

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM REVIEW

MOLDOVA 2021

DISCLAIMER

National reports have not necessarily undergone proofreading and language editing.

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ACRONYMS

ADA - Austrian Development Agency

ALMPs - Active Labour Market Policies

ARTICO/ RCCY - Republican Centre for Children and Youth

CCI - Chamber of Commerce and Industry

CCP - Cognitrom Career Planner

CEDA - Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance

CIS - Career Information Systems

CoCI - Chamber of Commerce and Industry

CoE - Centre of Excellence

DOTS – Decision making, Opportunity awareness, Transition planning, Self-awareness

ETF - European Training Foundation

EU - European Union

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

IES - Institute of Education Sciences

ILO - International Labour Organisation

IOM - International Organization for Migration

ISCED - International Standard Classification of Education

ISO - International Organisation for Standardisation

JVIS - Jackson Vocational Interest Survey

LLG - Lifelong Guidance

LLL - Lifelong Learning

LMI - Labour Market Information

LMO - Labour Market Observatory

LSPA/ SRAP - Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance

MoE - Ministry of Education

MoECR - Ministry of Education, Culture and Research

MoHLSP - Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection

NEA/ANOFM - National Agency for Employment

NES/SNOFM - National Employment Strategy

NCEM - National Confederation of Employers of Moldova

NEET - (Young people) not in education, employment, or training

NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation

NQF - National Qualifications Framework

NTUCM/ CNSM - National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova

ODSME/ ODIM - Organization for the Development of the Small and Medium Enterprises

OECD - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OMECR - Order of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research

OSCE - Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

PES – Public Employment Services

RCPA/CRAP - Republican Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance

REVOCC - Reconceptualisation of career guidance and counselling

SEL - Social and Emotional Learning

SME - Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

TU - Trade Union

TVET - Technical Vocational Education and Training

UN - United Nations

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

USAID - United States Agency for International Development

USM/ MSU - Moldova State University

VET - Vocational Education and Training

WTO - World Trade Organisation

INTRODUCTION

This national career development system review Moldova aims to:

- identify gaps and development priorities in the career development system;
- identify the opportunities and potential for system development, building on existing capacity;
- devise a business case for investment in career development sub-systems, such as career guidance and HR systems;
- provide recommendations that will inform an action plan based on a widely agreed long-term vision for system development.

This review covers the complete range of services designed to help individuals make career choices and act upon them, e.g activities in education and training, within employment and social protection services, communities and enterprises. It includes a vast range of delivery channels, including digital and distance services, collectively or individually oriented, with or without the support of qualified professionals.

The review was implemented in June-October 2021 *via* a mixture of desk research and online interviews. The desk research was focused on thorough analysis of the national legislation, policy and strategy documents, legal acts defining the scope of authorities and the functions of numerous bodies directly or indirectly involved in career development, the rules and procedures on different career development practices.

A methodology to perform system reviews (ILO and ETF, 2021) was employed with the aim to undertake a comprehensive process from career development support system review to the development of a national theory of change and related action plans.

The **methodology** comprises: analysis of reports and documents on career guidance development in Moldova and 12 interviews with key stakeholders involved in career development policies and practices. The interviews followed the guidelines and a reference structure provided by the International Labour Organisation. The interviews were conducted online on the platforms Zoom and Google meet with 14 participants from

ministries, agencies, schools, universities, companies, Chamber of Commerce and industry, Trade Union, National Confederation of employers, NGOs. The consultant took also part in an interview with two representatives of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) on lifelong learning (LLL) organised for the RBTC project “Towards making lifelong learning a reality: proposal of a strategy for Moldova”. The participation was voluntary and the interviews were recorded for note-taking purposes, transcribed, coded by theme and analyzed. The main topics discussed during the interviews were: allocation of responsibilities and relevant institutional framework; formal coordination and cooperation between stakeholders; funding arrangements; quality of career development services, including standards and tools and public awareness; access of youth, adults and vulnerable groups to career development services; use of technologies and common standards in service delivery, cooperation and support to practitioners; services gaps, untapped potentials and opportunities and a proposal for priority areas of intervention. The interviews added rich insights into the review of career guidance from the perspective of the decision-makers, practitioners, researchers, representatives of NGOs, trade unions, employers, companies.

This interim report identifies **information gaps and initial key findings**. It contains the following sections:

- a) the context for career development services, including an including a brief outline of the history of the services, responsible organizations, allocation of responsibilities and relevant institutional framework;
- b) an overall description of national career development systems and subsystems, covering youth, adults and vulnerable publics (whether studying, unemployed, employed or inactive) and depicting delivered services and activities;
- c) a description of existing coordination and cooperation mechanisms, including cooperation across different career support services as well as links to education, training and recognition of prior learning;
- d) a description of existing funding mechanisms, including private contributions;
- e) a description of existing quality assurance measures, including frameworks for practitioner competence, service delivery, use of labour market information, monitoring and evaluation, as well as available training for practitioners;
- f) a description of existing measures to enable and enhance access to career development, including coverage of services, entitlements and outreach measures;
- g) a description of existing digital and distance services, depicting type of activities available, delivery channels and service strategy;
- h) an analysis of services gaps, untapped potentials and opportunities and a proposal for priority areas of intervention.

1. CONTEXT FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND SYSTEM OVERVIEW

1.1. CONTEXT

Moldova is located in Eastern Europe and bordered on the west and south-west by Romania and on the north, south, and east by Ukraine. Formerly a part of the Soviet Union, Moldova gained independence in 1991. The administrative-territorial organization of Moldova has villages (916) and cities (61) at the first level and districts (35) at the second level. Rural population share is 65.8% and the level of urbanization gets to 34.2% (NBS, 2018).

Moldova is a parliamentary republic with a president as head of state and a prime minister as head of government. Moldova is a member of international organizations such as: United Nations, European Council, Partnership for Peace, World Trade Organisation, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Moldova aspires to join the European Union. In 2014, Moldova signed the Association Agreement with the European Union.

Moldova is a lower-middle income country, largely a service-oriented economy, with quite a high share of agriculture in its economy and employment. It also has an uneven territorial distribution of economic opportunities and growth, with the capital city, Chisinau, generating more than half of GDP. Almost half of the labour force employed in services, which generate 53.3% of GDP, followed by industry, which employs 16.5% of the labour force and contributes 23.0% of GDP and one-third are employed in agriculture, which contributes just 10.2% of GDP (2018 data).

The Program for the Implementation of 2021-2030 Education Development Strategy 'Education 2030' (Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, 2021) describes the main social, economic, political, demographic, cultural, geographic and environmental issues the country is facing.

The Republic of Moldova is confronted with a **severe economic crisis**, GDP per capita being at the lowest level when compared to Central and Eastern European countries. The development of the country is affected by **climatic changes** with negative impact in the agriculture sector. It is confronted with the **worsening health status of population**, and an **increase in the cases of COVID-19**.

The country faces a **political and identity crisis**, the society being divided on national criteria and identity dispersion by 63 registered political parties focused on geopolitical or strictly electoral issues. Moldova is confronted with **major demographic problems** due to a declining birth rate, persistent high mortality and massive labour-related emigration. It is ranked among the top 10 countries in the European and Central Asian region by the share of number of emigrants in the total population of the world. The **role of the family in children's education is reduced** due to factors such as: postponing the moment of creating a family by young people; an increase of the number of divorces; an increase of the number of incomplete/single-parent families; increasing number of children raised by grandparents while parents work abroad; frequent situations of non-involvement of parents in children's education, domestic violence, etc.

Education, training and labour-market systems are increasingly challenged by all these problems the country is facing. All these have a profound impact on society as a whole and on the lives of individuals. There is a pressing need to develop effective education, training, employment and social policies as well as practices to enable individuals to be resilient, to cope with these phenomena, to develop their skills and to become real lifelong learners.

The existing career development services should consider these challenges and support both public policies and individuals in addressing those. It is important that career guidance is integrated into multiple policies and strategies, e.g. lifelong guidance (LLG), lifelong learning (LLL), social policy, whole-government approach – in a harmonised and coordinated model. Providing citizens with access to quality career-development programmes and services should be seen by governments as a strategic policy measure and as a way to address inequalities, to increase the employment rates of high-risk groups, and to support college- and career-readiness efforts (Solberg, 2017).

The **National Development Strategy 2030** was approved by the Moldovan Parliament in 2020 and aims at significantly improving the quality of life in Moldova, reduce the outflow of youth from the country, increase the investment attractiveness of Moldova, and create jobs across the country and personal development opportunities for young professionals. Moldova 2030 includes four basic elements of sustainable development: a sustainable and inclusive economy; reliable human and social capital; honest and efficient institutions; and a healthy environment (ETF, 2020).

1.2. SYSTEM OVERVIEW

1.2.1. A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Starting with the end of the 19th century, the socio-political context from Moldova had different stages, each with its own educational system and respectively, its own career guidance system subordinated to it (Dandara,

2012). The concept of “vocational guidance” was used in the interwar period as well as in the Soviet period. In a closed society, which was a subject to state planning with stable jobs, the vocational mobility was considered as a gap of education rather than a tendency of the person to increase her/ his chances to professional success.

The term of “educational and vocational guidance” was introduced in 1990, adapted from the French literature and consolidated by accessing bibliographical resources from Romania. At that date, it did not express the essence of the phenomenon as it was stipulated by the Education Law (1995). This Law created a framework for diversification by establishing high schools with real and humanistic profile.

In the 21st century, the concept of “lifelong guidance” was introduced, being understood as an activity undertaken at any life stage to empower individuals in the process of lifelong learning and to face a labour market which permanently changes its requirements. It enables “citizens of any age and at any point in their lives to identify their capacities, competences and interests, to make educational, training and occupational decisions and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are learned and/or used” (Council of the European Union, 2008).

Republic of Moldova undertook a few steps towards the establishment of a career guidance system, which have been based, in general, on fragmentary actions and trials of implementation of methodologies from abroad, which lasted, unfortunately, only for the duration of some projects (Dandara, 2012).

1.2.2. MAIN SERVICE PROVIDERS

In Moldova, two important networks provide career guidance services: the network of educational services and the network of employment services. The development of career guidance services is coordinated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MoHLSP).

Career guidance is provided to people in a wide range of settings: schools and training centres, tertiary and higher education institutions; public employment services; public and private career guidance centres, workplaces, trade unions, NGOs and professional bodies as well as in local community settings.

The social partners play an important role in supporting the development of career guidance services in Moldova, as follows: the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CoCI), the National Confederation of Employers (NCEM), the National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUCM/CNSM).

The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance (CEDA) and Keystone Moldova have an important contribution to the system development by providing technical assistance to central and local public authorities in the development of policies, practices and legislation.

Career guidance is important to ensure the smooth transition of young people as they make choices about education and training and to the social and economic mobility of adults within the labour market. It is relevant to unemployed workers and people in work who are looking to move jobs.

- **Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR)**

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) is the central sectoral body of public administration, which ensures implementation of state policy in the field of education, culture and research. As a result of public administration reform, the Ministry of Education was merged in September 2017 with the Ministry of Culture and Research to become the new Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR). The new ministry has four departments: (i) Higher Education and Research; (ii) General Education, VET, National Qualifications and Lifelong Learning; (iii) Culture; and (iv) Youth.

- **District/Municipal Education Directorates**

The district/ municipal education directorates have the mission to organize, coordinate, evaluate and monitor the functioning of the education system at the local level. A new regulation on the organization and functioning of the district/ municipal education directorates was approved in 2015. The regulation was developed in accordance with the provisions of the Education Code (2014) and aims to strengthen the responsibilities of the local body in the field of education.

- **Republican Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance (RCPA/CRAP)**

The Republican Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance was established by Government Decision no. 732/2013. It is subordinated to the Ministry of Education and aims to: offering psycho-pedagogical assistance at national level; monitoring the activity of the local psycho-pedagogical assistance services and delivering methodological assistance for them; elaborating and adapting instruments for evaluation and/ or diagnosis of child's development; elaborating the methodology for providing assistance for children with special educational needs and children at risk, addressed to teachers, psychologists from general education institutions, support teachers; prevention of problems in the development of the child at risk and methodological assistance of the local public administration authorities and the child's family in the process of school inclusion.

It coordinates and monitors the activity of Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance.

- **Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance (LSPA)**

The Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance are organised within the local specialized bodies in the field of education and have as objectives: assessing the children's situation; providing psycho-pedagogical assistance to children; ascertaining the special educational needs and elaborating recommendations regarding the intervention measures and the support services for the educational inclusion. A report of the Ministry of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences indicated that 238 specialists are employed by the Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance: 35 of heads of service, 57 psychologists, 33 speech therapists, 35 psychopedagogues, 67 pedagogues and 11 physiotherapists (Cucer, 2019).

- **Centre of Excellence (CoE)**

The Centre of excellence is a vocational education institution with responsibilities both in the organisation of combined training programmes and in the development of capacities in the technical and vocational education and training sector. It has functions related to career guidance and promotion of technical vocational education as well as to certification of professional competences, acquired in formal, informal and non-formal learning context.

- **Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection (MoLHSP) of the Republic of Moldova**

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection is the central specialized body of public administration that ensures the implementation of governmental policies in the fields of health, labour, social protection and demography to ensure a quality and equitable health and social system, accessible to all the citizens of the Republic of Moldova. It coordinates and monitors the activity of the subordinated administrative authorities and of the public institutions in which the Ministry has the founding capacity, like ANOFM. The MoLHSP is responsible for human resource development and employment policies (including vocational orientation and training for adults); the identification of the labour market's skills requirements; and improvement or upgrading of the skills of the labour force in accordance with those requirements.

- **National Agency for Employment (NEA/ ANOFM) and its territorial subdivisions**

The National Employment Agency and its territorial subdivisions provide career guidance services, which include four types of activities: information on professions and the specifics of the labour market; self-knowledge; consultancy in the development of personal marketing tools; career decision consulting. The activities are provided through three methods: individual consultation, group consultation, and career guidance seminars.

- **Social partners**

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CoCI) is an autonomous and independent organisation, established 1999 in accordance with the corresponding Law, based on membership, which represents the interests of the entrepreneurs in the Republic of Moldova as a whole. CoCI brings together over 1200 members, large, small and medium-sized enterprises from all branches of the economy.

The National Confederation of Employers (NCE) is an NGO established in 1996. It is an umbrella organization that reunites professional associations (IT, constructions, agriculture, transportation, etc.) and supports the interests of the business environment. It establishes synchronisation mechanisms between the labour market demand and supply to assure the quality and relevance of information.

The National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUC) was established in 2007 and has representatives in each district of Moldova. It unites 24 sector federations from: education and science, agriculture and food industry, social services and production of goods, communications, construction, light industry, consumer cooperatives, trade and business, chemical industry and energy resources, culture, employees of some state bodies.

- **Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)**

Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance (CEDA)

CEDA is a non-governmental organization (NGO), established in 2009 that supports education reforms, promotes entrepreneurship, income-generating activities as a foundation for quality vocational training and career education, aimed at training and capitalizing on professional skills, individual initiative and entrepreneurship. It offers technical assistance and cooperates with MoECR and ANOFM with the aim to implement important career development projects at national level.

Keystone Moldova

Founded in 2003 by Keystone Human Services International, Keystone Moldova works to reform the social protection system and develop sustainable community-based services so people with disability can leave the institutions and live valued lives in the community with full access to their human rights.

Keystone Moldova provides technical assistance to central and local public authorities in the development of policies, practices and legislation on the rights of persons with disabilities. It participates, together with other non-governmental organizations, in monitoring the implementation of inclusive social policies.

2. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION MECHANISMS

Cooperation between government sectors with stakeholder involvement is important to overcome practice and policy fragmentation in the field of career development. Discussion of coordination and cooperation mechanisms in career development in Republic of Moldova is structured under the following sections: policy framework and allocation of responsibilities, key civil society stakeholders and promoting coordination, cooperation and good governance.

2.1. POLICY FRAMEWORK AND ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Laws, policies, strategies and documents that are in place in the education sector in Republic of Moldova are mentioned below.

Education sector

- The Education Code (2014),
- the Strategy "Education 2020",
- the Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training (VET), 2013-2020,

- the “Education Strategy 2030”,
 - the Program for the implementation of 2021-2030 Education Development Strategy “Education 2030” (2021),
 - School curricula of Personal development for grades 1-12, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research No. 1124/2018,
 - Decision No.732/ 16-09-2013 regarding the Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance and the Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance,
 - Methodological guide regarding the establishment and functioning of the University centre of career guidance and counselling (Ministry of Education, 2014),
 - Curricula for the school subject Personal development for elementary, lower secondary (gymnasium) and upper secondary education (high school), approved through the Order no.1124/2018 and the Implementation guides for curricula of Personal development, edition 2018 (Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, 2018),
 - The Government Decision No. 70/22.01.2018, on Approval of the Regulation on the Organisation of VET.
- **Education sector - analysis of policy framework**

Policy and strategy documents stipulate the need to create proper conditions for career education and career guidance activities.

In the **Strategy "Education 2020"**, the specific objective 1.10 aimed to career development and guidance and establishment of a lifelong guidance system. The Strategy for the Development of Vocational Education and Training (VET), 2013-2020 included a specific objective no. 6 aiming to modernize the ways of presenting vocational guidance and career counseling and tools for general education and VET schools, promoting emerging occupations (anticipating the demand of the labour market), increasing the social protection of youth with disabilities and from vulnerable families, promoting elective courses to stimulate the attractiveness of VET. The anticipated results for this objective were: plans for vocational guidance and career counseling elaborated for general education schools; a monitoring mechanism in force; vocational guidance and career counselling material in the written press; making VET more accessible for youth with disabilities and from vulnerable families (support with accommodation, food, scholarships, support for employment, a better mobility for persons with disabilities in VET institutions) (Damian-Timoşenco et al., 2015).

The ‘Education 2030’ Strategy (2021) determines the strategic directions of actions needed to solve problems and achieve objectives of the education development; foresees the changes arising from the implementation of the strategy; identifies the resources required and the impact of the main actions proposed. Career guidance is mentioned in the Program for the implementation of 2021-2030 Education Development Strategy “Education 2030” (Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, 2021), under the strategic objectives 3 and 8. **The strategic objective 3 refers to Quality of teaching staff – quality of education – quality of human resources – quality of the economy:** Securing quality human resources in education capable of providing quality education that would promote learning opportunities for all, so that by 2030 at least 95% of teaching, academic staff shortage is filled. Ensure a balanced approach towards the training of specialists for the national economy by laying the foundation and applying **a holistic model of career guidance** – a teaching career in this case – starting with early education and in the course of their professional activity.

Under the strategic objective **8: Scientific research versus the source of innovation and changes in education:** Development of the scientific research system from the perspective of integrating education, research and the labour market, ensuring by 2030 the scientific research coverage of at least 50% of the priority problems. Among the actions needed for scientific research to become a significant component of the education system and a factor for development, innovation and technological transfer is: **career options for a targeted**

intervention where needed (for example, a more comprehensive effort to promote reading among pupils, especially among boys in rural areas).

The Education Code (2014), an overarching policy mentions the need to open career guidance and counselling services to support the students in the process of career planning (article 130) but it does not provide clear guidelines regarding the structure of the institutions and the human resources involved in the process. It has no mentions of adult career guidance, which would highlight the lifelong nature of this process (Ministry of Education; CEDA; Austrian Development Cooperation, 2016).

The Education Code (2014) establishes the legal framework for organising, implementing and developing education, and provides the basis for modernising the education and training system. The code structures the education system into levels and cycles in accordance with the 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). It also establishes a new professional training system in the form of VET that has two pathways: secondary VET (VET schools and centres of excellence) and post-secondary VET (colleges and centres of excellence) (ETF, 2020).

- **Education sector - allocation of responsibilities**

Career guidance and counselling centres may be set up by local public administration authorities, the National Employment Agency, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, as well as other providers of such private services but the structure of the network and cooperation mechanisms between centres are not clearly indicated (Ministry of Education; CEDA; Austrian Development Cooperation, 2016).

Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) of the Republic of Moldova

The MoECR is the authority over guidance and staffing of guidance services in the education sector in the Republic of Moldova.

The General education Department of MoECR is the key unit coordinating the entire general education system in the country.

The **VET Department** (formally Department of Technical Vocational Education) of MoECR is the key unit coordinating the entire VET system in the country.

The **VET Department** (formally the Department of Technical Vocational Education) of MoECR is the key unit coordinating the entire VET system in the country. Five areas of tasks and the corresponding functions are defined for the Department: coordinating the process of elaboration and promotion of the VET state policy and legislation; coordinating and monitoring the implementation of national programmes and strategies in the field of vocational training and development; coordinating the activities of VET institutions in terms of specific and general issues, e.g. elaborate policy documents (methodologies, regulations, etc.) in the field of VET; coordinating the exercise of control over the application and observance of the initial professional training and the continuous professional development legislation in the educational institutions; providing methodical assistance for VET institutions.

The Order no. 793/2016 of the Ministry of Education regulated the implementation of the module “Personal development and career planning” in higher secondary institutions of TVET during the REVOCC project (phase I) and the implementation of the methodological guides for teachers and advisory teachers from TVET. Starting with the academic year 2018/19, the school subject “Personal development” is taught in TVET institutions with the support of pedagogical materials developed during the REVOCC project.

Reform of the VET system: legislative and normative acts

Over the last years several legislative and normative acts have been approved to enforce the reform of the VET system, including Government Decision No. 1199/2018 on the National Register of Qualifications; Government Decision No. 1016/2017 on the approval of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); Framework Regulation No. 65/2019 on the validation of non-formal and informal education; Regulation No. 1127/2018 on

the organisation of the qualification examination; the technical concept of the National Register of Qualifications and the methodology for the development of qualifications; the methodology for programmes and curriculum development in lifelong learning OMECR no. 70/2019; and the methodology for programmes and curriculum development in the continuing professional training of teachers OMECR no. 92/2019.

The adoption of the Regulation on the Organisation of VET Programmes for Dual VET (2018) and the Regulation on the Framework Curriculum for Dual Secondary VET (2018) has completed the process of formally establishing dual education, which started in 2014. In terms of the regulatory framework, the MoECR is at an advanced stage of finalising the draft Law on dual education, which will be soon be presented to the authorities for consultation (ETF, 2020).

Centres of career guidance and counselling

The Education Code (2014), the article 130 stipulates that “the centres of career guidance and counselling have the mission to support pupils and students in the process of career planning and career education. These centres can be established by the local public administration authorities, the National Agency for Employment (NAE), education institutions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or private providers of such services”.

The centres of career guidance are available in universities, the employment sector, youth centres. In the education system, the Republican Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance and the Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance (CRAP/SRAP) are available to support mainly the students with special needs. In the employment sector, three centres of career guidance were established in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca during the project of CEDA developed in partnership with ANOFM, the Ministry of Education and the Development Agency of Austria.

Centres of excellence (CoEs)

Centres of excellence are new VET structures, established by decision of the MoECR on the basis of some existent colleges and VET schools. In the academic year 2020–2021, several centres of excellence carried out the validation of prior learning. The Framework Regulation of the CoEs stipulates their role to:

- offer didactic, curricular and methodological support of the VET system;
- coordinate and guide the activity of other colleges and VET schools in the sector;
- provide continuous training to teachers and managers of VET institutions;
- certify professional competences, acquired in formal, informal and non-formal learning environment;
- be the social liaison to ensure social dialogue with important players in the labour market;
- promote the image of the economic sector and vocational education;
- bring innovation, elaborate projects, test new models and implement pilot projects that would stimulate the integration of innovative contents and services in VET.

Adult education and services for the private sector

The provision of adult education and services for the private sector is at an initial stage. In this regard, three important legal acts were adopted in 2018: the Regulation on the Continuous Training of Adults; the Regulation on the Organisation of Admission/Enrolment to Secondary VET Programmes in VET Institutions; and the Regulation on the Organisation of Admission to Post-secondary and Post-secondary Non-tertiary VET Programmes. In the academic year 2020–2021, several centres of excellence certified professional competences, acquired by learners in formal, informal and non-formal learning environment.

Employment sector - analysis of policy framework

Laws, policies, strategies and documents that are in place in the employment sector in Republic of Moldova are mentioned below.

- Labour Code of the Republic of Moldova, № 154-XV of 28 March 2003, Parliament of the Republic of Moldova.
- Law no. 60/2012 on Social inclusion of persons with disabilities,
- The National Employment Strategy (SNOFM) for the period 2017–2021, approved by the Government Decision No. 1473/2016.
- Law no. 105/2018 on the Promotion of employment and unemployment insurance by the National Agency for Employment through the territorial subdivisions for employment (2018),
- Minimum quality standards for providing career guidance services by the National Agency for Employment (2021),
- Career Guidance Procedure of the National Agency for Employment (2021).

The National Employment Strategy (SNOFM) for the period 2017–2021 was approved by Government Decision No. 1473/2016. It has four objectives: create formal, non-discriminatory and productive employment opportunities; develop human capital for increased employment opportunities; improve labour market governance; and capitalise on the potential of migration to support sustainable development.

SNOFM 2017–2021 sets out an integrated approach from the perspectives of demand development and efficient labour market management. Priority 2 of SNOFM 2017–2021, which is headed ‘Developing Human Capital for Higher Employment Opportunities’, aims to increase the attractiveness, relevance and inclusion of the VET system and raise awareness of the importance of lifelong learning. To achieve its targets, SNOFM 2017–2021 provides for a number of actions, such as: strengthening the link between the labour market and the vocational training system; improving the image of vocational–technical education and its promotion; improving the practical skills of graduates using internship training and apprenticeship in the workplace to facilitate the transition from school to the labour market; ensuring the access of vulnerable groups to education and training; improving the legal framework for lifelong learning; stimulating cooperation and establishing partnerships between research and development institutions, public authorities, educational institutions and enterprises (ETF, 2020).

The National Action Plan for 2017 also included a series of measures to increase the level of employment, particularly by developing the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) sector and extending the industrial park network and free economic zones to provide more jobs, especially in rural areas. Active school–enterprise partnerships will be developed to strengthen the link between the labour market and the VET system, along with career guidance services and voluntary activities (ETF, 2020).

The Law no. 105/2018 on the Promotion of Employment and Unemployment Insurance, entered into force on 10 February 2019. It seeks to make the labour market more effective and inclusive. It promotes active labour market policies (ALMPs) to increase employability through training, create job opportunities through wage subsidies, and stimulate start-ups. Special targeted groups mentioned in the law include unskilled young people, women over 50, people with disabilities, and individuals from the Roma minority. The Law sets out a number of new active employment measures, including provision of workplace training for unemployed persons and certification of skills acquired in the context of both non-formal and informal education. In the context of Covid-19, the National Employment Agency (NEA) considered how to reform ALMPs to address the new challenges.

The Article 24 of this Law specifies that NEA offers the following services: information regarding the labour market, career guidance, labour intermediation, pre-dismissal services, vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Career guidance is described in the article 26 as an activity “aiming to support the person looking for a job to identify educational and professional opportunities such as: information on the professions

and the specifics of the labour market, self-knowledge, consultancy in the elaboration of personal marketing tools, consultancy for career decision-making” (Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, 2018).

- **Employment sector - allocation of responsibilities**

Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Protection (MoLHSP)

The Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Protection (MoLHSP) is responsible for human resource development and employment policies (including vocational orientation and training for adults); the identification of the labour market’s skills requirements; and improvement or upgrading of the skills of the labour force in accordance with those requirements.

National Employment Agency (ANOFM/ NEA)

The National Employment Agency (ANOFM/ NEA) was established in 1991 and acts under the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection. It has in total 250 staff, of which 50 are working at the national office, and 200 at the 35 territorial units.

The ANOFM provides services for job-seekers based on the Law no. 105/2018 and the Procedure of career guidance. The Procedure of career guidance was revised in 2021 (Appendix of ANOFM Order no. 23/24 February 2021) to offer more flexibility for the ANOFM counsellors who are public servants. ANOFM is a key institution in the provision of both active and passive labour market measures for jobseekers. The agency has a tripartite management board of nine members, with three representatives each appointed by the government, employers and trade unions. As part of the public administration reform, the ANOFM has been restructured. This includes centralising the system, cutting staff and optimising business operations. The ANOFM currently provides intermediary services, **career guidance and counselling**; organises job fairs and public works; and provides training to increase the employability of jobseekers and priority groups of people with special needs.

According with the Regulation approved by the Government Decision No 990, 10th October 2018, the NEA’s mission is to ‘improve employability of the job seekers and support employers in finding skilled labour force and creating new jobs’. The Agency is entitled for a number of functions mainly related to the employment and social policy as well as studying, monitoring and forecasting the labour market at the national level. Provision of services to the beneficiaries, including both passive and active labour market measures, such as paying unemployment benefits, supporting start-ups, organisation of vocational training for unemployed, is the responsibility of the territorial units. Other functions of those units, particularly are: registration of jobseekers and vacancies; monitoring the job placement of the persons after implementing active employment measures; monitoring of registered unemployed; labour market monitoring.

The National Employment Agency implements special employment programs, including: unemployment prevention programs; territorial employment support programs; programs to facilitate the integration of migrants and national minorities in the labour market; employment facilitation programs that require additional support in the labour market, namely: young people aged between 16 and 24; persons who do not have a occupation; persons with disabilities; the long-term unemployed; persons aged 50 and over; persons released from places of detention; victims of trafficking in human beings, after psychological and social rehabilitation; people who struggle with drug use or psychotropic substances, after social and psychological rehabilitation; victims of domestic violence.

Territorial units of ANOFM

The 35 territorial units are not independent legal entities but do have the right to sign agreements with local companies on the provision of active and passive labour market measures.

Centres of career guidance of ANOFM

Three centres of career guidance have been established in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca during the project of CEDA, developed in partnership with ANOFM, the Ministry of Education and the Development Agency of Austria. These centres deliver four types of activities: information on professions and the specifics of the labour market; self-knowledge; consultancy in the development of personal marketing tools; career decision consulting.

2.2. KEY CIVIL SOCIETY STAKEHOLDERS

- **Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CoCI)¹**

It is a non-profit organisation which offers paid services (e.g. programs, courses for staff from companies and business environment). It addresses: youth, students, entrepreneurs, start-ups. CoCI carries out:

- a project for entrepreneurs in the agri-food sector;
- a project managed by the Organization for the Development of the Small and Medium Enterprises Sector (ODSME/ODIM) targeting women, young people, start-ups, migrants returning to Moldova;
- a program of training for trainers in the field of energy efficiency;
- trainings on “How to develop a CV” for university students;
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID) seminars of Financial education for VET entrepreneurs, VET students;
- programs for entrepreneurs beginners similar with career guidance activities.

CoCI collaborates with local and international experts from Austria, Germany, Romania (Galati, Bucharest, Iasi, Brasov) in transborder programs. The programs are adapted based on the aim and target group. CoCI can offer individual consultations at request and refer the clients to a service provider. CoCI developed a Cooperation memorandum with Moldova State University to collaborate in the education field and an action plan will be drafted.

CoCI developed a set of criteria for certifying the companies for provision of dual education and any member company may apply for this certification. The Chamber also monitors the activities of the company during the delivery of dual education.

CoCI has a Department for dual education (2 employees – at central level and 9 employees – in territorial branches). It is responsible to implement the Government Decision No. 70/22.01.2018, on Approval of the Regulation on the Organisation of VET Programmes for Dual VET. The Dual education department undertakes the following type of activities:

- encouraging dialogue between schools and companies;
- promoting dual education in online environment and familiarizing the students and VET institutions with this option;
- organising discussions for 15-16 years old students on their educational and vocational options;
- organising Dual education days;
- undertaking career guidance activities during promotion events;
- delivering promotion materials on dual education for parents and students.
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- **National Confederation of Employers of Moldova (NCEM)²**

¹ Information was collected from the website of the organisation and the interviews with Mrs. Inesa Iordatii, Chief of Business Training Centre and Mrs. Cristina Denita, Dual Education Unit from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CoCI) of the Republic of Moldova.

² Information was collected from the website of NCEM and the interview with Mr. Vladislav Caminschi, Executive Director of the National Confederation of Employers of Moldova.

The National Confederation of Employers has members representing different sectors of economy such as: construction, transport, agriculture, public services and some inter-sectoral branches. The main objectives of the Confederation are:

- promoting employers' solidarity and facilitating participation of employers' organisations in the economic development;
- participating, via tripartite structures, in social dialogue and in the development and consultation of draft laws, other legal acts, government programmes and policies;
- promoting and protecting the interests of its members at international level.

NCEM carries out diverse activities, such as organisation of seminars, e.g. on raising awareness on the amendments to the Labour Code, on managing the personal data, on application of specific legislation, on business reporting; implements various projects, particularly targeted at identifying, attracting and employing young people in different businesses. Confederation has also a platform for communication with the members and uses that for providing necessary consultations.

The sources of the NCEM funding are the membership fees, provision of services, e.g. related to public relations or health insurance, as well as donations and grants.

NCEM supports the involvement of companies in dual education system. The dual education system is organized as follows: 1st year (70% theory and 30% practice), 2nd year (50% theory and 50% practice), 3rd year (30% theory and 70% practice). It is important to motivate the companies to get involved in dual training because this is an expensive activity but it is a good driver for companies to identify employees in the conditions of labour shortage. A law to support the companies to get involved in dual training is under preparation.

The professional associations which are part of NCEM recruit employees for their members and then make proposals for companies to hire. They also organize trainings for the new employees.

- **National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUCM/ CNSM)³**

The National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUCM/ CNSM) was established in 2007. The Statute of the Confederation, approved in 2019 defines the following objectives:

- representation and protection of social-economic, professional, labour, collective and individual rights and interests of the union members, at the national level;
- promoting the basic principles of the European social model;
- defending the freedom of association and the right of employees to set up trade unions and to join trade union centres;
- expansion of the national trade union movement and strengthening the civil society;
- consolidation of unions of all levels;
- updating and developing social dialogue and social partnership;
- the progressive realisation of the social justice and the dignity of the work.

The National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova contributes to ensuring the socio-economic protection of employees by carrying out the following activities: elaboration, expertise and approval of normative documents, promoting changes of legislation, participating in working groups and sectorial committees, taking part in the Management Board of ANOFM, contributing to the elaboration of occupational standards and to the National Employment Strategy, organizing trainings on employment rights, employment relationships, stages of employment, online trainings at request for specialists from companies. NTUCM has a training centre, the

³ Information was collected from the website of the organization and the interview with Mrs. Polina Fisticanu, Chief of the department of Socio-Economic Protection at NTUCM/ CNSM.

Employment Institute. NTUCM provides support and guidance to migrants, unemployed people and other disadvantaged groups with the aim to ensure:

- a better correlation of labour demand and supply;
- career guidance towards jobs that ensure a decent living and jobs required on the labour market;
- quality training for specialists and qualified workers;
- support for unemployed people;
- knowledge of occupations' profile by young people, including information about employment conditions and remunerations, employment guarantees.

The National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUCM) and the National Agency for Employment (NAE) offer informational support and juridical assistance to migrants returning to Moldova during the project "The role of trade unions in the social protection of migrant workers in the context of Covid-19", implemented with the support of International Labour Organisation (ILO).

2.3. PROMOTING COORDINATION, COOPERATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Some examples of coordination and cooperation between different organisations active in the field of career development are provided below.

- **MoECR**

The MoECR cooperates effectively with other relevant ministries, sector committees, VET institutions, businesses and other social partners to contribute to the development of 33 occupational standards and 43 qualifications (out of 200).

- **VET Department of MoECR**

The VET Department of MoECR collaborates with ANOFM to carry out career guidance activities in VET institutions. It was involved in REVOCC project. It cooperates with the Ministry of Labour, private organisations, companies, etc.

- **Centre of career guidance and relation with the labour market from Moldova State University, Chisinau**

Career guidance and counselling centre collaborates with university structures, teachers from secondary education, representatives of the labour market and civil society. This collaboration allows: the organization of labour fairs in order to familiarise future specialists, university graduates, with companies that can become potential employers; mediating the assignment of students to internships and mediating the employment of students; mediating the employment of new graduates; conducting analyzes and research on the vocational and social integration of students.

- **Keystone**

It cooperates with government representatives (the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, the Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Finance and local public authorities from 15 districts/ rayons), donors, other NGOs.

- **Keystone - a cross-border partnership on career guidance for persons with disabilities**

A cross-border partnership for inclusive career guidance between Keystone and "Close to you" Romania foundation from Iasi takes place between October 2020 - April 2022 with funding from the European Union through the Joint Operational Programme Romania – Republic of Moldova 2014-2020. The total amount of the grant is 370,326.00 EUR.

The project aims to offer better access of Moldovan and Romanian youth with disabilities from Iasi/ Romania and Republic of Moldova to labour markets by 2020 due to developed / strengthened capacities of 470

relevant actors in the field of education and employment in providing quality and inclusive career guidance services. The specific objectives are:

- national policies and tools for career information, guidance and counselling for persons with disabilities improved, due to quality standards for career guidance services developed and approved and two specialized training curricula and handbooks developed and piloted;
- 360 professionals from education and employment systems in Republic of Moldova and Iasi, Romania have appropriate knowledge and skills to provide quality career guidance services to persons with disabilities;
- raised awareness of at least 1500 students/pupils/ youth with disabilities and their families from Romania and Republic of Moldova on inclusive career guidance services for them.

The **expected results** of the project are:

- cross-border partnership for career guidance and labour mediation for persons with disabilities established between Romania and Republic of Moldova;
- a methodological framework and tools for career guidance of persons with disabilities and for labour mediation developed and piloted within the educational and employment institutions in both countries;
- developed / strengthened capacities of 360 stakeholders from Romania and Republic of Moldova in providing quality career education and guidance to persons with disabilities;
- career guidance services within the National Employment Agency in Republic of Moldova regulated;
- 1970 people aware of career guidance services for persons with disabilities in Republic of Moldova and Romania;
- recommendations for improving the career guidance policies and practices for persons with disabilities in Republic of Moldova submitted to the decision makers and other stakeholders.

During this project, they carried out a research on policies and practices of career guidance for persons with disabilities in Moldova. The research report will be available at the end of July 2021 on the webpage of Keystone.

- **Collaboration of CoCI with companies and schools**

CoCI motivates and creates advantages for companies to get involved in dual education. CoCI evaluates the conformity of companies before the start of the school year. CoCI coordinates the qualification exam.

CoCI have played a strong active role in the implementation of the of the dual VET reform. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) has allocated a significant number of places for dual VET (1.203) based on the demands of companies.

- **Collaboration of the National Confederation of Employers of Moldova (NCEM) with the National Agency for Employment (NEA/ ANOFM)**

NCEM collaborates with ANOFM for synchronisations regarding the most demanded professions on the labour market and retraining.

- **ANOFM/NEA - the Labour Market Observatory (LMO) - an example of cooperation mechanism**

As a result of the NEA's reorganisation, the Labour Market Observatory (LMO) was established in 2018. The LMO operates on the basis of a partnership signed between, on one hand, the MoLHSP and the NEA and, on the other hand, the Ministry of Economy and Infrastructure, the Ministry of Finance, the MoECR, the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, the National Bureau of Statistics, the National Institute for Economic Research, the National Confederation of Employers, the National Trade Union Confederation, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Migration and Asylum Bureau. The purpose of the LMO is to collect, systematise and analyse the statistical data produced by the NEA and other public institutions, develop

analytical studies, forecast labour supply and demand, and disseminate labour market information to different actors in the labour market. In 2018, the LMO prepared two analytical notes entitled ‘The analysis of vacancies registered in the NEA database’ and ‘Labour migration and the impact on the labour market of the Republic of Moldova’, and it produced infographics on a variety of subjects (ETF, 2020).

- **Draexlmaier company, Bălți, Moldova**

Since 2014, the Draexlmaier company has been engaged in dual education collaborating with VET schools no. 2 and no. 5 from Cahul, with State University “Alecu Russo” from Balti, with Cahul State University “Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu” and with Straseni Engineering College.

3. NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS AND SUBSYSTEMS, COVERING YOUTH, ADULTS AND VULNERABLE PUBLICS

3.1. CAREER GUIDANCE DELIVERED IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Moldova’s education system has the following stages: pre-primary, primary, lower and upper secondary, post-secondary and higher. Education is compulsory at pre-primary, primary and lower secondary (‘gymnasium’) levels, that is, from grades 1 to 9. After that, students can take an entrance exam for general and vocational upper secondary school, and lyceum (academic) (grades 10 to 12). Higher education is provided by private and public universities, academies and institutions, and students who have obtained their general upper secondary or lyceum certificate or diploma are eligible to apply (ETF, 2020).

Career guidance services in Moldova combine the pedagogical approach with the psychological/ specialized approach. On the one hand, the topics of personal development and career guidance are included in the school curricula in a distinct school subject, named “Personal development” and some elements in the school subject “Civic education”. On the other hand, most general schools have school psychologists who help children and young people succeed academically, socially, behaviorally and emotionally, perform tests and carry out activities of career guidance and counselling. It was also an attempt to implement the career centre model in collaboration with public institutions (Damian-Timoşenco et al., 2015).

Civic education curriculum contains elements of career guidance. The general education curricula for middle school (grades 5–9) and high school (grades 10–12) students include modules on personal development and career guidance as 25% of civic education courses.

Personal development as a compulsory school subject with 1 hour/week was introduced in 2018 at primary school (grades 1-4), middle school (grades 5–9) and high school (grades 10–12). The curricula for grades 1-12 was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research through the Order No. 1124/2018.

Career guidance is embedded in the school curricula of elementary education, lower and upper secondary education. The school curricula for the subject “Personal development” for primary, secondary and high school education was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research through the Order no. 1124/2018. It is usually taught by teachers, advisory teachers/ tutors and in some schools by school psychologists.

The article 55 of the Code of Education mentions that the didactic activity of teachers from the general education system contains 7 hours daily and 35 hours/ weekly, including also activities of counselling for pupils and parents concerning psychology-pedagogy issues and activities of tutoring/ advisory teaching for pupils.

A study on career guidance

In 2015, the Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance, within the REVOCC project, funded by the Austrian Development Agency, conducted a study aimed at identifying the state-of-the-art of career development in Moldova. The study highlighted the school subjects and activities in which the career guidance process was carried out: civic education (65.5%), tutoring classes (59.1%), other school subjects (39.5%), extracurricular activities (37.3%).

The outcomes of the study showed that career guidance is approached more with students from middle school and graduate classes (42.7%) and less with high school students in the first grades (X-XI) (4.5%) and primary school pupils (12.7%). These activities should be continuous and very well planned. For students from vocational schools and colleges, within the subject of civic education, the same content was proposed as for high school students, even that these young people need support to identify career development options in the field already chosen.

An important role in career guidance is played by the personal marketing tools. In this context, it is interesting that 73.8% of students in middle school have a CV, and in high school only 50.7%. Even lower is the percentage of students in vocational schools who have developed a CV: 43.4%.

Students declared that they need the support of teachers in the process of preparing a CV, but unfortunately, only 29% of teachers can help them develop a resume. This situation can be explained by the need of teachers' training in the field, a need mentioned by 43.3% of teachers taken part in the study (Ministry of Education; CEDA; Austrian Development Cooperation, 2016).

3.1.1.1. CAREER GUIDANCE IN SCHOOL CURRICULA OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The curricula for the school subject "Personal development" for primary schools, grades I-IV for pupils aged 6/7-9/10 was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research through the Order no. 1124/2018. It is part of the compulsory curriculum and it is taught by primary school teachers.

It comprises the following modules/ units of content: The art of self-knowledge and knowledge of the other, Ensuring the quality of life, Healthy lifestyle, Designing the professional career and developing the entrepreneurial spirit, Personal safety. It has allocated 6 hours for each module/ unit of content for each grade I-IV and 3 hours at the disposal of teacher. Annually, the total number of taught hours is 33 for each grade.

The structure of the curricula contains the following elements: specific competences for the school subject "Personal development"; management of the school subject (statute of the subject, curricular area, number of hours/ week, number of hours/year), indicative distribution of hours by units of content. For each grade, the curricula contain the following sections: units of competence (sub-competences), units of content, learning activities and recommended school products, learning outcomes in terms of skills, attitudes and values. It comprises recommendations for teachers regarding: didactic strategies, methodological suggestions (type of lessons), suggestions and strategies for evaluation.

From the perspective of career development, the specific competence aims to design careers from the perspective of individual potential and vocational interests, showing a positive attitude towards personal development and learning as the basic activity of the pupil. For example, at the 1st grade the module "Designing the professional career and developing the entrepreneurial spirit" includes topics: preferred activities and occupations, importance of work, self-knowledge (personal qualities, skills, interests, talents, etc.). The proposed methods are: role-play, exercise, learning through play, guided discussion, individual project, etc.

3.1.1.2. CAREER GUIDANCE IN SCHOOL CURRICULA OF LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION

The curricula for the school subject “Personal development”, grades V-IX for pupils aged 11-15 was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research through the Order no. 1124/2018. It is part of the compulsory curriculum and it comprises the following modules: Personal identity and harmonious relationship, Ensuring the quality of life, Healthy lifestyle, Designing the professional career and developing the entrepreneurial spirit, Personal safety. It has allocated 6 hours for each module at each grade and 4 hours at the disposal of teacher. Annually, the total number of taught hours is 34 for each grade. It is taught by teachers of any other school subject who have the role of tutor/ advisory teacher of the class.

The structure of the curricula contains the following elements: specific competences for the school subject “Personal development”; management of the school subject (statute of the subject, curricular area, number of hours/week, number of hours/year), indicative distribution of hours by units of content. For each grade, the curricula contain the following sections: units of competence (sub- competences), units of content, learning activities and recommended products of activity. It also comprises methodological suggestions for teachers and strategies for evaluation.

From the perspective of career development, the specific competence aims to designing careers by determining the educational and / or vocational route, from the perspective of capitalizing on personal potential and labour market opportunities.

During the module “Designing the vocational career and developing the entrepreneurial spirit”, the students in the 8th grade develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes on: labour market and career decisions, correlations between multiple intelligences and professions, preparing a CV and a letter of intention, business ideas, career projects, etc.

3.1.3. CAREER GUIDANCE IN SCHOOL CURRICULA OF UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

The curricula for the school subject “Personal development”, grades X-XII for students aged 16-18 was approved by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research through the Order no. 1124/2018. It is part of the compulsory curriculum and it comprises the following modules/ units of content: Personal identity and harmonious relationship, Ensuring the quality of life, Healthy lifestyle, Designing the professional career and developing the entrepreneurial spirit, Personal safety. It has allocated 6 hours for each module at grade X-XII and 4 hours at disposal of the teacher. Annually, the total number of taught hours is 34 for each grade.

The structure of the curricula contains the following elements: specific competences for the school subject “Personal development”; management of the school subject (statute of the subject, curricular area, number of hours/ week, number of hours/year), indicative distribution of hours by units of content. For each grade, the curricula contain the following sections: units of competence (sub- competences), units of content, evaluation activities and recommended school products. It also comprises methodological suggestions for teachers and strategies for evaluation.

From the perspective of career development, the specific competence aims to designing responsible careers by capitalizing on individual potential and labour market opportunities. The module “Designing the professional career and developing the entrepreneurial spirit” focuses on: knowledge of individual potential, informing students about occupations from the perspective of the labour market, career planning and career decision-making, developing the entrepreneurial spirit – as a career option. For example, at the 12th grade the module “Designing the professional career and developing the entrepreneurial spirit” includes topics as: personality traits in choosing a profession, mass-media and information sources regarding career design, employment interview, opportunities for vocational training in the chosen field, successful businesses, decision-making

styles and personal development, individual potential and career design, etc.). Among recommended evaluation activities and school products are the following: discussion with family members and friends about occupations, completing questionnaires, preparing descriptions of occupations based on criteria, analysing employment advertisements, preparing letters of thank-you, analysing job descriptions, preparing and analysing business ideas, preparing the project “My career decision”, etc.

Reflection

The introduction of the new school subjects “Personal development” and “Education for society proved that a new subject needs a clear concept and a thorough development of the implementation methods to avoid overloading the teachers and the excessive bureaucratisation of the process. It highlighted the continuous training need of teachers to develop competences in a concrete learning context and taking into consideration the level of motivation and the learning needs of the students.

Resources for teachers

In the process of designing the lessons for the school subject “Personal development”, teachers are recommended to use the following resources:

- online lessons from the platform <http://www.educatieonline.md/>
- The Guide of the teacher for the school subject Personal development, recommended by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, that offers 20 tasks for each grade (at lower secondary education), distributed on modules. Each task has the following indications: steps for carrying out the activity, recommended homework and follow-up task.

Continuous training was delivered for teachers on career guidance topics during REVOCC project (phases I and II), coordinated by CEDA.

In the context of the pandemic, methodological guidelines for teachers were prepared regarding the organisation of the educational process at the school subject Personal development during the school year 2020-2021 (Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, 2020).

Distance learning during the pandemic

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the ministry gave clear instructions on how to adapt the organisation and implementation of the education process through distance learning modalities, including guidelines for the development of digital content and training for dedicated staff in all schools (ETF, 2020).

3.1.4. CAREER GUIDANCE IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) INSTITUTIONS⁴

In vocational education and training (VET) institutions (e.g. schools, colleges, centres of excellence), “Personal development” is not a compulsory school subject. VET teachers are advised to adapt themselves curricula for high school and avoid overlaps. For example, in a VET school the curricular framework comprises a school subject “Decisions for a healthy lifestyle” and the curricula for high school contain the module “Healthy lifestyle”. Training courses were delivered for advisory teachers from VET institutions during REVOCC project, coordinated by CEDA.

Examples of career guidance activities in VET institutions are: career guidance lessons, tutoring lessons, practical stages for students.

Priorities for VET sector

⁴ Information was collected during an interview with Mr. Silviu Gîncu, Head of VET Department, Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova.

Three broad priorities for VET sector have been identified by the MoECR for 2020–21:

- the digitalisation of the VET system, including the development of digital materials; capacity building to increase the capacity of teaching staff to implement information and communications technologies (ICT) in the educational process; the identification of digital platforms and educational software; and increased ICT access for students and teachers;
- capacity building in VET institutions, including centres of excellence (CoEs); the provision of support to CoEs to implement their functions; increased demand for the continuous training of adults; and teacher training and training for managerial staff ;
- the creation of an engaging, innovative educational environment for VET students, including the creation of an appropriate environment in terms of infrastructure, equipment and dormitories; active participation of VET students in the educational process; school summer camps, contests, creative activities, competitions, etc.; and career orientation for VET students (ETF, 2020).

Distance learning during the pandemic

Following the declaration of a state of emergency owing to Covid-19, dual education including company training placements have been specifically forbidden and sector ministries arranged practical training at home supported by online advice from teachers. Following the reform of vocational school autonomy, all distance and online teaching is being organised by individual institutions, while the government is providing advice on platforms and developing digital content. Parents have been encouraged to play an active role in motivating their children to attend online lessons and communicate with teachers.

3.1.4.1. CASE STUDY: IMPLEMENTATION OF JOBS PROJECT AT VOCATIONAL SCHOOL NO. 7, CHISINAU⁵

Box no. 1

The Vocational school no. 7 from Chisinau is the only VET institution from Moldova which took part in Jobs project, starting in 2018. It is a vocational training school with 60 teachers and 500 students (only 2 girls) offering training on domains as: construction, mechanics, hair dressing, etc. Jobs lessons have allocated 1 hour/ week for the 1st year students, 15-16 years old.

Jobs lessons are not included in the framework curriculum. Teachers who teach in Jobs receive a salary bonus. Three teachers (chemistry, languages, entrepreneurship) from this school have been involved in the project. They have been selected during a Call, based on their personal motivation and trained for one year. During this training they also piloted the project during their lessons. They took part in a study visit in Switzerland.

Jobs school curricula contain four modules: self-knowledge, knowledge of occupations and sectors, knowledge of companies, opportunities and risks on the labour market. The focus is on students and the teacher is seen as a facilitator. Notebooks for students and training booklets for teachers are available.

Interactive learning methods are employed: simulation of a job interview, group work, professional biographies, debate, reflection, visits in companies, organisation of exhibitions after the visits of students in companies. The students get official requests from the school addressed to the company and they should take part in at least a visit during an allocated week. The companies are identified according to their proximity to the school and the house of the student. The parents are informed about the visit to the companies and they are asked for support. After three years of implementation, students taking part in Jobs

⁵ Information was collected based on the interview with the principal of the Vocational School no. 7, Chisinau, Mr. Alexandru Ciobanu.

activities are more opened, communicative and confident to present their personal qualities.

The project will continue with the support of the Ministry of Education and CEDA in another project by expanding the themes and maintaining the focus on the student. This new project is implemented with the support of CEDA during the lessons of Personal development (1 hour/week). The intention is to avoid the overlaps between these two projects.

3.1.5. REPUBLICAN CENTRE OF PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL ASSISTANCE (RCPA/ CRAP) AND LOCAL SERVICES OF PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL ASSISTANCE (LSPA/ SLAP)

The Code of Education (2014), the article 129 specifies the role of the Republican Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance and the role of the local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance. The centre and services carry out **career guidance activities for persons with disabilities** and **support them in choosing the right occupation**. The Republican Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance is subordinated to the Ministry of Education and aims to: offering psycho-pedagogical assistance at national level; monitoring the activity of the local psycho-pedagogical assistance services and delivering methodological assistance for them; elaborating and adapting instruments for evaluation and/ or diagnosis of child's development; elaborating the methodology for providing assistance for children with special educational needs and children at risk, addressed to teachers, psychologists from general education institutions, support teachers; prevention of problems in the development of the child at risk and methodological assistance of the local public administration authorities and the child's family in the process of school inclusion.

3.1.5.1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT "DEVELOPMENT OF QUALIFIED COUNSELLING AND CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES FOR STUDENTS IN PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL ASSISTANCE STRUCTURES"

Box no. 2

The project "Development of qualified counselling and career guidance services for students in psycho-pedagogical assistance structures" was implemented by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, the German Agency for International Cooperation and the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development. It aims to develop services of qualified counselling and career guidance for students, including those with special needs in the Republican Centre of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance (RCPA/ CRAP) and 35 Local Services of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance (LSPA/ SLAP). The main activities are:

- developing the structure and content of regional training for the training of specialists in the psycho-pedagogical assistance structures, including the methodology for using the software tools purchased for SLAP;
- organization of 3 regional trainings for specialists from the psycho-pedagogical assistance structures;
- elaboration and presentation for approval of a methodology regarding the implementation of counselling services for students in the psycho-pedagogical assistance structures;
- purchase of 36 computer technology units and 3600 JVIS software test units for SLAP, etc.

During the school year 2019-2020, the methodology of counselling and qualified vocational

guidance for students graduating from middle school and high school was developed and implemented in the Central region of the country by using a tool validated in Romania JVIS Test. The methodology was developed based on an international study in the field and implemented by the Centre for Career Guidance in Orhei.

3.1.6. SERVICES OF CAREER GUIDANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Education Code (2014), the article 110 regarding the partnership between higher education and business environment mentions: “the establishment of common centres of career guidance and counselling and employment of graduates on the labour market; organization of job fairs; establishment of common business incubators and research laboratories”.

The centres of career guidance from higher education operate based on methodological guide regulations (Ministry of Education, 2014) and have the following objectives: offering career guidance for high school students; supporting students in designing their career; monitoring the professional evolution of the graduates and supporting them in the career management process; delivering career guidance for students with special needs; supporting university teachers in the process of teaching career development; collaboration with economic entities, NGOs, associations, etc., in order to capitalize on the training possibilities of volunteering. The beneficiaries of the services are: high school students; students of higher education institutions; university graduates to support their professional development; teachers, to support the development of their professional careers; parents of candidates, parents of students, employers. Regarding the connection with the labour market, these centres offer: assistance to enterprises on the recruitment of university graduates; monitoring of the employment of university graduates; round tables and meetings organised with university graduates and leaders of companies (Ministry of Education, 2014).

3.1.6.1. CASE STUDY: THE CENTRE OF CAREER GUIDANCE AND RELATION WITH THE LABOUR MARKET FROM MOLDOVA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHISINAU⁶

Box no. 3

The Centre of career guidance and relation with the labour market was established in 2004. Three career guidance counsellors (specialised in psycho-pedagogy, civic education and social assistance), a specialist who monitors the practice at university level and an ICT engineer work at this centre. Examples of activities undertaken by the Centre are: the platform E-cariera, “Caravan of USM”, “USM student for one day”, “USM Ambassador” for high school students, “Ambassador of education”, “School for career”, “Club of career planning” in collaboration with the Youth centre from Anenii noi district. For example, the programme “USM Ambassador” involves high school students who take part in activities at university for three days to learn about the academic environment. Then, they return in their regions and disseminate this information for their colleagues from high school.

For university students, the activities of the Centre focuses on: promoting efficient communication and integration in the academic environment- 1st year students; preparing a career project – 2nd year students; facilitating the transition to the labour market and meetings with employers, taking part in job fairs - 3rd year students.

⁶ Information was collected during the interview with Ms. Aida Cotruta, career guidance counsellor, Moldova State University.

3.1.7. SERVICES OF CAREER GUIDANCE IN CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

The centres of excellence (CoEs) are new VET structures, established by decision of the MoECR on the basis of some existent colleges and VET schools. The Framework Regulation of the CoEs (Ministry of Education, 2015) specifies their **functions of career guidance** and promotion of technical vocational education with the following attributions:

1. vocational guidance services for students in general education institutions;
2. providing career guidance services for students in technical vocational education institutions;
3. coordination of career guidance and counselling activities, including the activities of vocational schools and colleges;
4. elaboration, through collaboration with economic agents, sectoral committees, of the informative materials for the promotion of the professions and specialties in the technical vocational education;
5. organization and participation in public events to promote professions and specialisations;
6. increasing the attractiveness of professions/ specialisations and educational offers of technical vocational education institutions through various methods of media coverage and promotion;
7. monitoring the employment and professional development of the graduates of the Centre of excellence in its field of specialization;
8. CoE can employ psychologists and psychopedagogues among its staff.

3.2. CAREER GUIDANCE DELIVERED IN THE EMPLOYMENT SYSTEM

3.2.1. SERVICES OF CAREER GUIDANCE DELIVERED BY THE NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EMPLOYMENT (NAE/ ANOFM) AND ITS TERRITORIAL SUBDIVISIONS⁷

Information and counselling services are provided by the National Employment Agency (ANOFM) and its territorial subdivisions and through ad hoc initiatives financed as a result of partnerships. The activities are provided through three methods: individual consultation, group consultation, and career guidance seminars.

The National Employment Agency through 35 territorial subdivisions (at district and municipal level) actively promotes career guidance services (2021). The article 26 of the Law no. 105/2018 on employment stipulates that the services of career guidance comprise the following activities: information on professions and the specific of the labour market; self-knowledge; consultancy on tools for personal marketing; consultancy on career decision.

The specialists of ANOFM are public servants taking part in a national exam and continuous training at the workplace. Usually, they have a background in social studies.

Services for individual jobseekers include registration, counselling and guidance, client profiling, individual employment planning and job placement. Services for employers include registering vacancies, preselecting job candidates and intermediation. Employers are obliged to inform the NEA about job vacancies. The NEA's public works programme aims to improve the situation of temporarily unemployed people in vulnerable groups (particularly those in rural areas), keeping up their motivation to work and helping them to acquire skills for work. The NEA runs annual employer surveys to identify workforce requirements and labour shortages and publishes the results in a 'labour market barometer' (ETF, 2020).

⁷ Information was collected during the interview with Mrs. Cristina Arapan and Mrs. Tatiana Cristafovici, ANOFM.

Three centres of career guidance were established in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca during the project of CEDA developed in partnership with ANOFM, Ministry of Education and Development Agency of Austria. The centres were equipped with tools, like Cognitrom Career Planner platform and Casper platform for special needs persons.

They offer services for job seekers and at request for middle school pupils, high school students and higher education students. The educational institutions require services, they come to the centres or the specialist from ANOFM carries out activities in the educational institutions. They organise round tables and online activities through Zoom, Google meet or recommend the use of libraries from villages equipped with computers.

People who want a job, but do not know in which field they would find themselves can benefit from career guidance services through the CCP platform and find the right job. The National Agency for Employment, through its territorial subdivisions provided during the 6 months of 2021 career guidance services through the Cognitrom Career Planner platform (CCP platform) for 963 people, of which 64.5% were women and 35.5% were men. Most of the beneficiaries were jobseekers, registered as unemployed, who wanted to test their skills in order to identify the right profession. According to age, most beneficiaries of the platform were young people, aged 16-34 (78.3%). 2.6% of the total beneficiaries were people with disabilities.

ANOFM Statistics

In 2020, more than 13.400 people benefited from career guidance at national level (jobseekers, pupils, students). The Cognitrom Career Planner platform had approximately 1200 users in 2020 and 1000 users in 2021 (1st semester: January- June). It is mainly used by young people with no work experience (>15 y.o.).

The activities of ANOFM are promoted by: presenting a film about on career guidance services involve the beneficiaries; organising annual forums of professions (success stories, round tables, job fairs, discussion of young people with employers); organising visits in enterprises but the number was reduced in the last two years due to the pandemic.

3.3. CAREER GUIDANCE DELIVERED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (NGOS)

3.3.1. THE CENTRE FOR ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE (CEDA)⁸

CEDA is a non-governmental organization (NGO) established in 2009 that supports education reforms, promotes entrepreneurship, income-generating activities as a foundation for quality vocational training and career education, aimed at training and capitalizing on professional skills, individual initiative and entrepreneurship. It has 9 permanent staff and mobilises also local expertise, when necessary.

CEDA contributes to the following activities:

- ensuring the access of VET students to equal and equitable career guidance services and supporting their economic empowerment and labour market integration;
- continuous training of teachers in the field of career education;
- developing a coherent career mechanism at territorial/ local level, e.g. creating a non-formal discussion platform at local level by involving the representatives of NGOs, educational institutions, families, enterprises, mass-media (CEDA, 2020).

⁸ Information was collected during the interview with Mrs. Sofia Shuleansky, director of CEDA.

CEDA in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (ME) and the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) and with financial support from the “Austrian Development Agency” (ADA) implemented the project “Reconceptualisation of career guidance and counselling, phase II” (REVOCC II) in the period 2017-2021, with a prolongation of 6 months. REVOCC II is a continuation of the REVOCC I project (2014-2017). The budget of REVOCC was estimated at about 900.000 EURO.

Within the REVOCC I project, the module “Personal development and career design” was developed, which is currently taught in all educational institutions. Also, within the project, three career guidance centres were created within the territorial structures of ANOFM in Soroca, Cahul and Chisinau, with services that have already benefited more than 10.000 young people.

The main outcomes of this project are:

- teachers’ training on delivering career guidance activities for young people;
- preparation of a special curricula for trainers from the Excellence centres where VET trainers are certified;
- improvement of career guidance services at local level and support for the opening of another four career guidance centres at local level in the employment sector;
- organisation of internships, master-class activities, visits to enterprises, forums of professions, round tables, summer schools for young people;
- vocational training and employment support for jobseekers;
- training on starting a business organised for women and, on the basis of a competition, some of them will receive small grants for starting their own business, counselling and mentoring services;
- creating access at jobs for people with disabilities by using a platform to assess the potential of people with disabilities, the estimation of manual dexterities and their matching with a job profile.

Since 2017, CEDA has been working for embedding **entrepreneurship skills** in VET curricula, particularly in different subjects, such as Mathematics and Romanian language. For this, 30 teachers were trained for 100 hours and certified for teaching entrepreneurship on the base of subjects. The accounting and other administration staffs of the VET institutions were also trained in order to ensure a team approach.

CEDA also organises a National Annual Contest “The Best business plan” for students who learn entrepreneurship with support from MoECR and other organisations.

CEDA elaborated in 2020 a “Guide for a successful career at home” containing methodological suggestions for teachers, school psychologists, ANOFM employees in the territory. It is available at: <https://ceda.md/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/O-cariera-de-succes-acasa-TIPAR.pdf>

CEDA initiated "Career education", a television magazine that presents the world of professions through participation of successful professionals from different fields. The show contains opinion polls conducted in the street, about professions and the role of the family in career decisions. It is available at: <http://trm.md/ro/educatie-pentru-cariera/> and <http://ceda.md/en/gallery/video/>

3.3.2. Keystone Moldova⁹

Founded in 2003 by Keystone Human Services International, Keystone Moldova has a strong history of promoting human rights, working toward inclusion, and establishing community-based systems of social care services. Partnering with national and local governments and advocates, Keystone Moldova works to reform the social protection system and develop sustainable community-based services so people with disability can leave the institutions and live valued lives in the community with full access to their human rights.

⁹ Information was collected during the interview with Mrs. Natalia Cojocaru, Program manager at Keystone Moldova.

Keystone Moldova provides technical assistance to central and local public authorities in the development of policies, practices and legislation in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which the Republic of Moldova has signed and ratified. At the same time, Keystone Moldova participates, together with other non-governmental organizations, in monitoring the implementation of inclusive social policies.

Keystone Moldova aims for social inclusion of people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities who have left residential institutions or who have avoided being placed in residential care.

It offers technical assistance to central and local public authorities in **deinstitutionalization or prevention of institutionalization of people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities and their integration into families and community** (e.g. assessing the needs of people with disabilities and their families and the resources available at family and community level; developing recommendations for the inclusion of these people in the family and community; mobilizing communities and creating support groups for people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in difficult situations; family support services for families with persons with disabilities in difficult situation).

It provides technical assistance to central and local public authorities in the **development of community services for people with disabilities** (e.g. procurement and equipment of the service building according to the needs of people with disabilities; capacity building, and annual performance evaluation of service staff; monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provided services).

A cross-border partnership on career guidance for persons with disabilities

A cross-border partnership for inclusive career guidance between Keystone and “Close to you” Romania foundation from Iasi takes place between October 2020 - April 2022 with funding from the European Union through the Joint Operational Programme Romania – Republic of Moldova 2014-2020. The total amount of the grant is 370,326.00 EUR. The project aims to offer better access of Moldovan and Romanian youth with disabilities from Iasi/ Romania and Republic of Moldova to labour markets by 2020 due to developed / strengthened capacities of 470 relevant actors in the field of education and employment in providing quality and inclusive career guidance services. During this project, they carried out **a research on policies and practices of career guidance for persons with disabilities in Moldova**. The research report will be available in 2021 on the webpage of Keystone.

3.4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN COMPANIES

3.4.1. DRAEXLMAIER COMPANY IN BĂLȚI, MOLDOVA¹⁰ – SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

Draexlmaier, Bălți, Moldova is a company operating in the automotive industry. It opened a factory in Balti in 2011 which was expanded in 2017. Since 2014, the company has been engaged in dual education collaborating with VET schools no. 2 and no. 5 from Cahul, with State University “Alecu Russo” from Balti, with Cahul State University “Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu” and with Straseni Engineering College.

Dual vocational training is offered for students in the following occupations: mechatronics, production technologist, warehouse operator. It is not an age limit for the enrolment of students in VET schools. The

¹⁰ Information was collected during an interview with Mr. Vadim Bubulici, responsible for education at Draexlmaier in Bălți, Moldova.

Government Decision No. 70/22.01.2018, on Approval of the Regulation on the Organisation of VET Programmes for Dual VET established the content and duration of the continuous vocational training.

Dual education project in Balti

The first dual education project started in Balti in 2014 (the 1st year), 31 students have been involved in dual vocational training and 70% of them have been hired by the company. Since 2014, 244 apprentices have been enrolled and trained. 22% of these apprentices are girls. Three trainers carry out the activities.

In 2020, 101 applications were received for 44 places. In 2020-2021, 76 apprentices are in training at the moment. In 2021-2022, the places available are: 16 - mechatronics, 20 - production technologist, 12 - warehouse operator. 44% apprentices have advanced in career after hiring.

100 students started dual vocational training at 15 years old and after graduation they will be hired at 18 years old in the same company. The duration of studies is 2 years and the employment rate is 60%. The content is the same but the training is taking place in two locations: Cahul and Balti. Both theoretical and practical aspects are taught at the company's headquarters.

Dual education project in Cahul

In Cahul, the Draexlmaier Company opened a factory in 2018. Since 2018, 86 apprentices have been enrolled and trained in dual vocational training. 74% of graduates have been hired by the company.

Engineering College from Straseni

It prepares the students for 2 years in mechatronics and technological equipment (at the 5th level of qualification) based on an apprenticeship contract. It involves a consortium of companies that offer training for students. The students receive accommodation and access to workshops.

1st International Educational Program in Engineering was developed in collaboration with Hochschule Landshut. Professors from Germany offer some of these courses and funding is received from German government and DAAD, BMZ. The students receive scholarships and practical training during summer time.

Automotive Academy – Engineering and Management in Automotive Industry

The company organized Bachelor degree studies with duration of 4 years. 47 out of 129 graduates have been hired immediately after graduation in the period 2013-2020

The company organised marketing campaigns: visits in middle schools and high schools, Open days for schools (with transport provided by the company), social media promotion.

Support to tutoring/ internal training

Experienced workers are involved in the training of the new employees. The foreman instructors have in their job descriptions the task of contributing to the training of the new employees and to the periodical training of their colleagues.

4. FUNDING MECHANISMS

4.1. PUBLIC FUNDING

The funding sources of existing career services in Republic of Moldova are mainly ensured by public funding. Stable public budget should be allocated to career development activities, on the basis of transparent and reliable estimates, with appropriate accountability, monitoring and evaluation of its application.

NEA/ANOFM

The career guidance procedure regulates the implementation of the provisions of art. 26 of the Law no. 105/2018 on the promotion of employment and unemployment insurance by the National

Agency for Employment through the territorial subdivisions for employment. The career guidance procedure stipulates that the expenditure related to the provision of career guidance services shall be financed within the limits of the budget allocations approved annually.

VET institutions

The financing mechanism is approved by the Government Decision № 1077, 23rd September 2016 and it should be updated with a view to ensure more balanced funding of different size institutions. The *per student* financing formula is profitable for large institutions but not for small ones. The latter are under the risk of being closed down. As of 1 October 2018, VET institutions operate under financial and economic self-management. They receive allocations from the state budget for execution of the state order, their financing is based on a service contract and they are allowed to generate additional funds. Schools have difficulties to manage this degree of autonomy and cope with the necessity of generating additional income to deal with the possibility of insufficient funds (ETF, 2020).

CRAP/ SRAP

The Funding of the CRAP/SRAP is made from the public budget but also from donations and sponsorships (Government of the Republic of Moldova, 2013).

4.2. PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Financial support is provided from different projects, developed in partnership with external partners. Some examples are presented below.

The project “**Reconceptualisation of career guidance and counselling**, phases I and II” (REVOCC I, 2014-2017 and REVOCC II, 2017-2021) is implemented by CEDA in collaboration with MoE and ANOFM and with financial support from the “Austrian Development Agency” (ADA). The budget of REVOCC is about 900.000 EURO.

A **Cross-border partnership for inclusive career guidance** between Keystone and “Close to you” Romania foundation (2020 – 2022) is implemented with funding from the European Union through the Joint Operational Programme Romania – Republic of Moldova 2014-2020, with a budget of 370,326.00 EUR. The project aims to offer better access of Moldovan and Romanian youth with disabilities from Iasi/ Romania and Republic of Moldova to labour markets by 2020 due to strengthened capacities of 470 relevant actors in the field of education and employment in providing quality and inclusive career guidance services.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES

Quality assurance measures include (a) national standards such as competence frameworks for practitioners, (b) labour market intelligence and careers information, (c) monitoring and evaluation of services and d) continuous improvement of the system.

5.1. STANDARDS

Employment sector

Minimum **quality standards for providing career guidance services** have been developed by the ANOFM (2021) with the technical support of Keystone Moldova. The 17 standards cover three categories of themes related to: the access of persons to career guidance services, organisation and provision of career guidance services, outcomes of career guidance services. Each standard is explained and contains outcomes and performance indicators. The Box below presents all the quality standards.

Box no. 4

I. Access of persons to career guidance services (standards 1-4):

1. promotion of career guidance services;
2. access of beneficiaries to career guidance services;
3. ways to access career guidance services;
4. collaboration and partnership;

II. Organisation and provision of career guidance services (standards 5-14):

5. types of activities and ways to provide them;
6. information on professions and the specifics of the labour market;
7. information sources used for information activity on professions and the specifics of the labour market;
8. self-knowledge;
9. tools for carrying out the self-knowledge activity;
10. consultation in the elaboration of the personal marketing tools;
11. information support for consultation in the elaboration of the personal marketing tools;
12. consultation for making career-decision;
13. anonymity and confidentiality;
14. equality and non-discrimination.

III. Outcomes of career guidance services provided (standards 15-17):

15. monitoring and evaluating the quality of career guidance services;
16. documentation in career guidance services;
17. transparency of the results obtained.

The 4th Standard on Collaboration and partnership specifies that the National Agency, through its territorial subdivisions, establishes and develops cooperation relations with the local public administration, local specialised bodies in the field of education, civil society organizations, enterprises, educational institutions of different levels, etc., combining efforts and thus, increasing the number of beneficiaries and the quality of career guidance services provided.

The National Agency, through the territorial subdivisions, establishes and develops cooperative relations with other public or private career guidance service providers for the purpose of exchanging experience, transferring knowledge as well as with potential employers in order to organize the meetings of the beneficiaries with successful people from different professional fields.

As a result, local public administration, local specialized bodies in the field of education, non-governmental organizations, enterprises, educational institutions of different levels, etc. know about the specifics of career guidance services and refer people who are looking for a job to the territorial subdivisions.

As an indicator of performance, the number of collaboration agreements signed by territorial subdivisions with local public authorities, territorial social assistance structures, penitentiary institutions, civil society organizations and other service providers in order to refer beneficiaries to career guidance services, exchange of experience and good practice.

CoCI (based on the interview)

CoCI is certified by ISO on quality management and has a deontological code, certified by ISO. The training programs are delivered by local/ international trainers. Some programs end with an examination and the participants receive certificates but do not receive credits.

Occupational standards - NCEM (based on the interview)

NCEM cooperates with VET institutions to elaborate occupational standards and to assure the quality of the labour force. They contribute to the selection of future employees directly from schools. For example, NCEM collaborates with an enterprise in the field of car mechanics and mechatronics which received a tender.

The system of occupational standards was decentralized by selecting companies that elaborate occupational standards in different sectors. The occupational standards are approved by the National Council for Qualifications.

The methodology for developing occupational standards has different stages of development. The representatives of employers are involved: employees with high level of qualification and the management with the facilitation of an expert. Only employers are taking part in this process to synchronise the quality between what the educational institutions will prepare and what employee the employer finally will receive.

An occupational profile is developed first and then it becomes an occupational standard.

5.2. STAFFING

Teachers' trainings on delivering career guidance activities for young people took place during the REVOCC project (phase I and II), implemented by CEDA, ANOFM, MoE and supported by the Development Agency of Austria. Teachers' methodological guides and pedagogical materials have been prepared to support the process of teaching the school subject "Personal development" (Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, 2020).

ANOFM staff is taking place in continuous training activities with funding from various projects.

Postgraduate programs are not available in universities to prepare career guidance specialists in Republic of Moldova.

Draexlmaier Company (based on the interview) - Training for new employees

The company organises internal trainings for the new employees. The experienced personnel contribute to the training of new employees and periodical training of all employees. The trainers followed the psycho-pedagogical module, training organised by the Ministry of Education and CoCI. The quality evaluation standards have been reached.

5.3. QUALITY OF DATA AND INFORMATION

The 7th standard of the ANOFM Standards (2021) refers to the sources of information used for the activity of Information on professions and specifics of the labor market. It specifies that the officials of the territorial subdivisions should provide the beneficiaries with reliable information, extracted from credible sources. The information is selected from the Labour Market Information System (Jobless), the Barometer of professions, web platforms and online information channels administered by the National Agency, such as the Cognitrom Career Planner (CCP) platform.

5.4. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND POLICY FEEDBACK

The 15th standard of the ANOFM Standards (2021) refers to the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of career guidance services. The staff/ officials of the National Employment Agency monitor and evaluate the quality of the career guidance services provided, e.g. if the career guidance services provided to the beneficiaries correspond to their needs and interests. Monitoring is done by telephone contact, online meetings or by visits to the headquarters of the territorial subdivisions. At the same time, the monitoring of the quality of the services provided is performed following the collection and verification of the data registered in the **Labour Market Information System (Jobless)**.

The impact of the career guidance services and the degree of satisfaction of the beneficiaries are evaluated according to the provisions of the Procedure approved by the National Agency (ANOFM, 2021). The expected result is that the career guidance services provided to the beneficiaries correspond to their needs and interests. The achievement indicators are:

- Officials/staff of the territorial subdivisions know and use efficient methods of working with the beneficiaries of career guidance services.
- The degree of satisfaction of the beneficiaries of career guidance services is measured and evaluated.

The Career Guidance Procedure

The career guidance procedure regulates the implementation of the provisions of Art. 26 of the Law no. 105/2018 on the promotion of employment and unemployment insurance by the National Agency for Employment through the territorial subdivisions for employment. The purpose of the procedure is to establish the methodology for organizing and providing career guidance services, to ensure the correct, complete and continuous development of the activity, including in conditions of fluctuation of the staff of the National Agency.

Beneficiaries of career guidance services are jobseekers, including people registered as unemployed in the territorial subdivisions. At the request of the educational institutions (middle schools, high schools, vocational schools, colleges, universities), career guidance services can be offered to pupils, students, by organizing career guidance seminars.

The career guidance procedure describes the following tools used by the territorial subdivisions of ANOFM (ANOFM, 2021):

- Register of unemployed persons receiving services of career guidance/ year;
- List of participants at career guidance services;
- Sheet on the results of participation in career guidance services;
- Annual report on the beneficiaries of career guidance services among the unemployed;
- Annual report on the beneficiaries of career guidance services among jobseekers without unemployment status.

For example, the 5th section of the Register of unemployed persons gives an indication on the types of career guidance activities delivered by ANOFM and its territorial subdivisions: offering information, self-knowledge, self-knowledge – using Cognitrom Career Planner tool, self-knowledge – using Casper tool, consultancy in the development of personal marketing tools, consultancy for career decision. The services can be offered by: individual consultation, group consultation and seminar.

6. MEASURES TO ENABLE AND ENHANCE ACCESS TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Widening access to career development services should take into consideration the following aspects: provision of targeted measures for vulnerable individuals in employment, such as low qualified; development of infrastructures and access to digital equipment; development of multi-channelled distance services; offering accessibility of services and tailoring of support

The career guidance procedure regulates the implementation of the provisions of art. 26 of Law no. 105/2018 on the promotion of employment and unemployment insurance by the National Agency for Employment through the territorial subdivisions for employment. The career guidance procedure stipulates that the access to career guidance services is free and unconditional. The quality standards for providing career guidance services, developed by the ANOFM (2021) underline the importance of free, unconditional and accesible for all the clients (job seekers, unemployed, pupils, students). Jobseekers, including those registered as unemployed, benefit free of charge from career guidance services, offered individually, in groups, in seminars, meetings with successful people from different professional fields, depending on the activities planned. The access to services is also ensured in online format (Zoom, Google Meet, Skype etc.) (National Agency for Employment, 2021).

ANOFM

The National Agency for Employment implements special employment programs, including: unemployment prevention programs; territorial employment support programs; programs to facilitate the integration of migrants and national minorities in the labour market; employment facilitation programs that require additional support in the labor market, namely: young people aged between 16 and 24; persons who do not have a occupation; persons with disabilities; the long-term unemployed; persons aged 50 and over; persons released from places of detention; victims of trafficking in human beings, after psychological and social rehabilitation; people who struggle with drug use or psychotropic substances, after social and psychological rehabilitation; victims of domestic violence.

Information about career guidance services will be made accessible also for people with disabilities (intellect, hearing etc.) and the videos will be accompanied by sign language. The career guidance services will also be accessible without discrimination on the basis of race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religion, beliefs, sex, age, disability, opinion, political affiliation, wealth, social origin, or any other criteria. This activity took place within the Project “Cross-border partnership for inclusive career guidance” (2SOFT/ 1.1/145), implemented by Keystone Moldova in partnership with “Close to You” Romania Foundation, financed by European Union through the Joint Operational Program Romania - Republic of Moldova 2014-2020, through the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI).

Centre of career guidance and relation with the labour market , Moldova State University, Chisinau

A program for students with disabilities was implemented in cooperation with the Centre for Juridical Assistance for persons with disabilities.

Keystone Moldova

Keystone Moldova offers **direct assistance to persons with disabilities and their families** (e.g. person-centered planning; development of self-care abilities; social assistance; psychological counselling; legal assistance; health care reference; positive behaviour development; inclusion in mainstream community services, including in educational settings; development of communication skills and building relationships; labour inclusion).

It promotes the rights of people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities to live in the community (e.g. informing people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities on their rights and how to exercise their rights;

development and implementation of complaints mechanisms regarding the respect of the rights of people with disabilities; development of Hotline service for people with disabilities).

Free hotline service for people with disabilities

The toll-free hotline service for people with disabilities was launched in January 2017 as a national support service to offer assistance to people with disabilities who need protection, support and information. Starting with June 2019, Keystone Moldova manages the hotline service for persons with disabilities based on the contract signed with the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection. The hotline number is anonymous, free and confidential and can be accessed from any landline or mobile telephone. It offers: on the phone informational assistance; phone counselling; multidisciplinary collaboration to solve the cases of rights violation; identification of suspected cases of rights violation of persons with disabilities and notification of the competent authorities and partner organizations; notifications of risk situations for life, safety and integrity of the persons with disabilities.

Association “Motivatie”, Moldova

Support to employment of persons with physical disabilities

The Association “Motivatie”, Moldova supported the introduction of the concept of “assisted employment” for persons with physical disabilities. The internal regulation on the organisation and functioning of the program „Assisted employment” sets the way of organising and operating of the program and providing services for persons with disabilities looking for a job. After offering seminars to the employers, in one year 11 persons with disabilities have been hired by an enterprise. The concept of “assisted employment” was included in the Law due to the work of the NGO Motivatie.

NTUCM and ANOFM - Support to migrants returning to Moldova

The National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUCM) and the National Agency for Employment (NAE/ANOFM) offer informational support and juridical assistance to migrants returning to Moldova during the project “The role of trade unions in the social protection of migrant workers in the context of Covid-19”, implemented with the support of International Labour Organisation (ILO). A number of approxim. 100 migrants, recently returned in Moldova (employed, job seekers, unemployed, NEETS, potential emigrants) took part in online trainings in July 2021. The topics discussed covered: employment and migration, individual and collective employment contract, safety and health at work, social security, including legal assistance and consultations in online format. According to a survey conducted in April-May 2020 by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), 83% of migrants reported being affected by Covid-19 in terms of job losses and / or housing due to declining incomes (IOM, 2020).

7. DIGITAL AND DISTANCE SERVICES

The use of technologies enables more diverse service delivery to all citizens but it is essential that career practitioners are equipped with the competencies they need and to integrate the use of ICT in ongoing career education, wherein they can develop skills on how to use online services and how to be present in social media. It is important to have functional digital and distance services available, opportunities of multi-channelled delivery with possibility of individual tailoring and digital equipment available in careers centres and organisations. Information per type of major client group and the range of services is provided below.

Girls (10 - 18 y.o.) – an initiative of the Association “Motivatie”, Moldova

Technovation Challenge is a global initiative whereby girls (between 10 and 18 y.o.) follow an online program, helped by local coaches and mentors, to learn how to develop a mobile app aimed at solving problems in their community, and basic entrepreneurship skills. It is sponsored globally by many private sector partners, together with UN Women and UNESCO.

Children and young people/ students aged 11 to 18

The online platform "My Career" for career guidance for children and young people was launched in 2016. The project focused on the needs of students aged 11 to 18 in the country and it was created to give them the opportunity to make well-informed decisions about their future careers. The portal was developed by MiLab (Social Innovation Laboratory of UNDP Moldova and the Centre for e-Government), the Republican Centre for Children and Youth (ARTICO) and several volunteers, with the financial support of UNDP. ARTICO is committed to taking over the portal and ensuring its long-term development. Unfortunately, the website (www.CarieraMea.com) is not available anymore.

VET students - Draexlmaier Company

ICT Tools used: an e-learning platform, Viber, Zoom, Vplan- an internal platform from Germany: to plan the training of students, didactic softs for equipments.

Teachers

Online lessons for teaching the school subject Personal development are available for teachers on the platform: <http://www.educatieonline.md/>

University students - Moldova State University

The e-Career (<https://ecariera.usm.md>) is an electronic educational platform, designed by the Moldova State University, based on a research on the use of ICT in career guidance (Cotruta, 2020) and scientifically grounded on the DOTS model (Watts et al., 1996). It addresses mainly high school and university students as well as all those interested in designing a quality vocational route in relation to the individual potential, as well as in the educational services of the university. It contains sections as: self-knowledge (vocational interests, aspirations and values, decisional styles, career anchors, etc.); career decision; vocational marketing (preparing a CV, a letter of intention, an admission portfolio, etc.); career planning (synthesis of testing, career planning). It also includes information regarding: the training programs available at career guidance centre, volunteering and internship programs or available jobs. The e-Career is available free of charge at: <https://ecariera.usm.md>

Centre of career guidance and relation with the labour market , Moldova State University, Chisinau (interview with Mrs. Aida Cotruta)

The ICT is used during the activities, e.g.: Jamboard, Padlet, designing a virtual map of university graduates.

Youth and adults – NEA/ ANOFM

Three centres of career guidance were established in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca during the project of CEDA developed in partnership with NEA/ ANOFM, Ministry of Education and Development Agency of Austria. The centres were equipped with tools, like Cognitrom Career Planner (CCP) platform and Casper platform for special needs persons (available only in Chisinau centre).

The territorial subdivisions of ANOFM were endowed with the CCP platform with the support of the Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance (CEDA) and financial support from the Austrian Development Agency within the project "Reconceptualization of Career Guidance and Counselling." CCP platform was adapted to the context of Moldova. It supports young people to identify their vocational interests and to make career decisions by selecting among the 1150 occupational profiles available. The platform contains materials for teachers, school psychologists and parents, 350 films about professions and educational institutions from upper secondary

education and higher education from the Republic of Moldova and Romania. It is available in Romanian and it will be translated in Russian.

Another NEA/ **ANOFM platform (cariera.anofm.md)** addresses youth and adults and contains 70 descriptions of occupations, videos, a section with questions and answers, links. They plan to include other descriptions of occupations.

Persons with special needs – NEA/ ANOFM

Casper platform for persons with special needs

In 2017, the National Agency for Employment in partnership with the Center for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance (CEDA) within the project "Reconceptualization of Career Guidance and Counseling" (REVOCC), funded by Austrian Development Agency, launched an electronic platform which allows the assessment of the work potential of people with disabilities at the Career Guidance Centre in Chisinau.

The specialists from the National Agency, the representatives of the Career Guidance Centres from Chisinau, Soroca and Cahul, as well as from the association Motivation, participated in the training course to develop their skills of using the CASPER platform and the Ruward test for career guidance of persons with disabilities.

Casper tool generates a complex assessment of the person with disabilities, but also a match with the profile of a job. Casper supports people with disabilities by assessing and highlighting their work potential. The Ruward skills assessment test is a valid tool which measures the functional availability of any worker and offers the necessary and objective information about a person's skill.

People with disabilities - Keystone website

The project "Digitization of services for people with disabilities to ensure access to health and social services for people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities during the pandemic" was implemented in September 2020 – August 2021 by the organization "People in Need Moldova" with funding from the European Union (EU).

The aim of the project was to increase access to health and social services for adults with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities during the Covid-19 pandemic. The project had two objectives: adapting 19 social services to the new conditions related to the pandemic situation to provide quality services for people with disabilities according to their needs; increasing the resilience of employees, supervisors, families of people with disabilities and beneficiaries of 19 social services to stay safe during the pandemic.

Not sufficient information was found on the level of professionalization of the staff managing the websites and tools.

8. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. KEY INITIATIVES AND PRACTICES

This section is synthesising in the table below key initiatives and practices for each of the following areas of the review: coordination and cooperation, funding, quality assurance, access and technology.

Table no. 1

Areas	Key initiatives and practices
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<p>Coordination and cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Career development policies are formally integrated into other policy areas such as education, TVET and employment policy: “Education Strategy 2030”, “National Employment Strategy for the period 2017–2021”, Law no. 105/2018 on the promotion of employment and unemployment insurance by the National Agency for Employment through the territorial subdivisions for employment, Law on dual education (under preparation). - Technical assistance provided by NGOs (e.g. CEDA, Keystone) to central and local public authorities with the aim to develop a career guidance system.
<p>Funding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of the project “Reconceptualisation of career guidance and counselling, phases I and II” (REVOCC I, 2014-2017 and REVOCC II, 2017-2021) by CEDA in collaboration with MoE and ANOFM and with financial support from the “Austrian Development Agency” (ADA). The budget of REVOCC is about 900.000 EURO. - Implementation of a Cross-border partnership for inclusive career guidance between Keystone and “Close to you” Romania foundation (2020 – 2022) with funding from the European Union through the Joint Operational Programme Romania – Republic of Moldova 2014-2020, with a budget of 370,326.00 EUR. The project aims to offer better access of Moldovan and Romanian youth with disabilities from Iasi/ Romania and Republic of Moldova to labour markets by 2020 due to developed / strengthened capacities of 470 relevant actors in the field of education and employment in providing quality and inclusive career guidance services. A research on policies and practices of career guidance for persons with disabilities in Moldova was funded from this project.
<p>Quality assurance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum quality standards for providing career guidance services have been developed by ANOFM in 2021. The 17 standards cover areas related to: access of persons to career guidance services, organisation and provision of career guidance services, outcomes of career guidance services. - The career guidance procedure regulates the implementation of the provisions of Art. 26 of the Law no. 105/2018 on the promotion of employment and unemployment insurance by the National Agency for Employment through the territorial subdivisions for employment. It establishes the methodology for organizing and providing career guidance services, to ensure the correct, complete and continuous development of the activity, including in conditions of fluctuation of the staff of the National Agency. It contains templates for tools used by the territorial subdivisions of ANOFM: e.g. register of unemployed persons receiving services of career guidance/ year, list of participants at career guidance services, sheet on the results of participation in career guidance services, annual report on the beneficiaries of career guidance services among the unemployed, annual report on the beneficiaries of career guidance services among jobseekers without unemployment status. - ANOFM runs annual employer surveys to identify workforce requirements and labour shortages and publishes the results in a ‘Labour market barometer’. - Methodological guides for teachers - Teacher Guide for teaching the school subject “Personal development” (Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, 2020). - Teachers’ training on delivering career guidance activities for young people during REVOCC project (CEDA, ANOFM, MoE, Development Agency of Austria).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Methodological guide regarding the establishment and functioning of the University centre of career guidance and counselling (Ministry of Education, 2014) is available for the functioning of the Centres of career guidance and relation with the labour market from universities. - Three Centres of career guidance have been established in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca and equipped with tools, like Cognitrom Career Planner platform and Casper platform for special needs persons (during REVOCC project of ANOFM, CEDA, MoE, Development Agency of Austria). - 360 professionals from education and employment systems of Republic of Moldova and Romania develop their knowledge and skills to provide quality career guidance services to persons with disabilities during the project “Cross-border partnership for inclusive career guidance” between Keystone and “Close to you” Romania foundation (2020 – 2022) with funding from the European Union through the Joint Operational Programme Romania – Republic of Moldova 2014-2020. - At least 1500 students/pupils/ youth with disabilities and their families from Romania and Republic of Moldova raised awareness on inclusive career guidance services for them during the project “Cross-border partnership for inclusive career guidance” between Keystone and “Close to you” Romania foundation (2020-2022) with funding from the European Union through the Joint Operational Programme Romania – Republic of Moldova 2014-2020. - The quality of Labour Market Information (LMI) is mentioned as a standard for providing career guidance services (ANOFM, 2021).
<p>Access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curricula for the school subject “Personal development” for elementary, lower secondary (gymnasium) and upper secondary education (high school), approved through the MoE Order no.1124/2018 and the Implementation guides for curricula of Personal development, edition 2018. - Career guidance curricula for persons with disabilities, elaborated by Keystone (in the process of accreditation). - Work mediation curricula for persons with disabilities, elaborated by Keystone. - Outreach programmes for long term unemployed, rural populations – NEA/ ANOFM implements programmes aiming to improve the situation of temporarily unemployed people in vulnerable groups (particularly those in rural areas), keeping up their motivation to work and helping them to acquire skills for work. - The National Agency for Employment, through its territorial subdivisions provided during the 6 months of 2021 career guidance services through the Cognitrom Career Planner platform (CCP platform) for 963 people, of which 64.5% were women and 35.5% were men. Most of the beneficiaries were jobseekers, registered as unemployed, who wanted to test their skills in order to identify the right profession. According to age, most beneficiaries of the platform were young people, aged 16-34 (78.3%). 2.6% of the total beneficiaries were people with disabilities. - The Cognitrom Career Planner platform had approximately 1200 users in 2020 and 1000 users in 2021 (1st semester: January- June). It is mainly used by young people with no work experience (>15 y.o.). - CEDA elaborated a “Guide for the future employee for a successful career at home” for teachers, school psychologists, ANOFM employees from territorial sub-divisions. It is available at: www.ceda.md

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CEDA initiated "Career education", a television magazine that presents the world of professions through participation of successful professionals from different fields. - CEDA provided training on starting a business for women and offered them small grants for starting their own business, counselling and mentoring services. - CEDA offered access at jobs for people with disabilities by using a platform to assess the potential of people with disabilities, the estimation of manual dexterities and their matching with a job profile. - The toll-free hotline service for people with disabilities was launched by Keystone Moldova in January 2017 offering on the phone informational assistance, phone counselling, etc. - Informational support and juridical assistance to migrants returning to Moldova during the project "The role of trade unions in the social protection of migrant workers in the context of Covid-19", implemented by the National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUCM) and the National Agency for Employment (NAE) offer with the support of International Labour Organisation (ILO). <p>Other activities for disadvantaged groups, mentioned during the interviews were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summer schools for girls and Youth forums organised by ANOFM; - Employment support for offenders (people who left the prison) - a positive initiative in Orhei.
Technology	<p>Some electronic platforms have been developed to offer improved access to information and career-related content and materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - online lessons for teaching the school subject "Personal development" are available for teachers on a digital library supported by the Ministry of Education: http://www.educatieonline.md/ - the online platform "My Career" for career guidance of students aged 11 to 18 was launched in 2016 with the aim to give them the opportunity to make well-informed decisions about their future careers; unfortunately, is not available anymore; - e-Career is an electronic educational platform, designed by the Moldova State University, addressing high school and university students, available at: https://ecariera.usm.md - Cognitrom Career Planner (CCP) - an electronic platform providing career support for students aged 12-19. It reached 1200 users in 2020 and 1000 users in 2021 (1st semester: January- June). It was mainly used by young people with no work experience (older than 15). It is available at Career guidance centres of ANOFM in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca. - Casper - an electronic platform for persons with special needs allows the assessment of work potential of people with disabilities. - ANOFM platform contains 70 descriptions of occupations, videos, a section with questions and answers, links: cariera.anofm.md

8.2. PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION

The establishment of a viable career guidance system in Republic of Moldova should become a priority of the public policy and reflect the economic, political, social, cultural, educational and labour-market contexts as well as the existing professional and organisational structures.

Recommendations for each of the areas of analysis of this report, namely coordination and cooperation, funding, access, use of technology and quality assurance are made based on the literature and policy analysis and the outcomes of interviews with key stakeholders.

1. Coordination and cooperation

- **Policy framework**

General

- Highlighting the role of career development support in national reforms and initiatives in employment, training, education, social inclusion, youth areas;
- Developing a policy framework in which national career development support system is seen at the heart of the lifelong learning system;
- Implementing regulations to improve the public procurement system by reducing the number of procedures and using time efficiently when implementing career guidance funded projects;
- Undertaking skills anticipation exercises such as skills forecasts and cooperating with employers to obtain skills and vacancy information and big data analysis;
- Adjusting legislation to better support cooperation between school psychologists, teachers, family and community;
- Preparing a legislative act on internal training of employees describing the procedure of certification, based on which the companies can offer qualification certificates for employees.

Employment sector

- Improving legislation/preparing regulations to allow ANOFM to employ specialists in psychology for the positions of career guidance counsellors;
- Developing legislation and creating conditions to increase the number of career guidance centres of ANOFM (employment sector), apart from the existing three centres in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca.

General education

- Preparing and implementing regulations to clarify the differences and to avoid the overlaps between the lessons of “Personal development” and the lessons of “Tutoring/ advisory teaching” taught at lower and upper secondary levels;
- Implementing regulations to increase the number of hours/ week taught at the school subject “Personal development” at all education levels; the subject should be taught only by specialists/ trained teachers;
- Improving the connection of schools with the world of work by inviting employers at activities in schools and organising events and visits of the students and teachers at local companies.

VET

- Preparing and implementing regulations to introduce “Personal development” as a compulsory school subject in VET schools/ institutions;
- Establishing a system of career guidance in VET schools to inform the students from the start and not only in the final years about the importance of VET qualifications and motivate them to continue their studies in VET institutions/ dual education system;

- Improving the connection of VET schools/ institutions with the world of work by collaborating with employers for workplace visits, job shadowing and mentoring.

- **Key civil society stakeholders**

- Increasing dialogue among key civil society stakeholders in career guidance;

- Valorising the potential of NGOs, such as CEDA and Keystone to build capacity of the authorities at national, regional and local level by implementing projects in the field of career guidance;

- Technical assistance provided by NGOs (e.g. CEDA, Keystone) to central and local public authorities with the aim to develop a career guidance system.

- **Promoting coordination, cooperation and good governance**

- Implementing coordination measures between different responsible institutions with the aim to match the labour market supply and demand;

- Avoiding fragmentation of career guidance services by improving the cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, developing common strategies and measures to approach career development as a cross-thematic issue;

- Establishing strong organisations, unions and voluntary organisations that advocate access to career guidance;

- Establishing and developing a national lifelong guidance policy forum;

- Developing stronger partnerships: e.g. between similar university career guidance centres;

- Involving the local community (companies, institutions) in career guidance activities at school;

- Better collaboration at local level involving district/ municipal education directorates, local/district services of psychopedagogical assistance, territorial subdivisions of the National Agency for Employment, schools, companies etc.

- Improving local coordination and cooperation of public authorities to decide on: budget allocation, training of staff, priorities of economic activity/ sectors, training of future employees;

- Improving the support offered by other NGOs working directly with persons with disabilities and facilitating their employment (but they are located in Chisinau and they do not have a common working methodology);

- Developing intersectoral collaboration between ANOFM education, institutions and employers;

- Project involving a participatory approach to the development processes – engaging practitioners, researchers and decision-makers in the same development processes;

-

- Engagement of social partners in career development activities, e.g. LMI production, work experience promotion, support to associates

2. Funding

- Creation of dedicated budgets and resource pooling for career development;

- Developing national programmes aimed at financing TVET, LLL and learning in enterprises to integrate career development;

- Allocating adequate financial resources for career guidance services/ activities/ tools in schools, career guidance centres, companies etc.;
- Providing financial incentives to the development of career guidance activities by individuals and organizations, e.g. voucher schemes and incentives to the development of career development activities in HR practices and community contexts;
- Providing transparent information on funding allocated for career guidance services, not only information from different projects.

3. Access

- **Accessibility of services and tailoring of support**

- Designing and implementing systemic and comprehensive interventions of career guidance in schools not isolated activities at the end of an education cycle;
- Involvement of youth in career guidance activities at school/ youth centres/ centres of excellence/ NGOs to prevent and reduce the likelihood of young people becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) and to help them make better-informed career choices;
- Introducing extracurricular activities on career guidance in school program at all education levels in addition to the school curricula of Personal development, 1 hour/ week, compulsory at primary, middle and high school;
- Introducing “Personal development “as a compulsory school subject in VET educational institutions;
- Embedding career guidance in the university curricula as a compulsory subject to prepare the university graduates for the labour market in addition to the mentoring work and networking, with selective skills development;
- Raising awareness on career guidance by better promotion and marketing of career guidance services and activities in different settings (schools, universities, youth centres, workplaces, trade unions, NGOs, professional bodies, local community settings);
- Offering career support for employees in companies by HR specialists, professional mentors/ coaches by involving PES and cooperating with CoCI;
- Implementing outreach programs by PES to support the reintegration into the labour market of vulnerable groups facing misalignment, demotivation, depression, dropout and support them to overcome these barriers.

- **Persons with disabilities**

- Implementing coherent measures to provide career guidance for persons with disabilities by involving the specialists from MoHLSP, PES, CRAP/ SLAP and NGOS;
- Assuring accessibility of infrastructure and technical equipments for persons with disabilities;
- Overcoming the situation generated by the Covid-19 pandemic due to the lack of ICT equipment and the lack of skills of students with disabilities to use the communication platforms;
- Adapting the infrastructure of career guidance centres in higher education for persons with disabilities;
- Assuring the accessibility of information by identifying online solutions for persons with disabilities;
- Designing and offering career guidance information in audio and Braille format for students with hearing, sight disability, etc.;
- Reducing the stereotypes of teachers and parents regarding the needs of persons with disabilities: e.g. they do not need to work.

- **Targeted measures for vulnerable individuals in employment, such as low qualified**

- Implementing measures targeted to support vulnerable groups including: low qualified, geographically isolated, long term unemployed, inactive, older workers, women, inmates, persons with disabilities by enhancing career development support in upskilling/adult learning;
- Offering information about employment opportunities for people from rural environments, people without ICT skills;
- Delivering information by using Career Information Systems (CIS) and Labour market Information (LMI) in print, computer-based or online for beneficiaries of career guidance services;
- Offering information about employment rights and entitlements for employees.

- **Development of infrastructures and access to digital equipment**

- Digitalisation of career guidance system, including the development of digital materials, increased ICT access for clients and practitioners;
- Ensuring the availability of digital equipment in career guidance centres by partnerships between different organisations, sharing of older equipment, state subsidising the cost.

- **Development of multi-channelled distance services**

- Creating opportunities for multi-channelled delivery with possibility of individual tailoring in which the clients choose the access mode either for convenience or necessity reasons, being face-to-face, by telephone and online.

- **Accessibility of services and tailoring of support**

- Focusing on career guidance interventions for students at age 15/16 when they finish the lower secondary school and make educational and career decisions, e.g. involving the STUDENTS IN VISITS AT A WORKPLACE OR IN ATTENDING A JOB FAIR BY THE AGE OF 15/16;
- Improving the educational outcomes of higher education graduates in terms of skills and practical experience in order to avoid them to work in semi-skilled occupations;
- Improving the transition of graduates to the world of work;
- Offering support and career guidance for recognition of competences acquired by youth and adults in non-formal and informal contexts (e.g. crafts, family businesses, etc.);
- Implementing a readiness based approach that reflects the local context, especially for adults and link it also to the assessment of skills needs;
- Implementing a curriculum for teachers and a training support on career guidance for persons with disabilities, elaborated by Keystone; the curriculum is and it is in the process of accreditation;
- Implementing a curriculum elaborated by Keystone on work mediation for persons with disabilities;
- Developing school text books, tools and resources for the lessons of Personal development at primary, lower and upper secondary education.

4. Technology

- Delivering practitioner training in use of ICT in career guidance services by involving universities, responsible ministries, NGOs;

- Developing web-based interactive systems in career guidance (e.g. to offer information on occupations and learning opportunities, combined with assessments of personal skills and attitudes or to creating personal portfolios detailing skills, qualifications, experiences and aspirations);
- Using apps in career guidance to deliver local employment and training-opportunity information;
- Using big data in career guidance for analysing 'real-time' educational or labour-market information from online platforms with the aim of supporting individuals in making career and training decisions by involving specialists from universities, responsible ministries, NGOs;
- Using more digital tools, platforms and opportunities of distance communication integrated in career guidance services.

5. Quality assurance

- **Standards**

- Elaborating ethical standards and quality assurance criteria for all career guidance services by creating and involving the associations of practitioners/ national lifelong guidance forum by taking as a basis the quality standards for providing career guidance services, developed by NEA/ ANOFM in 2021;
- Developing standards for career information, staff competences and service delivery;
- Developing working methodologies for providing all types of career guidance services;
- Promotion and successful management of career guidance services and programs.

- **Staffing**

- Supporting the professionalization of career guidance specialists from employment and education sector by providing them with initial and continuous training;
- Introducing postgraduate Master degrees in career development by involving the universities who possess know-how (e.g. State University Moldova) to lead the process;- Establishing a national association of practitioners in career guidance;
- Improving the preparation of career guidance specialists to deal with specific topics: labour market information, occupations;
- Delivering training for teachers and school psychologists to teach "Personal development" in primary schools, middle schools, high schools and VET institutions;
- Developing educational communities for career guidance practitioners to share news, experiences, updated information;
- Digitalisation of services and training of practitioners on the use of ICT in career guidance;
- Delivering training for staff working on career guidance with persons with disabilities (teachers, psychologists, providers of services);
- Implementing measures to motivate the staff of ANOFM to stay on the job and to avoid the fluctuation of staff;
- Capacity building of ANOFM staff to offer career guidance and work mediation;
- Develop the capacity of ANOFM to work with persons with disabilities (they had 48 specialists to work with vulnerable persons but after the reorganization of ANOFM the number of staff was reduced).

- **Quality of data and information**

- Preparing Career Information Systems (CIS) (in print, computer-based or online) containing relevant information about specific occupations, including descriptions of pay, conditions, training, qualifications and experience required;
 - Creating Labour Market Information (LMI) systems containing information about the state of the labour market and/or professions and jobs and recording changes taking place within the labour market, employment, jobs and professions;
 - Involving the social partners, especially employers in creating skills databasis;
 - Undertaking national skills forecasts with the aim to offer projections of the future trends in employment by sector of economic activity and occupational group.
- **Monitoring, evaluation and policy feedback**
 - Monitoring services regularly, including the number of users, the number and type of career guidance interventions, etc.
 - Preparing statistics on the number of persons with disabilities who benefited from career guidance;
 - Carrying out needs analysis and mapping of existing career guidance services by considering cultural specifics of the country;
 - Undertaking research on modalities of monitoring and qualitative and quantitative evaluation of career guidance services and using the results to create and implement a system of monitoring and evaluation of career guidance services.

Recommendations provided in the tables below considered the **development of critical capacities at three levels: institutional, organizational and individual level.**

Table no. 2

Institutional level	Proposals
Hard capacities	
Laws, policies, strategies at national/regional/local level clarifying roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving the cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, developing common strategies and measures to approach career development as a cross-thematic issue; - Developing a national lifelong guidance strategy; - Developing legislation and creating conditions to increase the number of career guidance centres of ANOFM (employment sector), apart from the existing three centres in: Cahul, Chisinau and Soroca; - Implementing regulations to increase the number of hours/week taught at the school subject “Personal development” at all education levels; - Implementing regulations to state that the subject “Personal

	<p>development” is taught only by specialists/ trained teachers;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing and implementing regulations to introduce “Personal development” as a compulsory school subject in VET schools/ institutions; - Establishing a system of career guidance in VET schools.
Coordination and collaboration (public-public, public-private, across policy areas and sectors, central-regional-local)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving cross-sectoral and multi-professional cooperation between different stakeholders (education, employment, youth sectors, companies, social partners, NGOs); - Establishing and developing a national lifelong guidance policy forum, including representatives of the ministries of education and employment, employers, trade unions, national associations concerned with education, training, employment, social inclusion (e.g. associations of guidance practitioners, training institutions for practitioners, guidance parents, students, adult education providers, national consumers, persons with disabilities, seniors, Roma, etc.); - Valorising the potential of NGOs, such as CEDA and Keystone to build capacity of the authorities at national, regional and local level by implementing projects in the field of career guidance; - Technical assistance provided by NGOs (e.g. CEDA, Keystone) to central and local public authorities with the aim to develop a career guidance system; - Connecting schools with volunteers from the world of work using innovative match-making technology.
Quality assurance frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaborating quality assurance criteria for all career guidance services; - Defining a competence framework for career professionals
Monitoring and evaluation systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing and implementing a system of monitoring and evaluation of career guidance services; - Providing evidence of effectiveness and impact of guidance services for different target groups: students, NEETS, immigrants, low-skilled, people returning from family leave, aged workers, entrepreneurs and guidance at workplace
Professionalization standards for organisations and practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaborating ethical standards for all career guidance services; - Elaborating instruments for professional evaluation of the activity of career practitioners based on quantitative and qualitative indicators; - Developing competence standards for the training of career practitioners;

	- Adapting and implementing methodologies from abroad with the support of international partners
Core capacities	
A culture for public-public and public-private cooperation;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuing to valorise the potential of NGOs, such as CEDA and Keystone to build capacity of the authorities at national, regional and local level; - Establishing public-private partnerships between organisations active in career guidance
National research programmes in the field of career development	<p>Developing national research programmes on topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>EXPLORING LONG-TERM BENEFICIAL ADULT EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES ASSOCIATED WITH SCHOOL-MANAGED STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH EMPLOYERS/PEOPLE IN WORK;</i> - <i>EXPLORING</i> models of practice from primary and secondary schools

Table no. 3

Organizational level	Proposals
Hard capacities	
Clear organisational mandate	- Elaborating mandated requirements for career guidance to be offered in various settings (schools, universities, youth centres, companies etc.) together with accountability requirements and financial support.
Adequate human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivering continuous training for teachers/ psychologists, psycho-pedagogues to teach the school subject “Personal development”; - Delivering continuous training for staff working in ANOFM territorial structures.
Financial resources	- Providing/ identifying funding for continuous training of teachers and career practitioners on career development topics
Tools, methodologies, infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using more digital tools, platforms and opportunities of distance communication integrated in career guidance services; - Ensuring the availability of digital equipment in career guidance centres
Adequate service offer in line with existing needs	- Carrying out needs analysis and mapping of existing career guidance services
Quality LMI	- Preparing quality Labour market Information (LMI) in print,

	computer-based or online for beneficiaries of career guidance services
Core capacities	
A change management culture	- Introducing changes in the culture of organisations by underlining the role of career guidance

Table no. 4

Individual level	Proposals
Hard capacities	
Qualified and skilled practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementing induction and supervision programmes for career practitioners; - Delivering training on ICT skills for career practitioners; - Establishing a national association of career practitioners; - Implementing measures to retain effective career practitioners in the system; - Practitioners' peer-learning and sharing examples of good practice in career guidance.
Access to professional development opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involving career practitioners in international programs; - Organizing national and international events for career practitioners
Core capacities	
Career adaptability of practitioners	- Supporting career practitioners to adapt to changes when coping with their career roles, and maintain their ability to balance their career roles.



APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERVIEWS

Table no. 5

No.	Name	Position	Organisation and web address	Email
1.	Mrs. Natalia Cojocaru	Program manager	Keystone Moldova https://www.keystonemoldova.md/en/	Ncojocaru@khs.org
2.	Mrs. Sofia Shuleansky	Director	Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance (CEDA) https://ceda.md/en/	sshuleansky@ceda.md
3.	Mrs. Liliana Postan	University lecturer at the Department of Pedagogy and Methodology of Primay Education	Tiraspol State University https://ust.md/en/university-subdivisions/faculties/faculty-of-pedagogy/	cercetareim@gmail.com
4.	Mr. Silviu Gîncu	Head of VET Department	Ministry of Education, Culture and Research (MoECR) https://mecc.gov.md/ro	silviu.gincu@mecc.gov.md
5.	Mrs. Cristina Arapan	Chief of the Directorate for the Implementation of Employment Policy	National Agency for Employment (NEA) https://www.anofm.md/	cristina.arapan@anofm.md
6.	Mrs. Tatiana Cristafovici	Principal specialist at the Directorate for the implementation of employment policy	National Agency for Employment (NEA) https://www.anofm.md/	TATIANA.CRISTAFOVICI@ANOFM.MD
7.	Mrs. Aida Cotruta	Manager	Centre for career guidance and relation with the labour market, State University from Moldova https://usm.md/?page_id=268&lang=en	aidacotruta.usm@gmail.com
8.	Mr. Alexandru Ciobanu	Principal	Vocational School no. 7, Chisinau, Moldova, https://sp7.md/	sp7chisinau@gmail.com, ciobanua@mail.ru
9.	Mrs. Polina Fisticanu	Chief of the department of Socio-economic protection	The National Trade Union Confederation of Moldova (NTUCM) http://sindicat.md/about-ntucm/	polina.fisticanu@cnsm.md
10.	Mrs. Lidia Sclifos	Centre for Entrepreneurial Education and Business Assistance	Manager of the "Reconceptualisation of career guidance and counselling" (REVOCC) project	lsclifos@ceda.md

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11.	Mrs. Inesa Iordății	Chief of Business Training Centre	Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CoCI)	inesa.iordatii@chamber.md
12.	Mrs. Cristina Deniță-Boțolin	Dual Education Unit	Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CoCI) https://chamber.md/en/	cristina.denita@chamber.md
13.	Mr. Vadim Bubulici	Vocational training Manager	Draexlmaier, Bălți, Moldova https://md.draexlmaier.com/	Bubulici.Vadim@draexlmaier.de
14.	Mr. Vladislav Caminschi	Executive director	National Confederation of Employers (NCE)	caminschi@cnpm.md cnpm@cnpm.md



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