



CENTRUL ROMÂN
DE POLITICI EUROPENE

CRPE

DEBATING EUROPE, PROVIDING EXPERTISE

2021

ANNUAL REPORT

About us

The Romanian Centre for European Policies (CRPE) is one of the leading Romanian think tanks specializing in EU affairs, with over 10 years of experience in implementing European and regional projects. CRPE was established in 2009 by a group of experts bound by the shared objective of supporting Romania's role in Europe.



Our Team



Alexandra TODERIȚĂ
Executive Director

Since 2012, Alexandra has been coordinating CRPE's projects in the fields of rural development, vulnerable groups and VET. Alexandra has over 12 years experience in the NGO sector – both as a volunteer and as a project manager.



Bianca TOMA
Program Director

Bianca is coordinating programmes on Good Governance, Justice and EU Affairs. Specialised trainer in European policies, Bianca is also the author of CRPE's policy recommendation on various fields and of the Sustainability INDEX of the National Anti-corruption Directorate.



Ruxandra POPESCU
Program Director

Ruxandra is coordinating CRPE's projects in the field of youth, social entrepreneurship, human rights and social justice.



Alexandru DAMIAN
Program Director

Alexandru is part of CRPE's projects dealing with European Affairs, European Elections, Justice and the Neighborhood Policy of the European Union. He is most interested in the European path of the Republic of Moldova and the Western Balkans.



Cătălina MEIROȘU
Researcher

Cătălina is involved in projects related to social policies and the integration of vulnerable groups, youth and civic participation. She has over 5 years experience in regional and EU projects.



Vlada ȘUBERNIȚCHI
Researcher

Vlada is part of CRPE's projects related to the Eastern Partnership and the Republic of Moldova in particular. She is interested in media and fighting disinformation.



Maria Bălea
Researcher

Maria has extensive knowledge in the field of education, with focus on VET, and also rural development and has over 3 years experience in the NGOs sector.



Cristina CIUCU
Financial Manager

Cristina coordinates the financial management of the organization and has over 10 years of experience in national and international projects.



Oana GANEA
Sociologist

Oana is a sociologist with over 15 years of experience in market and social research. Her fields of expertise include quantitative and qualitative research.



Olesea Garbuz
Project Manager (CRPE Moldova)

Olesea has extensive experience in project management in the field of human rights, youth and civic activism.



Diana Casian
Project Assistant (CRPE Moldova)

Diana is interested in the EU decision-making process and participative democracy, sustainable development and poverty eradication.



Roland Kristo
Intern

Roland is passionate about the relationship between politics and economy, the processes of democratic consolidation and the political culture of Central and Eastern Europe.



Razvan Petri
Intern

Răzvan is interested in good governance, anti corruption, democratic backsliding and public policies in Eastern Europe. He is also the co-founder of the *Politica la Minut*, an informative initiative which explains Romanian politics to youth.



PROJECTS



PROJECTS

Justice, Internal Affairs and Anti-Corruption

Whistleblowing Open Data Impact. An Implementation and Impact Assessment (WOODIe)



Period of implementation: February 2019 – April 2021

Whistleblower protection and open data are unanimously recognized as key measures to deter and detect corruption in public procurement and are crucial tools for encouraging the reporting of misconducts and frauds. The project overviewed the current implementation and impact of whistleblowing legislation and open-data policy in public procurement in seven EU Member States, in order to develop an ICT tool for the public administrations (<https://www.woodietool.eu/>) to self-evaluate their policies.

The project is funded by the European Union Commission DG Migration and Home Affairs Internal Security Fund Police.

Civic Activism

Civic activism in practice – support for active citizens in advocating for efficient and transparent public services at the local level



Period of implementation: April 2021 - December 2022

The project is designed to generate through consultation, community activation, and training at local level, relevant changes in five communities, and a best practice model for citizen involvement in key local decision-making processes. We developed a pilot program that (1) identifies needs and priorities at the local level following a public consultation process (surveys and focus groups), (2) activates, connects, and forms a civic core at the community level, and (3) runs an extensive leadership and training program to (4) initiate campaigns at the local level (civic actions, petitions, hearings, advocacy activities, but also participate in public meetings, organized debates, etc.) and monitor local public authorities to promote investment decisions and public services that benefit the community where the intervention takes place.

Read more about the project at www.activismcivic.ro

The project is funded via Active Citizens Fund Romania program, financed by Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway through the EEA Grants 2014-2021.

PROJECTS

Common Agricultural Policy

Research and advocacy for positioning agriculture high-schools as hubs for small and medium farmers

Period of implementation: October 2015 – November 2021

The project aims to bring solutions to 50 high schools focused on agricultural education in Romania by improving teaching methods, connecting with the business environment, extracurricular activities, and e-learning solutions, also promoting the agricultural activity of the high schools enrolled in the program. In 2020 CRPE published a policy report which provided input from the perspective of the five years of program implementation for the development of agri high-schools through European funds and, among others, surveyed over 800 students regarding their future prospects for entrepreneurship in agriculture.

Target group: 50 agricultural high schools in Romania, public and private stakeholders at the local and national levels.

The project is funded by the Romanian-American Foundation (RAF).

YOUCooperATE: Youth Cooperation for Agricultural Renewal through Education



Period of implementation: March 2020– August 2021

Agricultural entrepreneurship can bring new opportunities for youth. And this is what we focused on: consolidating the knowledge and capabilities of youth through formal and non-formal education, and best practices and tools for agricultural entrepreneurship. By using modern teaching tools and e-learning methods, we aimed to contribute to and encourage the development of the agricultural cooperative sector in the five countries of the project. The beneficiaries of the project included T-VET students aged 15-17 years old from Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Latvia, and Italy; T-VET education experts, agricultural cooperatives, researchers, decision-makers, and representatives of the Government.

Find out more about the project at www.youcooperate.eu

The project is funded by DG GROW – DG for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship, and SMEs.

Find out more about the project here.

CoopNet - Network of facilitators in the development of associative structures

Period of implementation: January 2017 – November 2021

The project aims to train a group of 80 people to set up sustainable structures for farmers and to help small producers gain market access for their products. Coop Net is a network that supports the association and collaboration between Romanian farmers. It does this by training stakeholders to create associative structures on the territory of the Local Action Group (LAG) where they apply for funding. CRPE updated the comprehensive agricultural cooperatives database and highlighted the evolutions of the cooperative sector in Romania (quantitative parameters) since the last iteration (in 2016-2017) and advocated for measures conducive to the development of new and existing agri-coops within the National Strategic Plan 2021-2027.

The project is funded by the Romanian-American Foundation (RAF).

PROJECTS

Social and anti-poverty policies

Let's make the Invisible Visible

Period of implementation: September 2020 – August 2023

Discrimination against vulnerable and marginalized groups remains a stringent issue in Europe. Together with partners from 4 countries - the Czech Republic, Poland, Austria, and Slovakia, CRPE Romania is part of a project dedicated to women, Roma youth, migrants, and refugees facing multiple discrimination in EU countries. The project aims to increase competencies by testing innovative practices in adult education and counseling by introducing drama techniques and participatory coaching methods and raising awareness of the phenomenon by creating compelling storytelling campaigns - video portraits of women who faced discrimination and overcame it.

The project is funded by the European Commission, Erasmus+ Programme, Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices. Find out more about the project [here](#).



Republic of Moldova and Eastern Partnership

The contribution of the civil society to the development of the Strategic Partnership Romania - Moldova for the European integration of the Republic of Moldova

Period of implementation: July 2020 - December 2021

Romania's support of Moldova has always been significant. However, for the majority of the population, this support is still incomprehensible as there is a lack of coordinated communication and strategic effort from both sides. In this project, CRPE and the Foreign Policy Association from Moldova (APE) mapped the priorities and goals of the Strategic Partnership between Romania and Moldova, analyzed stalemates, and sketched further thematic and strategic directions to improve the relationship - all these based on an extensive consultation process with top officials, experts and journalists.

The project is funded by the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the German Marshall Fund.

PROJECTS

Fostering cooperation in the Black Sea Region: Setting up a transnational civic situation room

Period of implementation: July 2020 - December 2021

The Black Sea region has witnessed in recent years critical threats to its democratic foundations: breaches of the rule of law, attacks on European values and human rights, as well as increasing Russian and Chinese influence. To grasp the causes, effects, and possible solutions to these, we created a network of 19 experts from 6 countries - Romania, Ukraine, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Bulgaria, and Azerbaijan. We had monthly internal meetings, drafted thematic papers on the stringent issues with insights from experts, and organized public webinars on the potential of regional initiatives to bring security, economic development, and the peaceful implementation of democratic reforms. We also aimed to create a secure virtual space for communication and organized workshops on cybersecurity measures.

The project is funded by the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the German Marshall Fund. Find more about the project [here](#).

CRPE Moldova



Enhancing the capacity of the local civil society to monitor local public authorities

Period of implementation: August 2020 - June 2021

How to renew the relationship between local governments from small and medium size towns and citizens? This was the main challenge we aimed to address through this project. We worked in three communities in the Republic of Moldova and delivered (1) training programs for citizens, activists, and journalists and (2) established a team of ten monitors that worked with the local authorities for three months to improve their transparency and public consultation policies. We provided a mentorship program for the monitors, drafted a support guide for the monitors and citizens willing to monitor LPAs, and finally drafted a set of recommendations for the authorities in order to improve good governance at the local level. Through the monitoring campaign, we have also managed to convince local governments to increase their transparency and public consultation practices.

The project is funded by the European Union & Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in the framework of the grant program carried out by Dezvolt.md. Find out more about the project [here](#).

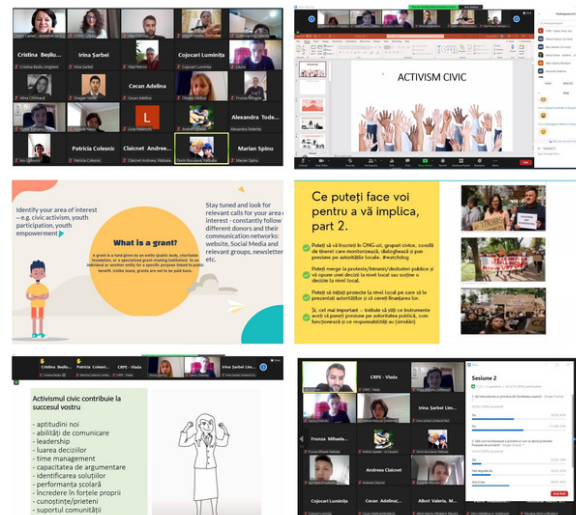
PROJECTS

Supporting Local Superheroes: Giving Voice to Active Young People

Period of implementation: June 2021 - April 2022

The initiative targeted young people with fewer opportunities, with a view to improving their level of competencies, consolidating and supporting their civic engagement, and providing them with the needed incentives to be able to organize spill-over activities in their communities. We organized interactive training for more than 40 participants with practical sessions from top trainers and organized a 3-months mentorship program for 5 teams carrying out local campaigns in their communities.

The project was funded by the Embassy of the United States in the Republic of Moldova. Find more about the project [here](#).



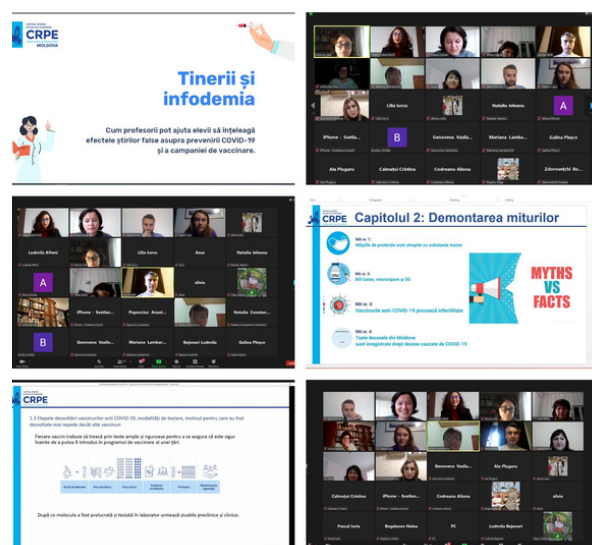
Building resilience to COVID-19 disinformation through health and media education among youth

Period of implementation: June 2021 - April 2022

The project intended to combat conspiracies and fakes compromising the immunization campaign, educate and raise awareness on the issues of public health and media consumption among youth and teachers.

We launched an online survey to learn more about how young respondents and teachers perceive disinformation and the vaccination campaign. Based on the study results, we tailored the following activities: drafted an interactive handbook explaining the vaccines and how disinformation works, organized training and Q&A sessions with top health experts engaging teachers and high-school students, and launched an essay competition among students.

The project was funded by the Embassy of the United States in the Republic of Moldova. Find more about the project [here](#).





PUBLICATIONS



PUBLICATIONS



Crises, protests and a glimpse of hope: The uncertain future of democracy in the Black Sea Region in 2021

The paper compiles emerging trends, anticipated events, and also game-changers between countries in the region and global players for the period 2021-2022 in the Black Sea region. It presents events with a significant potential of influencing perception of the regional dynamics and with potential implications at both national and regional level with insights from local experts.



Populismul mai trage un loz câștigător în Est. The election results in Bulgaria

An overview of the long-awaited parliamentary elections in Bulgaria, especially in the context of the 2020 anti-corruption protests, the paper draws scenarios on the post-election political landscape, possible alliances and the chances of the surprise populist party There is Such People to integrate in the Bulgarian political establishment.



New Paradigm, Same Old Game. Vaccine Diplomacy in Eastern Europe and Beyond

This policy paper tries to show how China and Russia have attempted to gain influence in Europe via vaccine diplomacy, how the European Union has responded and how it could have responded to these challenges.



How open are local public authorities in the Republic of Moldova?

The report is the result of a 3-month monitoring of public authorities from 3 districts in Moldova. We explain what are the problems, the gaps and the best practices we identified, as well as a series of conclusions and recommendations regarding the transparency of LPAs and the cooperation between NGOs, citizens, civic groups.



Snap elections in Sofia: Bulgarians are casting their votes against traditional parties (again). Populists can form the government

The piece explains the causes and the path that led to the early parliamentary elections of July 11 2021, parties' strategies to secure an improved result, the events that marked the election campaign and discuss possible coalition scenarios after July 11.



How Bucharest can support the pro-European reformist agenda of the Republic of Moldova

An analysis of the priorities and immediate actions that Bucharest can undertake to support the reformist and pro-European agenda of the 2021 newly elected / PAS parliamentary majority in Chisinau.

The paper is written together with Association for Foreign Policy (APE)



The rising wave of hate speech and human rights infringements in the Black Sea region: Tbilisi Pride episode

The report describes the events that led to the violent escalation of the March of Dignity at Tbilisi Pride 2021. We made an overview of the reactions of the authorities, the church, and civil society and argues whether the Georgian authorities' (in)actions could have damaged Georgia's relations with the United States or the European Union



Bulgaria amid Corruption, Pandemic and Elections. What are the chances of forming a government?

A piece on Bulgaria's second snap parliamentary elections run together with the presidential campaign, the paper explores the new political parties that emerged amid the political turmoil of 2021, what factors could influence voters' presence at the ballot boxes, and the increasingly worsening pandemic situation.

PUBLICATIONS



Become a Hero in Fighting Disinformation! Learn to identify and debunk fake news

The handbook is conceived as a survival kit for youth to be used amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and infodemia. It gives a glimpse on the risks of disinformation, how to identify fake news, as well as best practices on fighting disinformation and a series of interactive online games to better understand the fake news phenomenon.



The importance of vaccination. An explanation on how vaccines work

Including insights from a public health expert, the handbook offers friendly explanations on how vaccines work, and their safety for our health - all in an attempt to confront and debunk the falsehoods related to the production of vaccines and their effects on human body. The handbook is designed for youngsters, teachers and educators.



Food Hub: An alternative development model for small and medium farms in Romania

The report analyzes the implementation of the pilot project on the development of food hubs in Romania in the 2017 - 2021 period, including its progress and results, considering the application of the model in the US and the EU.



CRPE Analysis: Expectations from the Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels (December 15, 2021)

Launched in the margins of the Eastern Partnership Summit 2021, the paper assesses the EU's support to the EaP and the EaP countries' ambitions and commitments to the EU accession offer. It further analyzes the impact of the Associated Trio Ukraine - Georgia - Moldova: will it bring acknowledgement, a deeper political engagement or nothing?



Assessment of the Strategic Partnership between Romania - Moldova (2010 - 2021): Directions for the near future

An overview and assessment of the Strategic Partnership between the two countries, the report also lists expectations and needs from Chisinau, strategic projects to be prioritized and what directions should the partnership take to stay relevant for the context and goals of the two capitals. The assessment is based on the contribution made by 28 experts, diplomats, and public officials.



CRPE - APE Analysis: EU connection infrastructure, closer economic ties and security - the great expectations and needs of Chisinau from Bucharest

Together with the Foreign Policy Association (MD), we monitored and evaluated the results of the Romanian - Moldovan Strategic Partnership (2010 - 2021) having consulted a solid expert community: public officials.

PUBLICATIONS



[Public Consultation: Civic Activism in Practice - Support for Active Citizens in advocating for efficient and transparent public services at the local level](#)

What are the needs of citizens in terms of urban space, infrastructure and public services? What projects should be prioritized by public authorities? These were some of the questions we asked during an online public consultation covering District 1 of Bucharest. Respondents long for more green spaces, recycling infrastructure and parking solutions. Similar consultations took place in other 5 communities: Timisoara, Resita, Buzau and Ramnicu-Vilcea.



[Measuring the perception of youth and teachers about the COVID-19 vaccination campaign and the impact of fake news](#)

In autumn 2021, CRPE Moldova launched an online consultation for students and teachers to learn about how they understand the anti-COVID-19 immunization campaign and the conspiracies revolving around the vaccine. From the received 500 answers, we found out how many of respondents are involved in dismantling fakes, how they appreciate the authorities' communication and how informed they feel about prevention measures against the virus and the vaccination campaign.

Articles, commentaries, interviews

[Ruxandra Popescu: The T-VET qualification attracts high school students and reaches 90% employment, but qualifications such as beekeeper or organic farming worker have 0% employment rates](#)

[Alexandru Damian: What is going on in the Republic of Moldova? Why Maia Sandu is forcing snap parliamentary elections \(Scenarios and Forecasts\)](#)

[Alexandru Damian: Romania – a secret pandemic or how the authorities do not believe in transparency](#)

[Alexandra Toderiță: Advice for small farmers: Choose to externalize your logistics and sell your products to foodhubs, if you want to overcome the subsistence state and get faster to consumers](#)



EVENTS



EVENTS

Whistleblower: from legal rules to effective tools

Wednesday 7 April 16:00 - 17:30 CET

Chair: Valeria Ferraris (UNITO)

Speakers: Laura Scomparin (UNITO), Virginie Rozier (CRPE), Ana Lorena Sava (CRPE), Marie Terracol (CRPE)

To participate: cutti.lyviv@unibo.it
Info: valeria.ferraris@unito.it

This conference is funded by the European Union's Internal Security Fund - Police

[Whistleblower: from legal rules to effective tools](#)

Open data: from talk to facts

Wednesday 14 April 16:00-17:30 h

Chair: Valeria Ferraris (UNITO), Alex Damian (UNITO)

Speakers: Emanuela Andrei (UNITO), Mag. Alei Verici (UNITO), Christoph Konrath (UNITO), Samuel Goeta (UNITO)

To participate: cutti.lyviv@unibo.it
Info: valeria.ferraris@unito.it

This conference is funded by the European Union's Internal Security Fund - Police

[Open data: from talk to facts](#)

THE THREE SEAS INITIATIVE (3SI) FROM THE BLACK SEA PERSPECTIVE.
Old wine in a new bottle or game changer?

MONDAY, APRIL 19 15:00-17:00 (CET +1)

SPEAKERS: H.E. Ambassador Emil Valanov - Head of Foreign Policy Planning and Legislation Directorate, MFA of Bulgaria (TRC), Sergiy Serasymchuk - Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Project", Radu Albu-Candescu - Rules Project, Ministry of Culture, Republic of Moldova, Julia Sabina Jida - Middle East Institute, Senior Fellow for the Frontier Europe Initiative, Anca Agachi - Atlantic Council

MODERATORS: Clara Valentin - Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Alexandru Buzan - Romanian Centre for European Politics (CRPE)

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[The Three Seas Initiative \(3SI\) From The Black Sea Perspective: Old Wine in a New Bottle or Game Changer?](#)

CREȘTEM PRIN EDUCAȚIE AGRICOLĂ

PROPOZIȚII PENTRU REVITALIZAREA ÎN SFERA ÎNȚINUTULUI PROFESIONAL ȘI TEHNIC AGRICOL ÎN ROMÂNIA

17 FEBRUARIE 11:00

EDUCAȚIE AGRICOLĂ

[Growing with agricultural education: Proposals to revive agricultural Technical and Vocational Education and Training \(T-VET\) in Romania](#)

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP SUMMIT 2021
What to expect from the new EaP policy?

TUESDAY, JUNE 1 10:00-12:00 (CET +1)

SPEAKERS: H.E. Ambassador Emil Valanov - Head of Foreign Policy Planning and Legislation Directorate, MFA of Bulgaria (TRC), Sergiy Serasymchuk - Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Project", Radu Albu-Candescu - Rules Project, Ministry of Culture, Republic of Moldova, Julia Sabina Jida - Middle East Institute, Senior Fellow for the Frontier Europe Initiative, Anca Agachi - Atlantic Council

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[Eastern Partnership Summit 2021: What to expect from the new EaP policy?](#)

CÂT DE DESCHISE SUNT AUTORITĂȚILE PUBLICE LOCALE DIN REPUBLICA MOLDOVA?

25 Iunie 10:00 - 12:00

Rezultatul evaluării în trei raioane: Cimișlia, Basarabeasca și Căușeni

adept

Observații la nivel local în RM

[How open are local public authorities in the Republic of Moldova?](#)

ALEGERI LA CHIȘINĂU: CUI ÎI ESTE FRICĂ DE UN PARLAMENT PRO-REFORME?

SPEAKER: H.E. Ambassador Emil Valanov - Head of Foreign Policy Planning and Legislation Directorate, MFA of Bulgaria (TRC), Sergiy Serasymchuk - Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Project", Radu Albu-Candescu - Rules Project, Ministry of Culture, Republic of Moldova, Julia Sabina Jida - Middle East Institute, Senior Fellow for the Frontier Europe Initiative, Anca Agachi - Atlantic Council

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[Elections in Chisinau: Who fears a pro-reforms Parliament?](#)

THE CRIMEA PLATFORM: a new approach to the Crimean issue or a symbolic manifestation?

SPEAKERS: H.E. Ambassador Emil Valanov - Head of Foreign Policy Planning and Legislation Directorate, MFA of Bulgaria (TRC), Sergiy Serasymchuk - Foreign Policy Council "Ukrainian Project", Radu Albu-Candescu - Rules Project, Ministry of Culture, Republic of Moldova, Julia Sabina Jida - Middle East Institute, Senior Fellow for the Frontier Europe Initiative, Anca Agachi - Atlantic Council

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[The Crimea Platform: A New Approach to the Crimean Issue or a Symbolic Manifestation?](#)

SECURITY FUNDAMENTALS
BASIC CYBER SECURITY NOTIONS FOR ACTIVISTS, JOURNALISTS AND NGO PROFESSIONALS

05 NOV. 2021 10:00-13:00

RO TIME: GMT +2:00

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[Workshop: Security Fundamentals: Basic Cyber Security Notions for Activists, Journalists and NGO Professionals](#)

EVENTS



[Bringing citizens' needs closer to local public investments](#)



[FoodHub: An alternative development model for small and medium farms in Romania](#)



[What \(else\) should Moldovan youth learn about fake news? How to navigate safely online amid COVID-19 pandemic](#)



[How Bucharest can support the pro-European and reformist agenda in the Republic of Moldova](#)



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