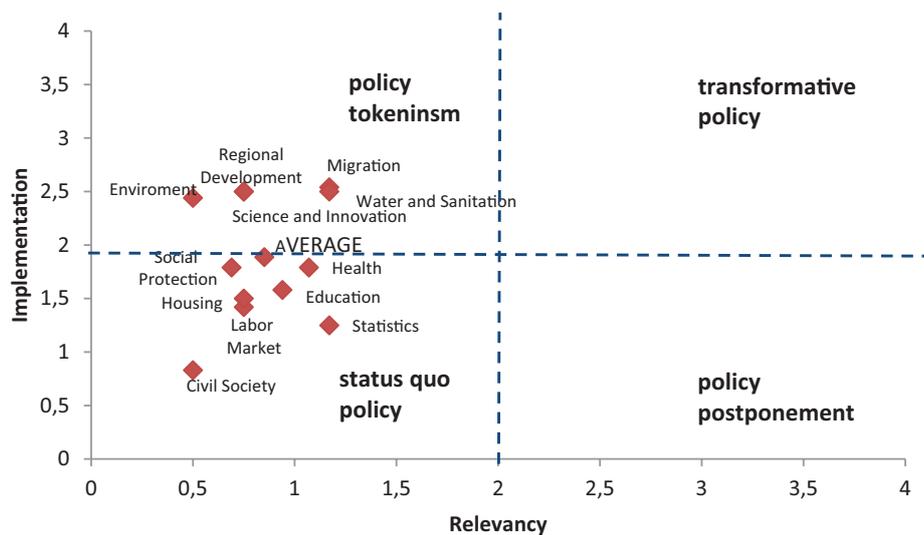


Figure 16: How National Strategic Program on Demographic Security Was Implemented?

Since most of the policy interventions within the Program are of low relevancy, this assessment concludes that so far the Program has low impact. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the assessment concluded the Programme Policy Interventions to be of low relevancy. From over 100 policy interventions over 12 thematic areas, very few are of structural nature, interventions that address the core demographic challenges or have any ambitious targets. In principle, one should expect that any impactful changes as they relate to the four demographic challenges cannot be attributed to the Strategic Programme.

Given the M&E set up of the Strategic Program, any attempts to assess even the intermediate the impact of the Program will be difficult. Since Strategic Program is a long term policy program, one has to assess how fit is the M&E framework (see the table below) as to permit Moldovan Government and other relevant stakeholders to evaluate its impact in the future. The assessment concludes that without significant rethink of the M&E framework the impact of the Strategic Program will not be possible to be measured.

The M&E framework of the program is quite weak from the policy accountability perspective. The Strategic Program mandates three year Action Plans as the main tool for implementation. The monitoring mechanism is based on annual and three year final reports. Every year, all the line ministries are submitting a report on the implementation of the Strategic Program to the Ministry of Social Protection and Family. Based on the information received, the Ministry is developing the annual report that is presented and debated within the Governmental Commission on Population and Development.

However there are some relevant gaps that hamper the accountability perspective of the M&E system presented in the table bellow and explored further.

Data and analysis on demographic dynamics is available. The census data has not been fully processed and published and so there is some reasonable doubt about the accuracy of population estimates in Moldova¹⁴ this assessment concludes that relevant decision makers have wide access to population data and analysis.

Elements of the M&E	Description	Status
Availability of data and analysis.	Should help decision makers to develop understand the scope of the problem, set up baselines and develop targets by making meaningful projections.	Strong
Policy impact is measured via SMART indicators	Should help decision makers understand how policy interventions will affect/improve demographic stance. Example: how work and life policies contributed to eventual increased fertility.	Weak
Policy outcomes are measured via SMART indicators	Should help decision makers understand how policy interventions are implemented. Example: the possibility to measure the rate of implementation of work and life measures.	Weak
Baseline and Targets are set.	Should help decision makers to understand policy contribution towards outcomes and impact. Example: how we know that work and life balance improvement can be attributed to specific policy interventions.	Weak
Performance management	Should help decision makers to understand gaps, bottlenecks and improve accountability among line ministries.	Weak

Table 4: Elements of a strong M&E framework.

National Bureau of Statistics and Center for Demographic Research provide data and analysis on constant bases. Two priorities from the Strategic Program action plan focus on: (i) science and innovation in the area of demography: improving population estimates, improving the demographic security index and (ii) statistics: aligning national statistics with international ones, improve data collection on migration, etc.

However, there are gaps in terms of linking the data and analysis to **evidence based policy making**. Given that in demography there is a very significant lag between policy interventions and their effect on demography, what decision makers lack and need most of all, is analysis on the potential impact of the ongoing policies on demography.

14. Producing reliable mortality estimates in the context of distorted population statistics: the case of Moldova”, authors: Penina Olga (CCD, Moldova), Dmitrii Jdanov (Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Germany; Center for Demographic Research at New Economic School, Russia), Pavel Grigoriev (Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Germany) <http://www.demogr.mpg.de/papers/working/wp-2015-011.pdf>



VI. HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE

6.1. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Reducing inequalities from income, rural/urban and gender perspective is the key to achieve any Program Impact. The assessment concluded that within most of the policy areas, there are significant inequalities, and that most of them widened since the Strategic Program was initiated. The alternative theory of change proposed within this assessment, illustrates that policy interventions to reduce inequalities as they relate to the four demographic challenges will be the key to ensure any progress towards improving demographic security.

6.2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Within this assessment human rights and gender equality perspective are defined as: any inequalities that arise from mainly from the following fault lines: income (poorest/richest quintile), rural and urban, age cohort, and male and female population. In multiple cases the fault line can overlap income and gender or place of residence and gender.

As a minimum, human rights and gender equality perspective in a policy context should refer to the following key elements:

Problem definition	Results framework
Disaggregated data is used (gender, income, age, place of living).	The objectives, results and outputs presume reduction of inequalities.
HR and GE gaps are stated and analyzed.	M&E framework is HR and GE relevant.
Specific needs are identified.	There are activities from the Action Plan that if implemented will contribute to the reduction in inequalities.
Causes of inequality are analyzed.	Special positive measures

Table 5: A simple representation of how HR and GE are to be mainstreamed in a public policy.

Reducing gaps from Human Rights and Gender perspective is the key to improve demographic stance. Seen through the key demographic challenges, the Strategic Program is relevant to both HR and GE concerns.

Key demographic challenges	HR perspective	GE perspective
Low Fertility	<p>Medium-High</p> <p>Access to high quality reproductive health services. There are still significant access gaps to health services based on rural/urban and income fault lines.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Labor Market. Ensuring more gender equality in the labor market is one of the most effective ways to increase work and life balance.</p>

<p>Low Life Expectancy</p>	<p>High Health status. There are significant gaps in terms of mortality and morbidity rate along the lines of income and rural/urban.</p>	<p>High Health behavior and status. Significant differentials in terms of mortality, life expectancy and healthy behavior (tobacco, alcohol consumption).</p>
<p>Demographic ageing</p>	<p>Medium-High Pension and labor market reform. Pensioners and pre-pensioners from employed in agriculture will have few opportunities to make labor transition in more productive sectors. Pension is the main source of revenue for most of the elderly.</p>	<p>High Pension and labor Market. Lifelong education. There are significant gaps in terms of employment and pensions. Gender gaps among the elderly: earlier retirement and greater longevity for women leading to greater vulnerability of women at older ages</p>
<p>Migration</p>	<p>Medium Migrants' access to pensions and other social benefits accrued abroad. Rights of children and elders of migrants left behind without family care.</p>	<p>Medium to high Reintegration of returning migrants. Male migrants tend to have more circular migration. They tend to work in sectors and countries with less social protection, and they are more likely to use their remittances to open up a business.</p>

Table 6: HR and GE perspectives as they relate to key demographic challenges.

The Program has a weak framework to ensure a comprehensive implementation of HR and GE perspectives. Given the HR and GE benchmarks and how these two perspectives are relevant to the overall Program success, the assessment finds that most likely the implementation of the Program would not reduce existing inequalities. Although the Program presumes policy initiatives like paternal leave, expanding reproductive health care services to rural areas (via community health services), it does not take a comprehensive approach to recognize and reduce inequalities. The programs lack a clear analysis of the root causes, it does not set out specific targets to reduce inequalities and policy initiatives are too generic to get a clear understanding as to what will be the extent to which their full implementation will reduce existing inequalities.

6.3. WHAT WAS THE HUMAN RIGHTS AND GEDNER EQAULTY GAPS TRENDS AND POLICY RESPONSE?

6.3.1. LOW FERTILITY

In terms of work and life balance, females from urban areas are most disadvantaged. At the national level employment gender gap for parents of a preschool age child was close to 3,6%, in 2014 it was 15,1%. In urban areas, where employment opportunities in terms of finding jobs, remuneration, and promotion the employment rate of mothers with a preschool age child was 31% lower as compared to the employment rate of fathers of a preschool cage child. The number of children born in urban areas is on average 1.7 times lower as compared to the number of children born in rural areas.

Childcare leave proves to be unfriendly to working mothers. In the context of OECD countries from EU, with 150 weeks long, Moldova has one

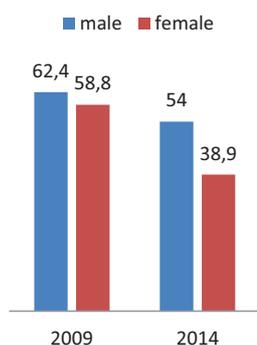


Figure 17: Employment gaps for parents
Source: National Bureau of Statistics

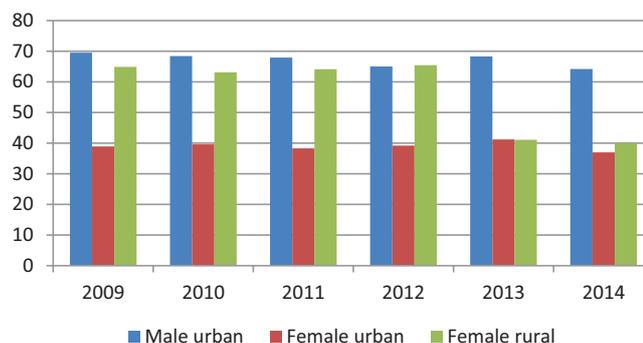


Figure 18: Employment gaps male-female with a preschool child 25-49 years old, 2009-2014
Source: National Bureau of Statistics

of the longest childcare leave periods¹⁵, the OECD average period being 66 weeks. Existing regulations, allow for the parents in childcare leave to work part time. Based on the last available data, less than 15% did so. Although in absolute terms the number of fathers in child care leave is small, of those who do about 44, 76% did work part time, while the proportion for mothers was 10,78% a decrease from 2013.

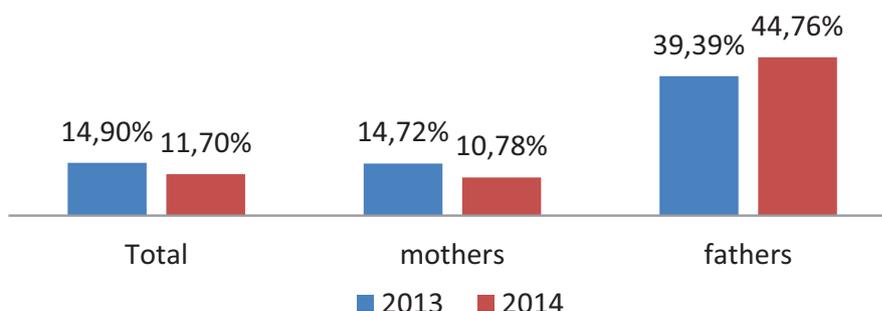


Figure 19: Rate of part time employed parents in childcare leave
Source: Social Report 2014

The way it is developed, Strategic Program will not reduce work and life balance gaps. Policy interventions from 2011-2016 have been timid. In principle two relevant measures were planned: (i) develop the network of preschool institutions and ensure additional investments and (ii) introduce paternal leave. The action plan does not specify any targets in terms of how much child care services will be expanded and the data shows that over the last years it did not (see figure below). Paternal leave was introduced in 2016. Studies¹⁶ show that providing father-specific leave seems to increase men’s uptake of parental leave, but without additional measure like financial incentives or specific quotas for fathers it will have low impact.

15. Poziția Centrului Parteneriat pentru Dezvoltare cu privire la politicile de extindere a serviciilor de îngrijire a copiilor (0-3 ani) și reformarea concediului de îngrijire a Copilului http://progen.md/files/8502_pozitiacpdconcediucresc.pdf

16. OECD, Parental leave: Where are the fathers? ? <https://www.oecd.org/gender/parental-leave-where-are-the-fathers.pdf>

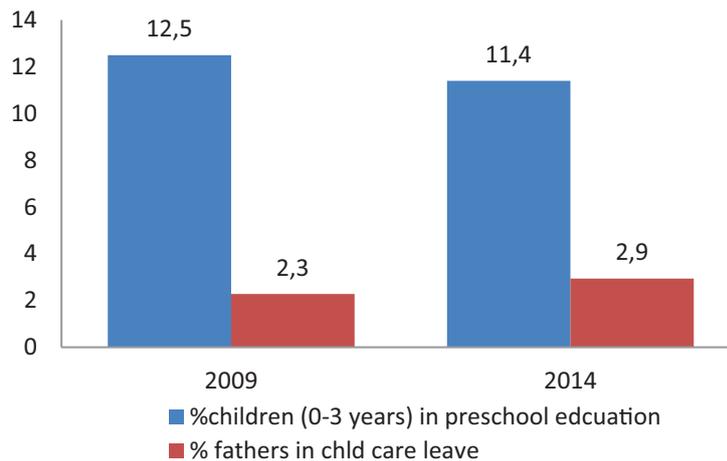


Figure 20: Children (0-3 years) in preschool education and father's uptake in childcare leave
Source: National Bureau of Statistics, Social Report 2014

6.3.2. LOW LIFE EXPECTANCY

Gender based inequalities are significant and are widening. One simple indicator in terms of health inequalities is to measure how many times bigger is the mortality rate of men compared to mortality of women by different cause of death. The existing data (graph 21) shows that such gender inequalities are significant and that they are widening still (with the exception of respiratory diseases).

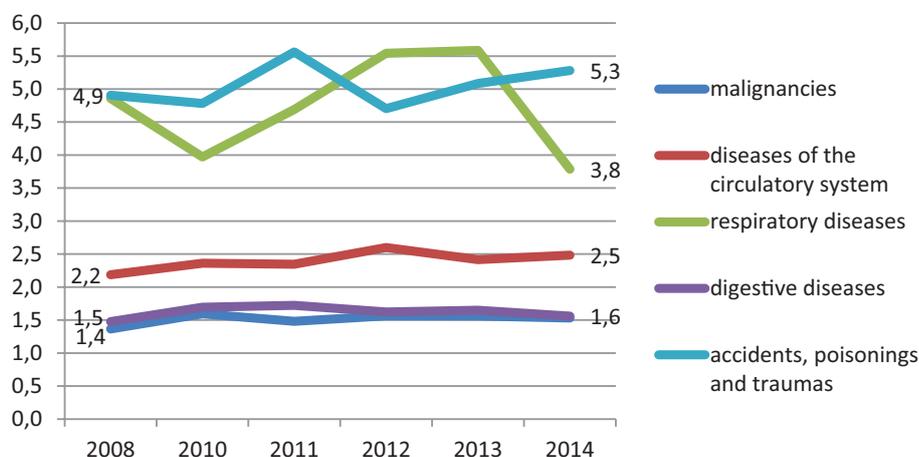


Figure 21: Gender inequalities in mortality rates age (15-59).
Source: National Bureau of Statistics

Gaps in terms of addressability to health care services among men, poor and rural population still persists. Gaps in terms of health care service addressability appear to be narrowing based on income and rural/urban groups, gender gaps in terms of addressability are widening. One explanation for the persistence of the gender gaps is due to the increased share of women in older age cohort, still the data shows that gender gaps exist in each age group. Gender inequalities in terms of mortality rates discussed above are magnified even more if analyzed through rural/urban perspective (figure 22). Inequalities as measured by mortality rates appear to move on cyclical bases (spiking up in 2011, leveling down afterwards and then on an upward

trend since 2014), rather than on persistent downward trend attributed to any particular policy intervention.

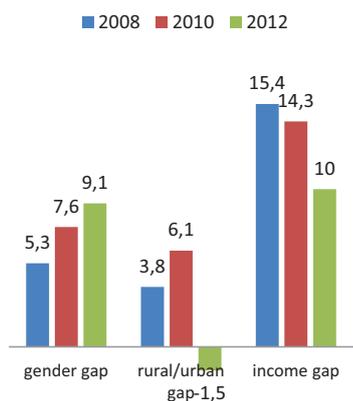


Figure 22: Addressability gaps 2008/2012
Source: Access Health Care Services, NBS

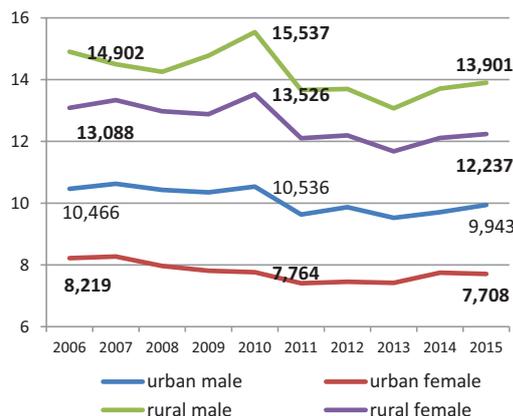


Figure 23: Mortality rates by gender¹⁷ and residence
Source: National Bureau of Statistics

6.3.3 DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING

The employment rate is much lower among elderly women. Among employees aged pre and post retirement we can see a significant difference depending on gender. This is largely due to three factors: (i) the retirement age for women is cause women to withdraw faster on the labor market , (ii) the burden of childcare or other members of the family is greater on women, (iii) pension age differential between men and women reduce the opportunities of women to remain longer in the labor market.

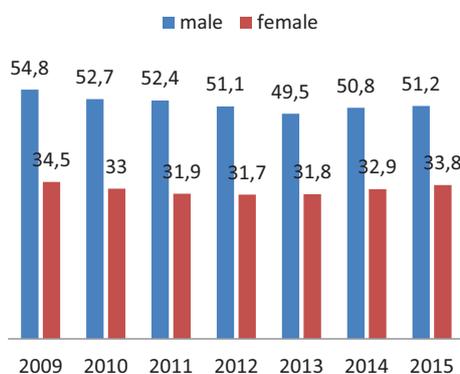


Figure 24: Employment rate 55-64
Source: National Bureau of Statistics

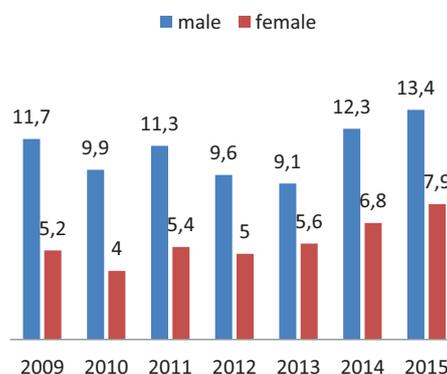


Figure 25: Employment rate of 64+
Source: National Bureau of Statistics

The elderly are trapped in low pay and low productivity sectors. This will pose significant policy challenge in terms of reallocation of significant labor force from less productive and lower paid sectors such agriculture to more productive sector such as services or industry.

17. Mortality rate based on gender are not adjusted to account for the fact that there are more women in the 60+ age group. Still the take away point of the graph is the trend line that remains unchanged.

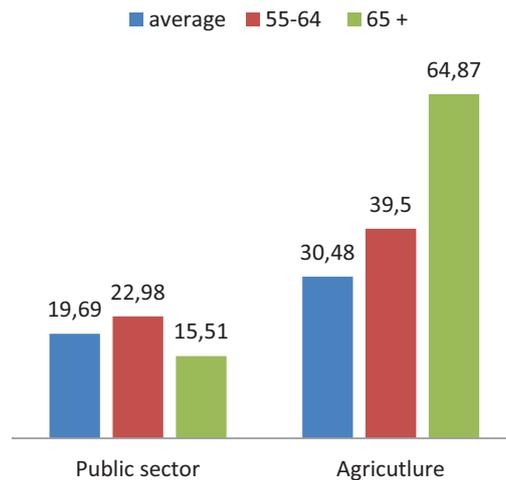


Figure 26: Employment sectors dominated by the elderly.
Source: national Bureau of Statistics

6.3.4. MIGRATION

Majority of migrant are male. The share of male migrant population is double the share of women migrants. The official figure show that majority of all migrants (72,5% in 2012) where from rural areas. Data on poverty show that about 80% of Moldovan poverty is concentrated in rural areas. Women migrants tend to have less mobility. Mostly due to: (I) the nature of their work as compared to more season based work flows of men, (II) the countries of destinations and their status as informal/formal workers.

Level of work informality is higher among men. Due to the nature and sector of their work, men migrants are more exposed to informality as compared to women migrants. Women migrants have more access to social protection. On each type of social and labor protection, women migrants benefit more comparatively to male migrants.

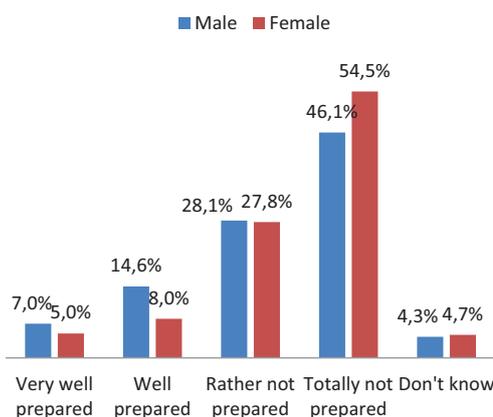


Figure 30: Confidence gender gaps in terms of starting a business
Source: How Moldovan Households Manage Their Finances, IOM 2008

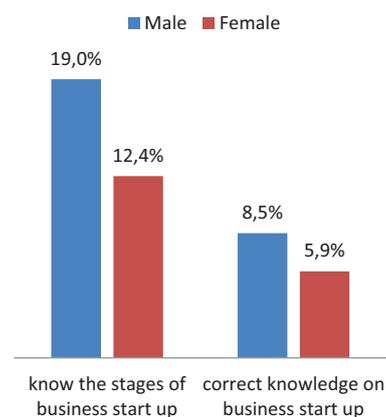


Figure 31: Confidence and knowledge on how to start a business among men and women.
Source: How Moldovan Households Manage Their Finances, IOM 2008

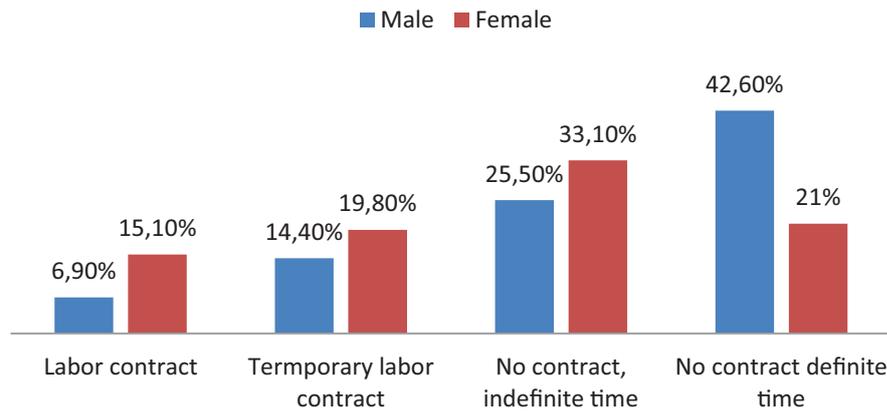


Figure 29: Informality of work among Moldovan migrants, 2012
Source: National Bureau of Statistics

There is a gender intention gap to start a business among male and female migrants. In the context of the effort to encourage migrants to put their savings to more productive use, it is worth mentioning that male are more confident in their abilities to start a business as compared to women (figure 30), we presume that this relationship hold for men and women migrants. There is a gender knowledge gap, albeit a smaller one, in terms initiating a business. The available data (figure 31) reproduces a general trend that men are feeling more confident to start a business as compared to women. However the actual knowledge gap on how to start a business is smaller.

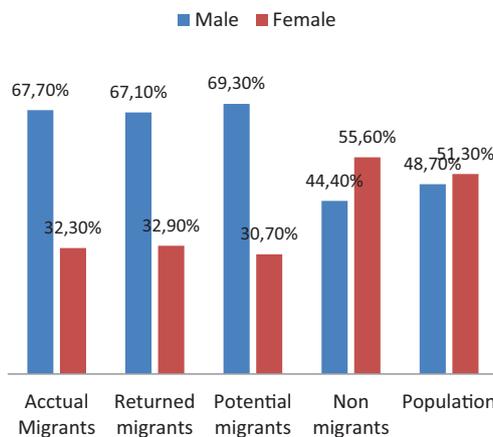


Figure 27: Structure of migrant population, 2012,
Source: National Bureau of Statistics.

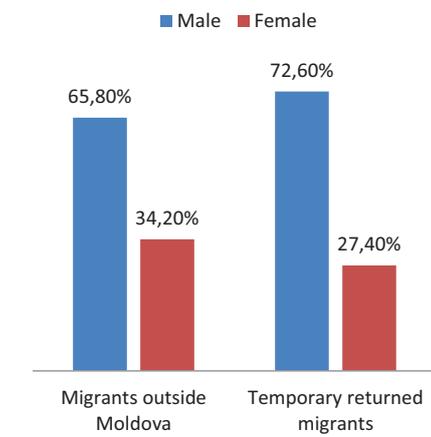


Figure 28: structure of migrant population
Source: National Bureau of Statistics.

6.3.5. DEMOGRAPHIC SECURITY AND WITHIN COUNTRY INEQUALITIES

Regions of Moldova experience different demographic trends. This is best captured by the Integrated Index of Territorial Demographic Security, developed by the Demographic Research Center in Moldova. The Index measures trends in four dimensions (Demographic development, Health, Social Security and Labor Market conditions) by creating a ranking among the regions of Moldova. The data shows significant disparities in terms of demographic security among the Moldovan regions, namely Chişinău/Bălţi and northern raions of Moldova.

The difference is mainly explained by internal migration to the urban centers from rural regions due to better economic opportunities, regions close to the urban centers also fair better. However, due to the poor work and life balance the fertility rate in urban centers is the lowest, along with the employment rate for mothers.

	Demo-graphics	Health	Social	Labor Market	Demo-graphic Security
Highest Score (Chişinău)	67,5	72,6	88,4	57,2	44,6
Lowest Score (Şoldăneşti)	30,5	45,4	49,5	28,2	44,6
Inequality rate %	54,9%	37,4%	44%	50,7%	36,5%

*Table 7: Integrated Index of Territorial Demographic Security
Source: Demographic Research Center.*





VII. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

7.1. CHAPTER SUMMARY

MLSPF is the leading governmental institution and the NCPD is the main collaborative platform for implementation of the NSPDS. The MLSPF has an institutional mandate for coordination of policy development in the field of demographic development as well as their correlation with other connected social and economic policies. Consequently it assumed a leading role in designing the Programme, monitoring its implementation, reporting on the results as well as ensuring coordination. The NCPD is the platform that was employed by MLSPF for coordination purposes.

The institutional arrangement for the coordination of demographic policies should be upgraded to the “whole-of-Government” level. The existing model - cooperation platform for single-purpose organizations – NCPD – is insufficient for proper implementation of the demographic strategic framework – NSPDS. While producing meetings and debates and some decisions, it failed to produce relevance and implementation for the Programme. Demographic policy making and implementation needs more institutional ownership and accountability for specific sectors of demographic field, more factual collaboration across mandate boundaries, data interoperability and real leadership.

7.2. WHAT IS THE WEAKEST LINK IN THE INSTITUTIONAL SET UP?

NCPD is probably the best of its kind in Moldova, but the coordination of demographic policies needs a new approach. In 2013 the Government counted around 80 commissions, councils and other collaborative platforms established for different crosscutting topics. Little has changed in this regard since then. Just a handful of those platforms have more or less periodic meetings and only NCPD registered a full-fledged activity. In the period 2011-2015 – the implementation period of NSPDS – a total of 18 meetings were organized and 67 topics were discussed. This activism, specifically when related to the low work propensity of other similar structures, creates an impression that the management and institutional arrangement for the demographic policies as crosscutting issues is going smoothly. But this isn't exactly so. A more profound analysis of the topics discussed during the meetings revealed that during the last 5 years only 5 topics (7%) concerned directly coordination of policies in the demographic security field.

Striving to combine different models, NCPD doesn't really succeed in fulfilling any of them. From the Annex 6 one can clearly see that the NCPD in Moldova replicated the Romanian model that appeared 2 years earlier. The NCPD model tries to include a part of the “academic approach” that we can

clearly see in the Polish model. But it doesn't succeed in producing that analysis and those annual demographic reports that are sent to Prime-Minister or to the Government and that stimulate and incite that policy debate so necessary in order to push for policy making, allocation of resources, creation of new institutions etc. The NCPD also does not succeed in taking over the Philippines example of an executive body – where the Commission is an agency in itself coordinated in its activities by a board of representatives from different ministries. The NCPD secretariat cannot be compared to the Executive Office of the Population Commission from the Philippine: it doesn't have a separate budget for coordinated implementation of demographic policies, it cannot enforce implementation of CNPD decisions, doesn't have an M&E framework and, in fact, can only recommend activities and approaches. NCPD doesn't really have an entity of its own – after all this is just a discussion platform for different governmental and non-governmental entities on demographic topics. Very often the presentations at the meetings had a purely informative purpose.

7.3. WHAT IS THE WEAKEST LINK IN ESURING ACCOUNTAILITY?

Lack of individual ownership for the activities with demographic impact is the weakest link in ensuring institutional accountability. While development and implementation of demographic policies depend on the contribution of and should involve the majority of Government entities, academia, mass-media, local administration, civil society etc. – as mentioned in the NSPDS – only some of these entities are active during the NCPD meetings. The Analysis from Annex 7 shows that 82% of all the topics discussed at the NCPD meetings were suggested or lead by MLSPF, UNFPA, ASM, MoH or NBS. It is interesting to notice that these are exactly those institutions that have special units dedicated to demographic issues. All the other institutions had few interventions or are not represented at all.

The MLSPF cannot and should not bear on its shoulders all the burden of demographic policy making and implementation. Given the scale of demographic policies, none of the Governmental institutions can cover all of their aspects singlehandedly. The NSPDS, the way it is formulated now, significantly surpasses the institutional mandate of MLSPF and any other institution. On one side the Programme expressly indicated the MLSPF as the leading institution for implementation and coordination of its actions, on another - MLSPF does not have sufficient human, time and financial resources to deal with the task.

Lack of a proper M&E framework and budget diminishes institutional accountability. Very few if any of the topics heard at the NCPD meetings were focused on the implementation of the NSPDS. Lack of exact targets that would allow for a proper M&E framework made very difficult a proper monitoring of the implementation of the Programme. On the other side, lack of budgetary allocations for the implementation of activities *deprioritizes* their implementation and has as a general consequence a low implementation rate.

7.4. WHAT ARE THE BEST EXISTING METHODS TO ENSURE BETTER COORDINATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY?

Coordination of demographic policies should move from “Single-purpose organizations” model to “Whole-of-Government” approach. Governmental entities around the world are increasingly implementing the “one-stop-Government” approach in their G2C operations. The essence of this method is to increase cooperation at the Government end and simplify access to information and services where the citizens are. One intermediate phase to reach this is to enhance G2G cooperation along the “Whole-of Government” - an approach that integrates the collaborative efforts of the departments and agencies of a government to achieve unity of effort toward a shared goal. In what regards demographic policies this move is specifically requested by the great complexity of the issue, the need for a collaborative policy response, need for a more active participation of citizens and the advancement of technologies.

The “Whole-of-Government” approach used in coordination of Diaspora policies may serve as a good example for demographic policy coordination. The system was enabled in Moldova back in 2013 with a Prime-Minister decree that is a decision-making instrument much faster than the Government Decision (adopted by the Government) or a law (adopted by the Parliament). The key interventions were to create ownership for the Diaspora agenda in each of the institutions on the functional and structural level. So the regulations of all the Governmental agencies were to be changed in order to include the mandate specific attributions in relation with Diaspora. And in each institution two focal points were assigned with responsibility for implementing that part of the mandate: a deputy minister at decision-making level and a head of directorate at the implementation level. To make sure that the Diaspora is mainstreamed into strategy and policy-making, the methodology for policy development was completed with one more level of impact assessment – impact on migration and on Moldovan Diaspora. The Diaspora Relations Bureau acts as a National Coordinating Authority steering the efforts for the implementation of the Diaspora 2025 strategy.

There are several important requirements that need to be respected for a functioning “whole-of-Government” approach in the demographic sector. First of all it needs a strong leadership – a position in the Government structure that would invest the bearer with real authority. This may also be linked with the institutional placement of the person: State Chancellery, Prime Minister’s Office, Ministry of Finance, etc. Secondly, it needs significantly more than just a communication platform – meetings in which representatives from different institutions exchange ideas over a presentation with almost no factual follow up. The “whole-of-Government” requires interoperability meaning the capacity to share and integrate information by using common standards. And this refers primarily to creation of information aggregators – portals that will ensure transferability of key info resources from agencies,

will link them horizontally across portfolio boundaries and vertically including regional entities. And finally the approach requires a different mindset, one that builds a culture of cooperation instead of siloed vision based on mandate divisions that incorporates change management mechanism.

The institutional management transition should start from a new Demographic Strategy. Building a new organizational approach will need focused efforts from political power holders, establishment of networks and partnerships within governmental agencies, real partnerships with innovators and IT specialists, new communication and technological infrastructure, acquisition of new skills by public officials. Moldova will have to find its own way of fine-tuning the institutional arrangement, as there is no one model that fits all systems.





VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. RELEVANCY

Develop a new theory of change for the Strategic Program. This should be a very clear and specific strategic document. Outlining a long term priorities linked to the four demographic challenges described in this assessment:

Increase Fertility: (i) Improve work and life balance of women (reform child care leave and expand preschool education services).(ii) Improve access to high quality reproductive services. **Adapt to an ageing population:** (i) Increase labor participation rate of the elderly, especially of the elderly women. (ii) Make pension systems more fiscally sustainable and equitable. (iii) Reform health care system to be more sustainable and equitable towards elderly population. (iv) Expand and increase the quality of long term care services. Introduce lifelong learning to make older workers more flexible (easier transition from Agriculture to services) and productive in the labor market. (v) Develop a long term fiscal strategy amid ageing and shrinking population. **Increase life expectancy by reducing health inequalities for:** (i) men – ensure behavioral changes to increase addressability, improve healthy life style. (ii) poor – improve access to high quality health services.(iii) rural population – improve access to high quality health services. Increase alcohol control policies. **Better deal with Migration:** (i) Make migration safe.(ii) Ensure migrants social protection. (iii)Increase benefits from Diaspora (investment opportunities for remittances). (iv)Ensure effective integration of returning migrants.

Increase policy intensity. A Strategic Program on Demographic Security should presume a program of structural reforms. Thus, as a rule, it should not be permitted that such a Program to have more than 100 initiatives that in most part reflect the day to day commitments of national central authorities. Any policy intervention will presume to be structural in the nature, have a clear target or at least be specific in its reform intent.

8.2. IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Improve Policy making by introducing the following principles: (i) Include in the future strategic document only original parts that bring added value to the rest of the national strategic framework.

(ii) Do not include objectives or actions that are not supported by sufficient budget or by a concrete plan to find the necessary resources.(iii) Include only actions that were proved to be feasible and enjoy the overall support of the Government for implementation.(iv) Include target for each planning level: sub-activity, activity and specific objective. If this makes the strategic document too complicated than probably the internal structure needs to be simplified to include objectives and actions only. (v) Discontinue the use of vague formulations like “evaluation of the opportunities...” that show just a formal interest in a specific field and discourage any serious interventions in it

Clarify implementation roles. Insert a scheme to involve donors in the

implementation of the strategic framework ensuring a practical division of labor and using the assistance as catalyst for Government interventions

8.3. IMPACT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY PERSPECTIVE

Fundamentally rethink the M&E system. The new M&E framework should have pass the following tests: (i) introduce indicators and targets at each level of intervention, from Program Impact to Program Activities, (ii) use annual reporting as a performance management tool to increase institutional accountability, (iii) use intermediate evaluation as learning opportunity as to think through the attribution of policy interventions to demographic stance.

Reducing inequalities should be a priority of the Program. This should be achieved in a comprehensive manner. Following activities must be considered: (i) realize a GE and HR baseline analysis of the Program to identify the most relevant inequalities. (ii) Integrate inequality analysis with the **theory of the change** in the new planning cycle, (iii) plan to reduce inequalities by approaching root causes, (iv) mainstream HR and GE perspectives within M&E framework.

8.4. INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

Substitute “Coordination of Single-Purpose Organizations” model with “Whole-of-Government” approach. This shall include but, not limited to: (i) Strengthening the capacity and the authority of the Demographic Policy Department that is currently being placed in MLSPF (ii) Review internal regulations of all line ministries and line agencies to expressly provide for their role and mandate in development and implementation of demographic policies (iii) Assign responsible persons for demographic policies at decision-making and technical level in the central Government, but also local level to allow for both horizontal and vertical cooperation (iv) insert demographic assessment instruments in general policy-making methodology to increase general system awareness and sensibility to the issue (v) Transform www.demografie.md into an interoperability platform aimed at monitoring the implementation of the Future Demographic Strategy. (vi) Design a communication strategy for the NSPDS to better inform the public, promote transparency, accountability, and aim to re-engage the public, and establish trust.

ANNEX 1: RELEVANCY EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Relevancy Indicators	Weak (0-1)	Intermediate (1-2)	Fair (2-3)	Strong (3-4)
1. Appropriate policies. Did we plan for the right policies? How proposed measures under the 12 strategic objectives address the key demographic challenges.	The proposed measures have an unclear or very weak cause and effect relationship towards any of the key demographic challenges.	The measures proposed, have some cause and effect relationship with a key demographic challenge. At least one or two measures from the best policy mix are proposed.	Strong cause and effect established. Majority of the measures from the best policy mix are proposed.	Clear defined policy to target the key demographic challenge. Most measures from the best policy mix are proposed.
2. Reform Intensity. Are we reformist enough? How ambitious are the measures under each strategic objective, given the degree of the key demographic challenges.	Proposed measures are marginal in their intensity or reform intensity cannot be established because most of the measures are generic.	At least one or two measures are formulated in ambitious terms - strong target for reform to be achieved.	Majority of the measures under the strategic objective are defined in ambitious terms with strong targets to be achieved. Structural reform is envisaged.	Most measures have strong and ambitious targets to be achieved. Systemic reform is intended.
3. Strong Implementation. Did we ensure the right implementation? What is the likelihood of implementation given how well formulated, measured and financed are the measures under each strategic objective.	No costing and financing and unclear implementation plan and timeframe.	Some costing and financing is provided. Implementation is clear for some outputs or short term results.	Clear implementation plan is proposed with clear costing and funding.	More than 80% of the cost is covered. Comprehensive multi-year implementation program is proposed.

ANNEX 2: RELEVANCY SCORING

Thematic area	2011-2014	2014-2016
Social Protection	0,57	0,69
Health	0,83	1,07
Labor Market	0,90	0,75
Migration	1,03	1,17
Education	1,07	0,94
Housing	0,50	0,75
Regional Development	0,80	0,75
Science and Innovation	0,73	0,75
Statistics	0,87	1,17
Environment	0,83	0,50
Water and Sanitation	0,67	1,17
Civil Society	0,50	0,50

ANNEX 3: METHODS TO ASSESS IMPLEMENTATION RATE

Implementation Rate Indicators	Weak (0-1)	Intermediate (1-2)	Fair (2-3)	Strong (3-4)
1. Implementation rate. The analysis is based on the premise that all activities had to be finalised.	The activity was not initiated or barely initiated at all.	The activity was initiated and it is not clear when it will be finalised.	The activity is ongoing and the finalisation is envisaged in the near term.	The activity was finalised on time.

ANNEX 4: IMPLEMENTATION RATE SCORING

No	Specific objectives	Implementation scoring	No	Activities	Implementation scoring	No	Sub-activities	Implementation scoring	type	change	lead agency
1	Improve social protection framework for children and families located both inside and outside of the country.	2,3	1,1	Developing mechanisms for social protection of families with children	2,3	1.1.1	increase child care allowance	4	social benefit	minimal	MLSPF
						1.1.2	summer rest for vulnerable children	0	recuperation	zero	MLSPF
						1.1.3	repatriation of children abandoned abroad	4	seminars	minimal	MLSPF
						1.1.4	capacity building for LPA	3	seminars	minimal	MLSPF
						1.1.5	improved legal framework	0,5	by-law	minimal	MLSPF
2	Improve life and work balance	2,5	2,1	Amend relevant legislation	3	2.1.1	introduce paternal leave	3	law	significant	MLSPF

				2.2	Prevent family violence	2	2.2.1	regulations for perpetrators' services	4	by-law	moderate	MLSPF
							2.2.2	trainings for multi-disciplinary teams to include prevention of violence against elderly	0	seminars	zero	MLSPF
							2.2.3	combat abuse of elderly	0	na		MLSPF
							2.2.4	two national awareness campaigns	4	social campaign	minimal	MLSPF
3	Prevent children victimization	3,5	3,1	Awareness campaigns	3,5	3.1.1	awareness actions for children		3,5	social campaign		ME
4	Better social benefits system for vulnerable	2,25	4,1	Improve Social Aid system	1,5	4.1.1	amend the law	0	0	law	zero	MLSPF
						4.1.2	implement awareness campaign	3	3	social campaign	moderate	MLSPF
						4.2.1	amend by-laws	3	3	by-law	significant	MLSPF
5	Integrated social services for vulnerable	2,5	5,1	Legal framework on minimal standards	3			3	3	by-law	minimal	MLSPF
									2	NGO	minimal	MLSPF
6	Better pensions for elderly	0,8	6,1	Consultations	0				0	social campaign	zero	MLSPF
						6.2.1	change the pension calculation	0	0	law	zero	MLSPF
										law	zero	MLSPF
						6.4.1	feasibility study for cumulative pensions	3	3	research	significant	MLSPF
										law	minimal	MLSPF

7	Increase trust in pension system and augment contributions	0	7,1	Public discussions on pension reform	0						social campaign		MLSPF
			7,2	raising awareness on contributions	0						social campaign		MLSPF
8	Social security for migrants	0,5	8,1	framework for negotiation of agreements	1	8.1.1	negotiation with migration destination countries	1			by-law	minimal	MLSPF
			8,2	increase participation of migrants in pension system	0	8.2.1	information campaigns	0			social campaign	zero	MLSPF
1	SOCIAL PROTECTION, FAMILY AND CHILDREN	1,79											
10	Access to health services	1,72	10,1	Better reproductive health	0,83	10.1.1	development of PH services at local level	1			social campaign	minimal	MS
						10.1.2	health education programmes	1			social campaign	minimal	MS
						10.1.3	access without discrimination	0,5			seminars	minimal	MS
			10,2	Development of geriatric and palliative care	2,00	10.2.1	expanding in medical institutions	2			services	moderate	MS
			10,3	Development of community services	2,33	10.3.1	home care services	1			seminars	minimal	MS
						10.3.2	mental health community services	3			services	significant	MS
						10.3.3	TB local services	3			services	significant	MS
11	Promoting healthy lifestyle	2,75	11,1	Optimising actions	2,75	11.1.1	raising awareness and information	3,5			social campaign	major	MS
						11.1.2	Prevention of noncommunicative diseases	2			social campaign	moderate	MS

12	Prevention of communicative diseases	2,50	12,1	Implementing Vaccination National Programme	2,50		reduce morbidity and mortality	2,5	services	moderate	MS
13	Prevent negative impact of smoking and alcohol	1,75	13,1	Efficient control policies	1,75	13.1.1	impact monitoring	3	law	significant	MS
						13.1.2	counseling	0,5	social campaign	minimal	MS
14	Improve medical statistics	2,00	14,1	Improve database	0,50	14.1.1	organize data collection	0,5	research	minimal	MS
						14.2.1	create human resources information system	3,5	research	major	MS
15	Raising awareness on traffic rules	0,00	15,1	Raising awareness on traffic rules	0,00	15.1.1	reports on accidents	0	na	zero	Mol
						15.1.2	radio and TV programmes	0	na	zero	Mol
II	HEALTH CARE	1,79									
16	Employment legal framework	3,00	16,1	Principles of strategic planning	3,00	16.1.1	new Employment Strategy	3	strategy	significant	MLSPF
17	Increase employment of youth	0,75	17,1	Counseling, vocational orientation and professional training	1,50	17.1.1	counseling	2	services	moderate	NEA
						17.1.2	vocational orientation and professional training	1	services	minimal	NEA
						17.2.1	change legislation	0	law	zero	MLSPF
18	Active and passive measures to increase employment	0,50	18,1	Increase competitiveness of labor force	0,50	18.1.1	increase employability	0	na	zero	NEA
						18.1.2	research	1	research	minimal	NEA
III	LABOR FORCE MARKET	1,42									
19	Stimulate return	2,50	19,1	Better internal conditions	2,50	19.1.1	employment services for those returned	2,5	services	moderate	NEA

20	Better migration management	2,21	20,1	Implementation of migration agreements	3,50	20.1.1	better implementation	3,5	services	major	NEA
			20,2	Informing on risks of migration	1,75	20.2.1	information materials	1	social campaign	minimal	MLSPF
			20,3	Migration statistics	2,33	20.2.2	promote Moldova at UN	2,5	social campaign	moderate	MFA
						20.3.1	better migration flow evidence	2	research	moderate	Mol
						20.3.2	Migration Profile	3	research	significant	Mol
						20.3.3	Analytical report	2	research	moderate	Mol
			20,4	Integration of foreigners	2,17	20.4.1	courses for foreigners	2	services	moderate	Mol
						20.4.2	reintegration programmes	1,5	services	minimal	Mol
						20.4.3	information materials	3	social campaign	significant	Mol
			20,5	Employment assistance for foreigners	1,00	20.5.1	identification of target sectors	1	research	minimal	Mol
						20.5.2	selection criteria	1	research	minimal	Mol
			20,6	Combating abuse on migrants	2,50	20.6.1	analysing cases	2,5	research	moderate	Mol
21	Consolidating diaspora	2,92	21,1	Better connection between Moldova and diaspora	2,83	21.1.1	online platform	2,5	services	moderate	BRD
						21.1.2	Diaspora Days	3	social campaign	significant	BRD
						21.1.3	informing on situation in Moldova	3	social campaign	significant	BRD

ANNEX 5: INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

	NCPD Moldova	NCPD Romania	Commission on Population, Philippines	Government Population, Council, Poland	Whole-of-Government Approach, Diaspora issues, Moldova
Structure:	inter-institutional commission	inter-institutional commission	the lead agency promoting population activities.	inter-institutional advisory board	responsible persons and focal points assigned in institutions
Legal status	doesn't have an independent legal entity	doesn't have an independent legal entity	has an independent legal entity - a Government Agency	n/a	no special status
Decision making	consultative body	consultative	decision maker	advisory body	cooperation and coordination platform
Subordinated to	Government	Prime Minister	President (as head of the Government). Administratively placed in the Health Department (ministry)	President of the Council of Ministers (Prime Minister)	Prime Minister
President	Deputy Prime Minister responsible for social matters	Minister of Labor, Family, and Social protection	Secretary of Department of Health (minister)	academic person, appointed by Prime Minister	Head of the Diaspora Relations Bureau
Members	central public administration, academia, social partners	government entities, academia and civil society	Board: 11 ministers and 3 - private sector. Office of the Executive Director: deputy, 5 division chiefs, 15 regional directors	academia, other members appointed by central public institutions and representatives of central public institutions	deputy ministers and heads of directorates to whom the diaspora matters were assigned to
Level of members	deputy minister/director	state secretary	ministerial	professors, representatives of ministries	I. Decision makers: deputy ministers II. Technical: heads of directorates
No of members:	29	17	14	38	62: 31 ministries and other Government agencies with 2 persons from each
Decision on the list of members	decided by the Government	decided by institutions- member	preset as Government + 3 persons delegated by the President	18 members of academia appointed by Prime Minister, 9 representatives appointed by the Ministers and Central Institutions, representatives of 11 ministries and government agencies	appointed by government institutions
Regional structures	no	no	offices in 15 regions	no	in the process of expansion at regional level
Budget:	no	no	6.5 million USD	n/a	no separate evidence for the moment
Planning:	meetings and subjects	n/a	targets	n/a	operational planning

Main function(s)	a) analysis of demographic trends, b) formulation of main problems and priority response actions, c) demographic data management	Planning, integration, coordination and monitoring of population policies	over-all coordinating, monitoring and policy making body of the population program - To attain a better quality of life for all Filipinos through management and maintenance of population level resources and the environment.	advising Prime Minister on matters concerning demographic issues and population policy	coordination of diaspora policy
Main attributions	a) following demographic phenomena b) coordinate policy making in the field e) endorsing development policies h) making suggestions for ensuring the demographic security of the country	a) analysis demographic phenomena c) establishes research topics d) monitors implementation of demographic policies e) coordinates development of the population strategy f) presents reports to the Government on demographic situation and implemented activities	*policy formulation and plan development *advocacy and communication *data and information management *generation, programming and mobilization of resources for population	* Submitting on annual basis reports on the demographic situation of Poland to the Council of Ministers * Initiating legislative actions and providing opinions on legal acts concerning the population policy. * Initiating scientific research including submitting proposals on research topics and providing opinions on demographic issues and population policy. * Cooperation with international organisations dealing with the population policy	* coordinated development of diaspora policies * coordinated implementation * monitoring and evaluation
Main rights	b) adopts recommendations that Government authorities need to respond to in a written form, c) requests and receive information from all entities, e) recommends researches to be done	n/a	n/a	n/a	set by special provisions on diaspora policies in the interbal regulation of each institution
Internal structure:	Executive Bureau (6 persons - president, deputy president - minister of labor, deputy minister of health, director general of NBS, UNFPA representative, director of the Demographic Research Center), Secretariat, special groups	Council of Governmental Coordinators (3 permanent: ministry of labor, ministry of health and Government secretariat + 2 depending on priorities in a specific year	Board of Commissioners+Office of the Executive Director+Regional Offices	n/a	no special structure, just two levels. The Head of the Bureau takes the lead

Secretariat:	done by Demographic Policy section within MLSPF	Department for coordination of family policies, Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection	Executive Director+ Deputy Executive Director + five (5) Division Chiefs + 15 Regional Directors.	Central Statistical Office	Diaspora Relations Bureau
Main method of functioning:	meetings (minimal 4 per year)	meetings (minimal 2 per year)	permanent	n/a	permanent connection, meetings
Taking decisions:	2/3 cvorum, 3/4 votes in favor	1/2+1 cvorum, consensual voting or simple majority	n/a	consensual	consensual
Website:	informative	no	functions as an interoperability platform mainly for monitoring implementation of the population policies. Includes sites for regional offices	general, informative	no
Established in:	2007	2005	1971	1974	2013
Source of information:	http://www.demografie.md	http://www.dreptonline.ro/legislatie/hg_comisia_nationala_populatie_dezvoltare_997_2009.php	http://www.popcom.gov.ph	http://bjp.stat.gov.pl/en/organization-of-official-statistics-the-government-population-council/#	http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=348273

ANNEX 6: ISSUES ON CNPD AGENDA AS THEY RELATE TO CNPD ATTRIBUTIONS

	Functions	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	TOTAL
A	Evaluates demographic trends		2	2	1		5
B	Coordinates policy development in demographic security field	3			1	1	5
C	Elaborates indicators and recommends researches that needs to be done		3	1		1	5
D	Ensures coordinated development of policies with demographic impact	3	5	2	1	2	13
E	Endorses sustainable development programs						0
F	Drafts proposals for development strategies		1	2	1	1	5
G	Analyses demographic researches	4	1	2	2		9
H	Makes suggestions for demographic security of the country	1		1			2
I	Collaborates with other institutions	1					1
J	Identifies institutions to be assigned with tasks tackling the demographic situation	2	1			2	5
K	Evaluates implementation of its own recommendations		1		1	1	3
L	Presents annual activity reports	1	1	1	1	1	5
M	Researches international experience		1				1
N	Organizes and participates at conferences etc.		1	2			3
O	Adopts its own plans	1	1	1	1	1	5
P	Other						0
	TOTAL	16	18	14	9	10	67
	Total number of meetings	4	4	5	3	2	18

ANNEX 7: THE LEADING INSTITUTIONS FOR THE ISSUES ON CNPD AGENDA

	MLSPF	MoI	ASM	MTIC	MYS	NSB	MoH	MCRD	MoE	UNFPA
2011	3	2	3	2	1	1				4
2012	4		4	2		3	2			3
2013	3		2		1	2	1	1	1	3
2014	2	1	1			1	3			1
2015	3		1		1	1	1			3
Total	15	3	11	4	3	8	7	1	1	14
GRAND TOTAL	67									

ANNEX 8: LIST OF PERSONS CONSULTED DURING THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Name	Institution
Mihail Stăilă	
Nadejda Zubco	Ministry of Labor Social Protection and Family
Maria Hîncu	Ministry of Labor Social Protection and Family
Irina Corman	Ministry of Labor Social Protection and Family
Valcov Liuba	Bureau for Diaspora Relations
Cesnocova Nina	National Bureau of Statistics
Stoianov Luibovi	National Bureau of Statistics
Gorschi Alina	National Employment Agency
Zagribneac Irina	Ministry of Construction and Regional Development
Luminița M	Ministry of Health
Manole Victor	National Police Inspectorate
Daniela Buzatu	National Police Inspectorate
Gavirliță Galina	Ministry of Education
Luca Ala	Ministry of Education
Burlacu Maria	Ministry of Education
Doina Soltan	Ministry of Education
Eduard Mihailaș	UNFPA
Olga Șavco	National Youth Council of Moldova
Irina Triboi	Gender-Centru
Tatiana Sorocan	Help Age International
Furdui Carolina	Congress of Local Authorities of Moldova
Găgăuz Olga	Center for Demographic Research
Sajina Elena	Family Planning Association of Moldova
Saincus V	Academy of Economic Sciences
Maria Vremiș	CBS-AXA Marketing and Sociological Company

ANNEX 9: TERMS OF REFERENCES

TERMS OF REFERENCES

Two National Consultants to evaluate the progress of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan

Job title:	Two National Consultants to evaluate the progress of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan
Duty Station:	Chisinau, Republic of Moldova
Deadline for application:	21 February 2016, 23:59 GMT+2
Expected Duration of Assignment:	01 March – 15 October 2016, up to 30 working days per each consultant
Partner institutions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Commission on Population and Development (NCPD) ▪ Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (MoLSPF)
Funded by:	UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund and Czech Republic Development Cooperation

1. PURPOSE

UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund in the Republic of Moldova in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, with the financial support of the Czech Republic Development Cooperation requires the services of the two National Consultants for evaluation of the progress in implementation of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plans¹⁸.

The evaluation will assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact, leadership and institutional management and human rights based approach and relevant cross-cutting issues in implementation of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan, results achieved, factors that facilitated/hindered the achievements, will document good practices and lessons learned and provide recommendations for review the Programme and for development of a new Action Plan.

2. BACKGROUND

The Republic of Moldova is undergoing a significant demographic change – depopulation and accelerating ageing. It is a result of low fertility level exacerbated by high secondary infertility, and negative migration balance during past decades. If current trends and policies continue, the total population will be between 2.9m (low case scenario) and 3.4m (high case scenario) by 2035¹⁹. According to the Border Police of the Republic of Moldova, in 2014 out of 3.5m of total population, 761.970 were abroad (46% men and 56%

18. Government Decision for approval of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 <http://lex.justice.md/viewdoc.php?action=view&view=doc&id=340745&lang=1>

19. International Conference on Population and Development after 20 years. Sociodemographic profile of the Republic of Moldova. Demographic Research Center, July 2014.

women), from which 490.359 persons for up to one year and 271.611 more than one year²⁰.

The official statistics says that in 2014, 15.7% of the population were elderly and 25% young people with the age 16 – 30 years²¹. On the other hand, age dependency ratios in Moldova are presently at an all-time low, suggesting favorable conditions for the country to benefit from a potential demographic dividend.

The demographic sector is coordinated in the Republic of Moldova by the National Commission for Population and Development, chaired by Deputy Prime-Minister and its secretariat is facilitated by the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family (MoLSPF). The Commission brings together representatives from different ministries and government institutions, academia, NGOs and international partners such as UNFPA.

National development priorities of the Republic of Moldova have been reflected in the National Strategy “Moldova 2020”²², where pension system financial sustainability directly related to population ageing is one of eight priorities. While Moldova has a relatively strong policy and institutional framework in the field of population and development, a sustained effort is required to turn policy into practice and to achieve actual results for people. As a development partner, UN in the Republic of Moldova, under the United Nations-Moldova Partnership Framework “Towards Unity in Action” 2013-2017²³, aims to assist the Government of the Republic of Moldova in promoting its reforms, supporting the implementation of the new Association Agreement with the European Union, fulfilling the administrative capacity requirements that the Republic of Moldova agreed to meet.

In concordance with these policy frameworks, UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund is implementing the Country Programme 2013–2017 with focus on population and development, sexual and reproductive health and rights, youth and gender. The **Output 4** of the Country Programme 2013 – 2017 aims to “Enhance national capacity to produce, utilize and disseminate data to contribute to evidence and rights-based policy mechanism”^{24,25}, part of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017, **Outcome 4** “Strengthened national policies and international development agendas through integration of evidence-based analysis on population dynamics and their links to sustainable development, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, HIV and gender equality²⁶”. Within this Country Programme Output UNFPA provides support to the Government of the Republic of Moldova in addressing demographic challenges through evidence-based policies.

20. Border Police of the Republic of Moldova, <http://www.border.gov.md/index.php/en/>

21. National Bureau of Statistics, www.statistica.md

22. National Development Strategy Moldova 2020 <http://www.cancelaria.gov.md/lib.php?!=ro&idc=435&nod=1&>

23. United Nations Partnership Framework 2013-2017 http://unfpa.md/images/stories/docs/UN-Moldova_Partnership_Framework_2013-2017.pdf

24. UNFPA Country Programme for 2013-2017, approved by UNFPA Executive Board at the ordinary session of 4 to 10 September 2012, http://unfpa.md/images/stories/docs/UN_version_CPD_for_the_Republic_of_Moldova_2013-2017_Engl.pdf

26. UNFPA Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017

3. CONTEXT

In 2013, the Republic of Moldova has created a new Centre for Demographic Research for strengthening demographic research to better align national population policies to EU requirements²⁷. In 2014 Government of Moldova approved a new Action Plan on Demographic Security for 2014 – 2016 based on the National Programme for Demographic Security 2011 – 2025.

According to the National Development Strategy “Moldova 2020” the pension system in Republic of Moldova operates based on the pay-as-you-go scheme, which consumes 8.8% of GDP. In 2010, 69.6% of the working population was contributing to the social security system, and pensions were paid for 84.7% of citizens who have reached the retirement age, i.e. a total of 460,500 people, or 13% of the total population. Thus, the pension system has a significant role in ensuring a decent standard of living for the population. In 2011, expenditures for payment of pensions were 67.8% of the total social security budget²⁸.

In the period of 1 – 5th December 2014, at the request of MoLSPF and UNFPA, UNDESA fielded a mission in the Republic of Moldova for carrying out a thorough assessment of economic policy framework in response to the population challenges, as well as gaps and needs for further actions required in the field of (1) macro-economic policies; (2) population and development and (3) pension system. The findings of this mission are that the declining birth rate and the high rate of migration of young people increase the dependency ratio and depopulation. This is accompanied by a decrease in the share of children (population under 14) and slight increase in the share of elderly (population over 65).

The share of working age population (15 to 65) actually increased in recent 25 years from 64 % in 1989 to 72% in 2013, but a considerable portion of this population is working abroad and is not contributing to the national social insurance system²⁹, despite bilateral social security agreements signed by the Moldovan Government with main destination countries of migrant workers.

To ensure that public policy in the field of demography and population are evidence-based and follow recommendations for implementation of the EU Association Agreement, national counterparts need to link macro-economic policies with demographic trends, as part of the implementation process of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan.

4. SCOPE

The overall scope of the assignment is to evaluate the progress of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plans.

The evaluation will assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact,

27. Population and Development Policy Brief, UNFPA, October 2014

28. National Strategy “Moldova 2020” <http://www.cancelaria.gov.md/lib.php?l=en&idc=435>

29. V. Popov, J. O’Toole, Report on macroeconomic policies and demographic trends in Moldova, UNDESA Mission, 1 – 5th December 2014.

leadership and institutional management and human rights based approach and relevant cross-cutting issues in implementation of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and its Action Plan, results achieved, factors that facilitated/hindered the achievements, will document good practices and lessons learned and provide recommendations for review the Programme and for development of a new Action Plan.

For the above mentioned assignment, a team of two National Consultants will be selected. National Consultants will work under overall leadership of the National Commission for Population and Development, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund.

Both consultants will be involved in carrying out this assignment using a participatory methodology proposed by consultants and agreed with MoLSPF and UNFPA. Main findings and recommendations collected during this process will be used for further development of the new Action Plan and for review of the National Programme.

Evaluation Report will be proposed for comments and suggestions to the members of the International Advisory Panel on Population and Development (IAPPD) which will meet on 20 – 21st April 2016 and in late September 2016.

5. OBJECTIVES

To achieve the envisaged scope, the following objectives were set:

- Evaluate the progress in implementation of the Programme and results achieved so far towards initially set objectives and targets.
- To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, leadership and institutional management and human rights based approach and relevant cross-cutting issues in implementation of the Programme.
- Analyze and describe the extent to which the national ownership is ensured, including domestic financial allocations to accelerate Programme implementation.
- Describe good practices and provide factors that facilitated and/or hindered the achievements of the results so far and elaborate lessons learned to be considered in reviewing of the Programme;
- Present specific recommendations to be incorporated in the next Action Plan of the Programme.

The evaluation will consider core results achieved since 2011 and will present, to the extent possible, implications of the results achieved towards demographic context of the country. Evaluation should be grounded on human rights based approach, ensure that results achieved are evidence-based, proposed recommendations are results-oriented and specific.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation should take into consideration the following criteria and evaluation questions:

Relevance. Evaluate to what extent the implementation of the Programme on Demographic Security and its Plan respond to the demographic context of the country:

- Do the twelve strategic objectives and its associated expected results remain relevant to the current demographic context of the Republic of Moldova?
- Are the implemented activities consistent with the objectives and expected results?
- To what extent the Action Plan is likely to contribute to the longer-term objectives of the Programme?

Effectiveness. Evaluate the extent to which planned results and indicators are tracked and have been effectively achieved so far as result of Programme implementation:

- Assess effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system for the implementation. How the M&E framework might be strengthened?
- Examine the achievements of the Programme so far with regards to progress made against its objectives; identify what has worked well and areas requiring improvements.
- Have the mechanisms for stakeholder's participation, including civil society organizations, private sector, trade unions etc., been developed and consolidated?
- To which extent current Programme and its Action Plans addresses key demographic challenges?
- Have the necessary legislative framework been developed and amended to support the implementation of the Programme?
- Are there any internal or external constraining factors and obstacles that have hampered progress towards implementing Programme objectives and achieving associated outcomes?

Efficiency. Evaluate how economically or optimally financial, human and technical inputs have been used to produce results:

- How efficiently has result based management been applied in tracking the results so far of the Programme?
- What was the domestic financial support provided by the authorities nationally and locally in implementation of Programme?
- Is there a mechanism of correlation demographic challenges and annual / medium term budgetary framework?

Impact. Assess the extent to which the results achieved have made a real difference to the beneficiaries:

- Do the beneficiaries and other stakeholders affected by the Programme perceived the effect of the interventions on themselves?
- What has been improved and what has not been improved? What are

their recommendations for the future in this regard?

- What appear to be the most significant key constraints to sustainability, and are adequate strategies being implemented to address these constraints?

Leadership. Management and Institutional Arrangements. Assess to which extent the leadership and management of the interventions ensured the relevance, effectiveness, and the impact of the Programme implementation:

- To what extent did the intervention mechanisms (administrative regulatory framework and procedures) foster or hinder the achievement of the results?
- Did the management of the Programme implementation ensure coordination with other similar interventions to encourage synergy and avoid overlaps?
- Is there effective coordination among the government and civil society organization in the implementation of the Programme?

Human rights based approach and relevant cross-cutting issues. Evaluate to what extent has human rights and gender equality considerations have been effectively mainstreamed throughout the Programme in its development and implementation:

- Does the implementation of the Programme actively respond to the needs and rights of vulnerable groups?
- To what extent and how the Programme ensured a non-discrimination and equity focus?

The evaluation team should consider contribution of all partners to the implementation of the Programme.

7. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The evaluators are expected to submit a context specific evaluation methodology as part of the Inception Report which will highlight the criteria and proposed evaluation questions listed above. The evaluation will be conducted in close coordination with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and UNFPA Moldova Country Office.

The collection of evaluation data will be carried out through a variety of techniques that will range from desk review, direct observation to informal and semi-structured interviews and focus/reference groups discussions.

Data collection.

The evaluation will use a multiple-method approach including documentary review, group and individual interviews, focus groups and field visits as appropriate. The evaluation will 1) review annual reports on the implementation of the National Programme on Demographic Security its Action Plan presented to the Government, reports and studies carried out by the development partners, other relevant policies and publication; 2) interview relevant national and local stakeholders. These stakeholders may include representatives

from the government, civil-society organizations, the private sector, UN organizations, trade unions, other multilateral organizations, bilateral donors, and most importantly, the beneficiaries of the policies; and 3) facilitate public consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries to determine performance of the implementation of activities and to collect recommendations for reviewing the Programme.

Stakeholders' participatio

The evaluation will be conducted based on the bottom-up participatory approach. Three public consultations will be organized by the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and will be facilitated by the evaluation team in order to evaluate the progress of the Programme and to collect recommendations for the new Action Plan.

The evaluators will undertake triangulation and consolidation of the data obtained from the methodological processes outlined in the evaluation methodology framework. They will also align objectives or results of the Programme to the specific questions, performance indicators, data sources and data collection requirements to facilitate the evaluation proper. The evaluators should ensure compliance of the report with the Evaluation Quality Assessment Criteria of the UNFPA Department of Oversight. (*Annex 1*)

8. THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of the Programme's progress will include the following key steps:

I. Preparation

- a. This involves briefing, orienting and clarifying relevant issues and approaches to the evaluators with the UNFPA and the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family.

II. Inception

- a. The evaluation team prepares a brief inception report which will include a clear, time and resource bound detailed work plan, methodology and clear evaluation questions and tools. An inception report to be prepared by consultants and presented to UNFPA CO and the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family for discussion and agreement before the evaluation team moves to the implementation phase.

III. Data collection

- a. Desk review and analysis of the annual reports on the implementation of the Programme and its Action Plan, reports of the national authorities responsible for the implementation of the strategy, reports and studies carried out by the development partners, other relevant policies and publication. The list of key documents will be agreed with the UNFPA and the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family.
- b. Carrying out individual or collective interviews with partners and stakeholders (national authorities, NGOs, development partners).

Additionally, facilitate at least three public consultations with relevant stakeholders. Consultations are scheduled for March 2016 and final dates will be agreed with Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and UNFPA.

iv. Analysis

- a. Evaluators will analyze collected data/information, seek clarifications from different sources to enrich the findings. In the absence of midline and end line data, use available data collection methods as much as practicable to collate feedback on the results of the Programme from beneficiaries and other stakeholders.

v. Reporting

- a. Evaluators produce and submit a draft report according to the agreed format which consists of findings that details the current status of the Programme, the assessment of the results and recommendations for the next Action Plan and for the review of the Programme. The draft Report will be presented not later than April 2016 during the meeting of the International Advisory Panel on Population and Development which is to take place on 20 – 21st April 2016.
- b. Evaluators produce a final report that incorporates the feedback received.

vi. Dissemination

Dissemination of the findings to the appropriate stakeholders and beneficiaries will be done as per agreed schedule. The report will be presented at the meeting of the National Commission on Population and Development for validation. In addition, it might be organized parliamentary hearings on the implementation progress of the National Programme on Demographic Security.

9. EXPECTED OUTPUTS / DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

A. Inception Report

The Consultants shall submit an electronic copy of a draft inception report to UNFPA and Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family. The inception report provides an opportunity for the Consultants, UNFPA and the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family to ensure that their interpretations of the ToR are mutually consistent. The inception report shall:

- Explain the evaluators' understanding of what is being evaluated and why;
- Review and strengthen the evaluation methodology (e.g. questions, methods, data-collection instruments);
- Explain how the evaluation questions will be addressed with respect to all evaluative criteria indicated above by way of proposed methods, evaluation designs, proposed sources of data, and data-collection procedures;

- For each of the evaluative criteria, describe the measurable performance indicators or standards of performance that will be used to assess progress towards the attainment of results;
- Discuss (a) the limitations of the proposed methods and approaches and (b) what will be done to minimize the possible biases and effects of these limitations;
- Explain the Consultants' procedures for ensuring quality control for all deliverables;
- Explain the Consultants' procedures to ensure informed consent among all people to be interviewed or surveyed and confidentiality and privacy during and after discussion of sensitive issues with beneficiaries or members of the public;
- Indicate familiarity with and agreement to adhere to the requirements of the UNFPA's Evaluation Quality Assessment Criteria, which will be provided to the consultants;
- Provide a proposed table of timely schedule of tasks, activities, meetings, field visits, consultations and deliverables consistent with this ToR;
- Provide the outline of the evaluation report and draft structure of the Work Plan;

Note: Consultants are encouraged to suggest refinements to the TOR and to propose creative or cost- or time-saving approaches to the evaluation and explain their anticipated value. UNFPA reserves the right to modify the ToR in response to the inception report.

B. Draft Evaluation Report

The Consultants shall submit an electronic copy of a draft evaluation report. The draft report should be thoroughly copy edited to ensure that comments on content, presentation and structure can be reduced to a minimum.

After review of the draft report, the UNFPA shall provide written comments on the draft report and shall submit these to the Consultants. Based on these comments, the consultants shall correct all factual errors and inaccuracies and make changes related to the report's structure, consistency, analytical rigor, validity of evidence, and requirements in the TOR. The consultants will not be required to make changes to conclusions and recommendations unless they are regarded as qualitative improvements. After making the necessary changes, the Consultants will submit a revised draft evaluation report, which may lead to further comments from the International Advisory Panel on Population and Development. After the second round of review and, if necessary, further revision to the draft evaluation report, the Consultants can then submit the final report.

C. Final Report

The final report will address the comments of the International Advisory Panel on Population and Development. The structure of the final report will be

suggested by the consultants in the Inception Report.

10. MANAGEMENT AND COMPOSITION OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The management of the evaluation will consist of:

1. **Evaluation Team** composed of two national consultants hired through a selection process. The consultants will be responsible to carry out the evaluation and to provide deliverables upon the deadline. It will be given preference to a mixt team of consultants, where one of them will be specialized in the area of social policy / demography and another one in monitoring and evaluation.
2. **International Advisory Panel on Population and Development** composed by pro-eminent international experts from a variety of relevant fields related to population and development with the main role to provide guidance and advice in relation to ageing policies and their social and economic implications based on the international experiences and practices, which would include:
 - ◆ Analyze the progress of the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025 and provide feedback to the Evaluation Report;
 - ◆ Identify national capacity development needs, good practices and recommend approaches which will strengthen the demographic sector of the Republic of Moldova through prioritizing economic implications of the demographic policies in the new Action Plan 2017 – 2020 for implementation of the National Programme on Demographic Security.
 - ◆ Addresses the need for additional research and analysis to assess the economic implications of different demographic scenarios and policy options.

The International Advisory Panel on Population and Development will work in close cooperation with the National Commission on Population and Development which have the overall responsibility for the National Programme on Demographic Security 2011 – 2025. Evaluation Report will be validated by the National Commission on Population and Development, based on the recommendations received from the International Advisory Panel on Population and Development.

3. **Coordination Team** composed by representatives of the Demographic and Migration Policies Department of the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family and UNFPA will offer all the support required (logistics, meetings with stakeholders, dissemination, etc). The Coordination Team will meet with the Evaluation Team at agreed schedules, discuss progress and address any challenges faced. In particular, it will be responsible for the following:
 - ◆ Select and secure appropriate endorsement of consultants;
 - ◆ Review and endorse the terms of reference of the evaluation;
 - ◆ Provide overall technical guidance and quality assurance on every step of the evaluation process;
 - ◆ Coordinate and set up meeting schedules with beneficiaries and

stakeholders;

- ◆ Facilitate the evaluation consultants' access to all background documents;
- ◆ Approval of all evaluation deliverables.

11. WORK PLAN AND TIMEFRAME

Task	Timeline	No. of working days	Responsible
Development of ToR and selection of the National Consultants	By end of February		UNFPA / MoLSPF
Meeting with the selected National Consultants	1 March		UNFPA / MoLSPF
Preparation and submission of the inception report (English)	8 March	3 days	Evaluation team
Desk review	1 – 21 March	6 days	Evaluation team
Carrying out individual or collective interviews, field visits and local consultations	22 – 25 March	5 days	Evaluation team
Draft report prepared and submitted	6 April	11 days	Evaluation team
Draft report presented to and reviewed by the International Advisory Panel on Population and Development and feedback is provided	20 or 21st April	1 day	IAPDD
Final report prepared and submitted	31 May	3 days	Evaluation team
Dissemination of final findings of the Report	June – September	1 day	Evaluation team & IAPDD
Total working days per each consultant:		up to 30	

Note: The duration of the work plan may be adjusted upon request of the consultants. However, the number of working days for which consultants will receive the payment is 30 working days.

12. ETHICS

The evaluation of the Programme will be conducted along highest ethical and legal standards and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, especially members of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups and in accordance with the UNEG's Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. Due consideration will also be given to beneficiaries and other stakeholders on confidentiality of information and privacy during consultations and personal interviews.

13. EVALUATION AUDIENCE

The results of the evaluation will be publically available for any interested parties. The primary users of the evaluation results are the decision makers within the Government of the Republic of Moldova, especially the National Commission on Population and Development, where the final report will be presented and would be proposed to be validated. The recommendations of

the evaluation will be used for the development of the new Action Plan and for reviewing the current Programme. In addition, the evaluation report might be presented to the Parliamentary Commission on Social Protection, Health and Family.

14. QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPETENCIES

- ◆ The following qualification criteria will be applied during the selection of the National Consultants:

Academic Qualifications:

- ◆ University degree in Social Policies, Public Policies, Economics, public administration, international development and/or other related science.
- ◆ Other formal education relevant for the assignment (such as training in Human Rights Based Approach, Results Based Management or Monitoring and Evaluation) is an asset.

Years of Experience:

- ◆ At least 5 years of relevant **professional experience** in social policies, gender, migration or demography **OR** at least 5 years of relevant experience in monitoring and evaluation, public policy and impact assessments. **Please note** that in selection of the consultants, preference will be given to a consultant with extensive expertise in social area and another consultant with extensive experience in Monitoring and Evaluation.

- ◆ Previous experience of **collaboration with Government of Moldova in developing sectorial policies**, in particular State Chancellery, National Commission on Population and Development and Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family.

- ◆ Experience of **work with development partners**, in particular UN/UNFPA and EU (successful experience in working with UN agencies is an asset).

- ◆ Experience in organization, moderation and or facilitation of **participatory** team-works, joint researches, national/local level consultations, trainings.

Languages:

- ◆ Fluency in Romanian and English is required.
- ◆ Working knowledge of one or more additional languages relevant for Moldova, including Russian, Bulgarian, Gagauzian, Romani, Ukrainian or sign language would be an asset.

15. APPLICATION PROCESS

Interested candidates must submit in English the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

- ◆ **Cover Letter**, explaining how the candidate's experience meets each qualification criteria;
- ◆ Two samples of **previous evaluation reports** of large policy documents / programmes.



