

**Activity Program of the Government of the Republic of Moldova
„European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare”
2009-2013**

Chisinau, 2009

Introduction

The Government's Activity Program „European Integration: Freedom, Democracy, Welfare” lays out a framework for Moldovan governing policies for 2009-2013.

The Program has been drafted in a difficult time for the Republic of Moldova, which faces a deep democracy crisis.

The democratic institutions are not functional and are unable to ensure plenary respect for the fundamental human rights and freedoms:

- the independence of the judiciary has been stifled, thus undermining the confidence of the society in the judiciary;
- the human rights situation is precarious, while corruption has infected all areas of the society;
- the „Vertical of Power” has suppressed the local autonomy and disregarded the rights of local collectivities;
- a large part of the mass media were used as propaganda tools, thus limiting to a minimum the space for public debate and the impact capacity of the free media;
- the civil society has not been regarded as a dialogue and collaboration partner in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and assessment of public policies.

The socioeconomic situation in Moldova is dramatic. The effects of the world economic crisis are sensed ever fully by the population and businesses. In 2009, they are manifested by:

A contraction of economic activities and a decrease in the domestic production in all the branches of the national economy, particularly in industry (-25%), transports (-63%), and construction (-34%);

- A drop in investment activities, particularly in fixed capital investments – by 38%, which undermines efforts to recover the economy;
- A decline in foreign trade, especially exports – by 22%;
- A decrease in the Gross Domestic Product by 7.8% in the first 6 months of 2009;
- An increase in the number of sacked workers, a surge in the official unemployment rate and, in effect, premises for a deepening poverty;
- A decrease in National Public Budget revenues and a raise of the budget deficit to an alarming level of over 10% of the GDP;
- Failure to observe budgetary commitments to businesses, withdrawal of their current assets and thus, occurrence of chain financial blockages;
- Reduction of business profitability, a surge in wage arrears and in arrears in payments to the national public budget;
- Withdrawal of crediting means from the banking system to finance the budgetary deficit at the expense of crediting the real sector of the economy.

The Government guarantees the real separation of powers, pledges to create efficient mechanisms to guarantee independence of the judiciary, respect for human rights and freedom of mass media. The Government views the civil society organizations as partners in the Europeanization of the country.

The Government commits to ensure a real separation of powers, to establish efficient mechanisms to guarantee the independence of justice and observance of human rights, and freedom of the media. The Government regards the civil society organizations as partners in the process of Europeanization of the country. In this program, the Government commits to a coherent set of public policies and measures adjusted and correlated with crediting-monetary and

fiscal-budgetary policies to ensure an end of the current economic decline, return to economic growth, establish an attractive and predictable investment climate, an positive development of the economy and the labor market, and increase in the living standards and quality of life of its citizens.

All in all, the Government Activity Program has the purpose to provide welfare in the Republic of Moldova, consolidate the state of law, and achieve European integration of the country.

Priorities of the Government of the Republic of Moldova

European Integration

The Government of the Republic of Moldova regards European integration as a fundamental priority of the domestic and foreign policies of the Republic of Moldova. The full achievement of this objective will enable the country to embark on a stability and prosperity course, governed by democratic values and respect for fundamental human rights. At the same time, the most efficient way to achieve political, economic and social modernization of the country is to responsibly implement the commitments deriving from the European course, as European integration means, above all, internal transformation of the country. The Government of the Republic of Moldova pledges to make consistent efforts to implement the reforms needed by the Moldovan society and requested by the international community in the areas linked to freedom of the mass media, independence of the judiciary, liberalization of the economy, which are vital for the real promotion of the European integration of the country. The coherent implementation of policies designed to Europeanize the country socially, politically and economically and an association agreement with the European Union will enable the Government to make the Republic of Moldova, in a reasonable time, eligible for EU accession.

Reintegration of the Country

The reintegration of the country is a fundamental objective of the Republic of Moldova. The Government will intensify the efforts to identify a viable and sustainable solution to the Transnistrian conflict, pursuing the principle of sovereignty and territorial integration of the Republic of Moldova, and create conditions for the real reintegration of the Transnistrian region into the economic, political, social and informational space of the Republic of Moldova. The Europeanization of the country will play an important role in this regard. The Government stands for negotiations on the settlement of the conflict in the 5+2 format, based on the principles accepted by the Moldovan key political forces, and for the withdrawal of the armed forces of the Russian Federation from the territory of the Republic of Moldova and substitution of the current peace-keeping forces with a civil international mission. The Government will promote far-reaching social and infrastructure projects in the Eastern rayons (districts) of the Republic of Moldova.

Rule of Law

The Government will ensure application of the separation principle and independence of the legislative, executive and judicial powers; uniform and correct enforcement of the legislation and equality of all citizens under the law. The Government understands that an independent judiciary represents the key element of a state of law and democratic governance, and is the tool which should provide the support needed to implement other reforms. Only a well-organized legal system is the key to attracting investments, fighting corruption, combating criminality and protecting human rights. For these very reasons, the Government will pay special attention to building a state of law, implicitly by implementing structural and procedural reforms of the judiciary.

Overcoming Economic and Financial Crises and Ensuring Inclusive Economic Growth

The Government will proceed to changing the country development paradigm from a consumption-driven economy to an economy based on investments, innovations and competitiveness, so that the national economy becomes able to create viable and well-paid jobs,

while the whole society in general and each citizen in particular could enjoy the effects of a sound economic, organic and balanced growth.

The economic and financial policies will stimulate, encourage and back the efforts of businesses to produce both for the local market and export. This objective can be achieved only with a competitive economy, modern infrastructure, highly educated and qualified human resources, a friendly business environment in a stable economy, competent, responsible and honest governance.

An immediate priority of the Government is to draft, in consultation with the business environment, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders, a complex economic recovery program focused on: increasing confidence in the capacity of the state institutions to manage the crisis; focusing the measures meant to stimulate the economy on activities with multiplying effect; coping with the financial bottleneck, by honoring the financial obligations to businesses; implementing a prudent fiscal policy and reforms meant to reduce inefficient public expenditures. The anti-crisis program aims at finding solutions in the short term and creating pre-requisites for economic growth in the long term.

The Government will ensure an efficient and stable cooperation with the international financial institutions and other development partners of the Republic of Moldova in strengthening the framework of resources needed to implement the economic recovery and long-term inclusive development program.

Decentralization of Power and Ensuring Local Autonomy

The Government will put an end to the „vertical of power” and will apply the European principles and norms in the field of public administration. The Republic of Moldova will come closer to the European Union only if, led by the supremacy of civil rights and freedoms, it substitutes the structural hierarchy with decentralized, transparent and flexible entities. The Government will make sure the central administration reform is correlated with the local administration reform and with the devolution of powers, including those linked with public finances, to local public authorities.

Building a State of Law

a. Protection of Human Rights

Government Objectives:

1. Develop the legal and institutional framework in the area of human rights.
2. Resolve the situation in the fields linked to human rights, which are seen as problematic (rooting out torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment or treatment; individual freedom and security; free access to justice and the right to a fair trial; right to freedom of expression and access to information, etc.).
3. Strengthen human rights protection mechanisms.

Priority Actions:

- Reform the state law enforcement bodies in order to eradicate the practices of torture and maltreatment, the unjustified, arbitrary and disproportionate suppression measures;
- Modernize the torture and maltreatment investigation mechanism;
- Transfer the preliminary detention institutions from the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to the Ministry of Justice;
- Reform the continuous training system for the staff of the state law enforcement bodies;
- Reform the mechanism of registration and re-registration of non-profit organizations so as to ensure respect for the freedom of association;
- Add the study of the fundamental human rights to the pre-university and university curricula;
- Introduce an integrated electronic system for keeping record of citizens' complaints;
- Improve the normative and institutional framework on religious cults in order to prevent religion-based discrimination.

b. Reform of the Judiciary

Government Objectives:

1. Create a judiciary appropriate for a state with European aspirations.
2. Reform the judiciary and prosecution bodies to have an independent, impartial, functional and transparent judicial system.
3. Increase the level of integrity and professionalism of the judges.
4. Provide a stable and efficient financing system for the judiciary.

Priority Actions:

Reform of the judiciary self-management and organization

- Restructure the Superior Council of Magistrates by creating a double chamber council, made of the chamber of prosecutors and the chamber of judges;
- Revise the role of the Superior Council of Magistrates in appointing judges;
- Formulate clear and transparent criteria for selecting, appointing and promoting judges;
- Revise the procedure of selecting and appointing the chairmen and deputy chairmen of courts and modify their competences;
- Disband economic courts with a transfer of competences to common law courts with their specialization by boards/sections, as the case may be;
- Reformulate the criteria for selecting the judges of the Supreme Court of Justice, by revising the age limit and tenure.

Reform of the justice management and execution system

- Reform the financing system for the judiciary and correlate the budget of the judicial system with the GDP;
- Provide adequate funds to the judicial system in order to ensure its independence and access of any citizen to justice;
- Reshape the management system of financial resources and resources of other kinds in the judicial and prosecution systems;
- Optimize the proportion between the number of judges in first-level courts and that in higher instances to ensure an efficient functioning of the judiciary system and observance of reasonable terms in case examination;
- Introduce the position of secretary general in courts, who will be the authorizing officer of the court in charge of resource management and who will not deal directly with doing justice;
- Revise the procedure for creating the panel of judges to ensure their stability;
- Introduce a transparent and efficient mechanism for aleatory distribution of cases to courts;
- Develop a system for making public the decisions and lawsuits;
- Modify the status, duties of the court clerk, who will be assigned with procedural tasks and who will be in charge of the most part of the justice management system;
- Raise the awareness of magistrates and prosecutors of their moral obligation not to commit deeds of corruption and adopt obviously illegal decisions, by introducing a legal and transparent sanctioning system;
- Reorganize the system for court decision enforcement by introducing the system of private judicial executors and adopting a new enforcement code, containing as few procedures as possible;
- Improve the legal framework and promote ways of alternative dispute resolution (arbitration, mediation).

Reform of the prosecution system

- Clearly define the competences and role of the Prosecutor's Office, to demilitarize it and grant the status of magistrates to prosecutors;
- Modify the procedure for appointing and dismissing the Prosecutor General, by excluding the possibility of appointing on political grounds;
- Introduce a transparent and effective mechanism for appointing and promoting prosecutors.

Reform of procedural legislation

- Revise the criminal, civil and administrative appeal procedures;
- Apply legal mechanisms that would guarantee the stability of court rulings;
- Restrict the application of review procedures to guarantee the security of legal relations;
- Reshape the bar system and the system of legal assistance guaranteed by the state.

Reform of state law enforcement bodies

- Reorganize the Ministry of Internal Affairs by decentralizing its structure;
- Reorganize the Security and Intelligence Service and declassify its archives in compliance with the law;
- Reorganize the Center for Fighting Economic Crimes and Corruption.

c. Strengthening the National Integrity System and Fighting Corruption

Government Objectives:

1. Develop an efficient institutional system for preventing and fighting corruption in the public system.
2. Optimize the public procurement system.
3. Develop the mechanism of cooperation between the public authorities, civil society and development partners to reduce corruption.

Priority Actions:

- Amend the legislative, normative and institutional framework for the purpose of reducing its corruptibility;
- Reduce the bureaucratic burden on the business environment in order to leave less room for corruption;
- Streamline the system of income and interests declaration for the holders of public positions and its monitoring;
- Increase personal responsibility of the holders of public positions by introducing performance contracts and make dignitaries assume responsibility for the serious cases of corruption in their state institutions occurred until the day of their resignation;
- Build the capacity of the Court of Accounts as a supreme audit institution for using public finances; apply the mechanism for making use of the results it provides;
- Prohibit the classification of contracts signed between the state institutions and companies where the state has the biggest share;
- Create a professional, incorruptible and motivated body of civil servants to carry out good-quality activities;
- Amend the Law on Prosecutor's Office, thus obliging the prosecutors to start investigating the alleged cases of lawbreaking, including corruption, protectionism, conflict of interests, covered by mass media (providing facts, statements), or to refer them to other relevant bodies;
- Ensure transparency in public procurement, competition and prevent unfair competition in the area of public procurement;
- Ensure transparency in the process of denationalizing public property and in the use of financial resources obtained, as well as in the investigation of previous transactions in this area.

d. Media Liberalization and Freedom of Expression

Government Objectives:

1. Bring the legal framework regulating mass media activity in line with the European norms and standards.
2. Ensure editorial freedom and increase the professionalism of the National Public Broadcasting Institution (NPBI), Teleradio-Moldova Company. Eliminate political interference in the work of the Supervisory Board of NPBI Teleradio-Moldova.
3. Ensure the autonomy of the Coordinating Council of Audio-visual (CCA) in the achievement of its mission as a representative and guarantor of public interest.
4. Create the conditions necessary for mass media development.
5. Integrate the Republic of Moldova into the European informational space.

Priority Actions:

- De-ideologize the public audiovisual by depoliticizing the Coordinating Council of Audiovisual and not allow appointment of the members of the Supervisory Board of NPBI “Teleradio-Moldova” on political grounds;
- Make the publishing of announcements about competitions for frequencies in the national press a compulsory practice and set reasonable timeframes for preparing applications for the competitions for broadcast licenses, thus ensuring transparency in the issuance and withdrawal of frequencies;
- Draft a Concept paper on the development of the media market in the Republic of Moldova;
- Draft a Concept paper on the audiovisual development in the Republic of Moldova and the legislation on public audiovisual services in line with the international practices and recommendations;
- Draft the Law on Freedom of Expression laying down the mechanisms for not allowing political interference in the work of the public broadcasting services, and abrogate the Press Law;
- Develop a preferential fiscal framework for mass media;
- Liberalize the domestic media market;
- Tighten the sanctions for restricting access to information and for failing to provide information of public interest within the timeframes set in the legislation.

e. Strengthening Civil Society and Cooperation with the Public Sector**Government Objectives:**

1. Develop a legal framework adequate for the development of the civil society as a mediator of the citizens’ interests and partner of public authorities in the public policy process.
2. Create the necessary conditions to ensure financial sustainability of non-governmental organizations.
3. Develop the institutional framework for an efficient collaboration between public authorities and civil society.

Priority Actions:

- Bring the legal framework regulating the work of non-profit organizations in line with the international norms;
- Complement the legal framework regulating cooperation between public authorities and civil society;
- Institutionalize the participation of civil society organizations in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of public policies, including by creating clear and efficient mechanisms of consultation and participation in decision-making;
- Reform the legal framework on philanthropy and sponsorship for the purpose of ensuring sustainability of non-governmental organizations and increasing their independence;
- Develop a legal framework needed for „outsourcing” public services and community activities to NGOs;
- Develop an efficient mechanism for implementing the National Strategy for Civil Society Development;
- Develop the concept of professional associations to promote the interests of different social groups by involving them in the drafting and monitoring of public policies and making them cooperate with the relevant public authorities.

Economic and Financial Policies

a. Business Environment

Government Objectives:

1. Remove administrative constraints on the business environments.
2. De-monopolize the domestic market and remove anti-competitive practices in commercial transactions.
3. Improve credibility between the public and private sectors and guarantee the right to own private properties and investments.
4. Ensure conditions for financing the business environment at a reasonable cost; stimulate the development of capital market.

Priority Actions:

- Speed up the regulatory reform, improving transparency in the business authorization system by reducing the number of areas subject to authorization/licensing, the import-export restrictions, and de-bureaucratizing the administrative authorization procedures, particularly in the area of constructions;
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of the National Agency for Competition Protection for the purpose of increasing its efficiency and public responsibility;
- Ensure a fair competition on the markets with monopolist companies or companies in a dominant position on the market and encourage new ones to enter these markets;
- Reduce the state share in highly competitive sectors, particularly by denationalizing the stake held by the state in such sectors;
- Conduct the regulatory impact assessment (RIA) of each draft normative act that refers to the business activity and ensure the functioning of a real platform for public-private dialogue in the RIA process;
- Intensify the sector dialogue with business associations for the purpose of encouraging the concerted drafting of sector strategies, with clear objectives correlated to the real development plans of the companies in the field;
- Optimize the inspection and control system; restrict the abusive and unjustified intervention of the state in the operation of enterprises;
- Implement the „one-stop shop” for statistical and financial reporting, provision of authorizations and services at the level of central and local public administration, as well as for carrying out import-export operations;
- Gradually introduce the declarative principle of starting and developing a business based on own responsibility;
- Stimulate the conversion of savings into investment means by diversifying and developing the financial instruments and institutions on the capital market, including the mortgage system;
- Develop the partnership between the state authorities and international financial organizations in order to attract credit lines and secure investments.

b. Competitiveness Policies and SME Development

Government Objectives:

1. Promote the technological development of enterprises.
2. Increase the flexibility of the labor force market and ensure qualified human resources for the economy.

3. Develop the support infrastructure for the operation of enterprises.
4. Ensure conditions for the development of a knowledge-driven economy.

Priority Actions:

- Liberalize the tax framework for importing technological equipment;
- Simplify the industrial certification procedures for the imported industrial equipment meeting the international and European standards on industrial security;
- Provide governmental grants for research and practical innovations in order to achieve a streamlined use of energy and natural resources;
- Revise the state policy of supporting technological research so that all the innovational entities have free access to the budgetary resources provided for research, technological development and innovations;
- Encourage integration of enterprises into international technological networks and chains and introduce modern practices of industrial management;
- Support enterprises in their participation in European quality-related programs and initiatives and in their efforts to meet the ISO quality standards;
- Develop a sound dialogue between the government, education institutions and enterprises in order to tailor the curriculum to the new needs and standards on the labor market to the requirements of the knowledge-driven economy;
- Create innovation parks alongside universities for running applicative research programs outsourced by enterprises;
- Encourage Moldovan students and teachers to connect to the international academic circuit and facilitate the participation of managers in European and international training and experience exchange programs;
- Support the creation of a network of industrial parks under the auspices of the local public administration, particularly in the areas related adjacent to the country border in order to encourage the integration of enterprises in international technological chains;
- Simplify and reduce the cost of connecting the industrial entities to the public networks and utilities;
- Facilitate the coordination of development strategies and horizontal and vertical cooperation at the level of industrial branches, including cooperation between big enterprises and SMEs;
- Capitalize the Credit Guarantee Fund for SMEs;
- Facilitate SME access to public services delivered currently by the local public administration (for example, cleaning up of the territory, housing maintenance, public lighting, etc.)

c. Budgetary-Fiscal Policy and Public Financial Management

Government Objectives:

1. Stabilize the national public budget, create a predictable budgetary-fiscal framework and keep the budget deficit at a reasonable level.
2. Promote a fiscal-budgetary policy focused on sustainable/inclusive economic growth by reducing public consumption and increasing productive public investments.
3. Ensure the equitable distribution of public finances, reduce the fiscal burden and simplify the tax system.

Priority Actions:

- Resume negotiations with the International Monetary Fund, other international financial institutions and donor countries for the purpose of receiving external assistance under

preferential conditions to finance the budget deficit and implement the economic recovery program;

- Correlate the budgetary-fiscal, monetary-credit, currency, investment and commercial policies for a sound development of the economic-financial system; reduce the share of the National Public Budget in the GDP to 35%;
- Improve the budget income and expenditures forecasting system in order to stop amending the annual budget countless times throughout the year;
- Not to allow bottlenecks in making payments from the national public budget in order to increase the financial sustainability of the budget and keep the taxpayers' money in their circular flow;
- Improve the VAT and excise management mechanisms; speed up the procedures linked to their reimbursement from the state budget;
- Introduce program budgeting and increase flexibility of budgetary expenditures in the context of the medium-term expenditure framework (3 years) at central and local levels;
- Ensure the stability, predictability and transparency of the fiscal policy and procedures applied on taxpayers by adopting and enforcing the Fiscal Procedural Code and the Customs Procedural Code;
- Assess and reduce on a regular basis the quasi-fiscal incomes to the budget, deriving from the money charged for services delivered by public institutions; implement the third stage of the regulatory reform („Guillotine-3”);
- Not to allow the exemption of bad taxpayers of compulsory payments to the national public budget, as this undermines the free competition and disadvantages the honest individuals and businesses, which honor their fiscal obligations according to the legislation in force;
- Stop collecting payments from businesses for specialized funds and use transparent subvention mechanisms;
- Implement the tax declaration system by using information technologies (e-returns), so that at least 60% of tax returns to be lodged online;
- Increase the capacity for fiscal management and tax collection, so that the share of tax revenues in the total budget revenue grows continuously;
- Consider introducing the single rate income tax for individuals and businesses;
- Achieve efficiency, transparency and accountability in the use of public financial resources, including in public procurement;
- Direct the resources received from the denationalization of public property to investments in social and economic infrastructure;
- Formulate clear principles on the redistribution of state budget incomes to territorial-administrative units, leaving no room for political partisanship.

d. Agri-Industrial Policies

Government Objectives:

1. Ensure the food safety of the country, increase export of agricultural and food products and stabilize the trade balance by improving competitiveness in agriculture.
2. Bring the national system of technical regulations and standards in line with the EU food safety standards.
3. Achieve a streamlined subvention system in agriculture and implement multi-annual programs.
4. Put the agricultural assets into use and ensure the access of investors to these assets.
5. Increase the human capital in agriculture by stimulating the institutions specialized in agriculture.

6. Stop the degradation of land resources by upgrading and extending the land improvement system.

Priority Actions:

- Promote economic growth in the area of agriculture and food industry based on the product diversity/differentiation principle;
- Promote stable market and trade policies to create a favorable environment for the development of businesses and stimulate investments along the agri-food chain;
- Stimulate the modernization of agriculture for the purpose of providing technical equipment to agricultural entities, extending efficient irrigation systems, optimizing the structure of agricultural establishments and extending the range of crops cultivated across the country, creating units to supply modern and quality inputs to agriculture and collect agricultural products;
- Produce high-quality products, including by promoting the ecological ones;
- Encourage the development of zootechny and increase its share in the total of agricultural products;
- Actively promote the exports of high value-added agricultural products by applying marketing techniques aimed at connecting international buyers with the domestic producers;
- Remove any barriers to the export of agricultural products and reduce the complexity of export procedures for agricultural and agri-food products;
- Support the process of improving the post harvest infrastructure, the marketing infrastructure, and the implementation of a market information system;
- Bring the technical regulations in the agri-food area in line with the European standards by formulating and approving the sanitary and phyto-sanitary norms;
- Stimulate the implementation of modern quality management systems (ISO 9001, HACCP, GlobalGAP);
- Provide support in creating the system of testing laboratories to evaluate the compliance of food products directed to the domestic market and export to the EU, as well as bring them in line with the European standards and norms;
- Provide increased support to agriculture and more ways of supporting the farmers by facilitating the access of farmers to subvention systems designed for products that help improve the trade balance in agriculture;
- Encourage farmers to apply for investment projects implemented with European funds, by providing the funds required for co-financing from the state budget;
- Extend the access to irrigation services;
- Achieve a streamlined subvention mechanism to insure the farmers against the risks to which they are exposed, particularly for cultivating high value-added products;
- Liberalize and develop the land market;
- Encourage the professional development of farmers through a better operation of the current network of institutions specialized in agriculture, access of farmers to training throughout the country and creation of the national training center for ongoing training of consultants and farmers and rural entrepreneurs;
- Intensify the cooperation with relevant organizations and development partners, including at product councils;
- Provide support and stimulate soil conservation, including by creating a computerized information system for soil quality;
- Stimulate the scientific – innovational activity for the purpose of creating new varieties and hybrids of plants and highly productive animals, and applying advanced farming and raw material processing technologies ;

- Upgrade the training and professional development of staff with higher and middle education in the agri-industrial sector, and bring the contents and quality of studies in line with the market requirements.

e. Infrastructure and Transport

Government Objectives:

1. Liberalize and develop the transport and communication markets.
2. Rehabilitate and upgrade the transport infrastructure, particularly the road infrastructure, and connect to the pan-European networks.
3. Improve road safety and reduce the number of road accidents.
4. Ensure energy security and achieve energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy.
5. Create an integrated and efficient communication infrastructure, meant to increase the competitiveness of the national economy and ensure the access of all the categories of users to information society services.

Priority Actions:

Transport policies and infrastructure

- Introduce procedures for consulting the transportation companies when drafting transport policies, as well as for setting priorities related to road construction and reconstruction;
- Ensure the continuity of medium-term capital investments and contribute to building the financial capacity of local authorities, particularly with the aim of maintaining the local road networks;
- Build the capacity of the Road Fund and increase its share in the GDP to at least 1.2% with the help of loans and grants provided by foreign governments, donors and international programs, among other things;
- Stimulate and channel the investments to the construction of modern international transport corridors, and the IX pan-European corridor in particular;
- Encourage public-private partnerships in the rehabilitation, modernization, construction and maintenance of the transport infrastructure, including by enabling international companies, which have the necessary funds for quality infrastructure projects, to carry out public works, provided that the Government has the possibility to make subsequent payments for using that infrastructure;
- Improve road safety by introducing modern technologies for road maintenance and reconstruction and apply modern road traffic management systems, alongside other measures, to ensure the observance of traffic rules;
- Rehabilitate and electrify the railroads and, as a priority, adjust the Chisinau-Ungheni section to the European track gauge;
- Liberalize and develop competition on the market of railway transport services;
- Create a free market of flight services, de-monopolize the service sphere and attract low-cost airlines;
- Stimulate and provide support to airlines so as to take advantage of the opportunities of turning the international airports into regional hubs.

Ensuring energy security and efficiency

- Diversification of primary energy supply sources:
 - As far as natural gas is concerned, to ensure the creation of reserve stocks and alternative interconnections with the neighboring countries based on feasibility studies;

- As far as electricity is concerned, to stimulate investments in the rehabilitation and upgrading of interconnection lines with Ukraine; to extend the interconnection capacity with Romania;
- Build own capacity for generating electricity by stimulating investments in the modernization of the existent ones and in green-field projects;
- Provide support in the identification of alternative methods of producing energy by implementing investment projects related to renewable energy.
- Encourage the modernization of the energy system to achieve the efficient use of energy resources and reduce the energy intensity of the economy, particularly in agriculture;
- Promote energy conservation, particularly by developing and providing funds for programs of heating rehabilitation of buildings;
- Integrate the Republic of Moldova in the EU energy market, by correlating policies, harmonizing the regulations in energy, joining the European relevant organizations and attracting European investments in this area;
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of the regulatory authority for energy; ensure transparency and good governance in this area.

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

- Integrate the ICT policies in national development strategies; revise the National Strategy “Electronic Moldova” drawing on the international best practices and provide support in the implementation of e-services in different sectors and areas, particularly in central and local public administration (e-governance: at least 85% of employees in public administration will be using computers/ 80% of them will be using Internet), in education and public health sectors in order to meet the citizens’ needs and improve life quality;
- Develop a coherent and predictable institutional and legal framework (including the creation of the e-governance center) for the development of the Information Society, authentication and authorization mechanisms and creation of conditions for attracting investments in this area;
- Develop and/or acquire standards, norms and methodologies, which would ensure the unitary development, implementation and operation of computerized public services and their interoperability;
- Provide support in the development of the telecommunication infrastructure and broadband electronic communication infrastructure in particular (reaching the level of 20% of the broadband access), which would enable each citizen to enjoy the benefits of the information society by accessing unconditionally the infrastructure (45% of households will own a computer/ 55% of the population will have access to Internet), including the local loop, and encourage alternative providers; ensure national coverage, particularly in the rural areas (90%-rate of mobile telephony penetration);
- Implement the operation mechanisms of the Universal Service;
- Provide support in the development of the ICT infrastructure in public education at all levels by applying new teaching and learning methods (e-training, e-education) appropriate for a knowledge-driven society; provide possibilities for interactive communication with teachers and students all over the world; facilitate and speed up the access to new information; join actively the European Framework Program FP7;
- Encourage conservation of cultural patrimony, by digitalizing it and ensuring the access of citizens to it;
- Create a platform for the introduction of electronic voting and encourage participative democracy forms by means of electronic systems, regardless of the location of the citizen at the moment of elections;
- Increase the independence and institutional capacity of the ICT regulatory authority.

Accountable and Efficient Administration

a. Central Public Administration Reform

Government Objectives:

1. Restructure the central public administration in order to create an efficient, operational and sustainable institutional framework, governed by the rule of law, and deliver quality public services to the population.
2. Ensure transparency, equity, effectiveness and efficiency in decision making.
3. Upgrade public services by reducing bureaucracy, improving the quality of services with most positive impact possible on citizens.
4. Develop a meritocratic civil service, with civil servants recruited, evaluated and promoted based on professional qualifications and performances achieved in the fulfillment of job-related tasks.
5. Deconcentrate public services and reinstate the Government territorial office.

Priority Actions:

Institutional restructuring

- Restructure the ministries, agencies and other institutions subordinated to the Government in order to disband the public authorities with low efficiency, optimize the functional operation and reduce administrative costs;
- Go on with the internal reorganization of central administrative authorities, having made clear the objectives of the authority and evaluated the resources available, according to the institutional development plan;
- Regulate the organization and administrative procedures according to the European good decentralization and deconcentration practices, by adopting new legislative and normative acts on central public administration and administrative procedures.
- Institutionalize the Government representative office in regions and regulate the appointment, work and dismissal procedures, tasks and duties, as well as the relations with the autonomous local public authorities;
- Regulate in legislation the relations, rights and obligations of local public authorities and deconcentrated services.

Reform of the decision-making process

- Ensure transparency in decision-making, by posting all the drafts of decisions on the websites of central administrative authorities, alongside other actions;
- Institutionalize a platform for dialogue with and consultation of the civil society in the drafting, implementation, monitoring and assessment of public policies, under a diversified mechanism of tools (conferences, roundtables, seminars, meetings, information posted on the websites of the central administrative authorities, analyses and joint polls);
- Ensure the access of citizens to public information; reduce bureaucracy and administrative costs by applying electronic governance tools, particularly by developing the websites of central and local administrative authorities and computerizing the public services;
- Develop and implement circulation systems for documents and normative acts, particularly document registration, distribution and electronic monitoring systems, and improve the petition management process;
- Gradually introduce the ex-ante impact analysis of public policies before their approval and build the civil servants' capacity for conducting analyses of this kind;

- Improve the instruments for collecting and disseminating data on the main indicators for monitoring and strategic evaluation of national policies, including by making public the statistics and databases of statistical researches;
- Achieve a better consistency in decision-making and correlation of public policies with budgetary resources by introducing program budgeting;
- Build the policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation capacity in relevant ministries and promote the understanding of the strategic planning process among civil society organizations.

Modernization of public services

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of the public services delivered by the central administrative authorities; identify public services with the strongest impact on the socially vulnerable categories of the population and businesses;
- Draft and implement a program for the complex reform of public services;
- Introduce minimal quality standards for the public services and the system of quality monitoring/evaluation indicators, as well as the tools for submitting complaints about the low quality of public policies delivered;
- Draft the tariff-setting methodology for public services in a transparent and equitable manner, as well as introduce independent regulators (specialized institutions) in charge of calculating these tariffs;
- Develop the State Registry of Public Services, by making use of the experience of advanced democracies.

Civil service reform

- Separate the civil service positions from the administrative ones, according to the law on the public function and status of civil servant;
- Improve the quality of public administration by unequivocally applying the competition-based employment of civil servants, by institutionalizing a recruitment, evaluation and merit and performance based promotion system, as well as by sanctioning the civil servants for poor performances and misbehavior;
- Adopt the new civil service job classification and grading grid, as well as reshape the civil servants' remuneration system according to the new grid in order to motivate and remunerate civil servants depending on their performances and responsibility;
- Provide regular and quality training to civil servants, managers in public administration, as well as to technical and administrative staff. Reorganize the Academy of Public Administration and focus it on the professional development of civil servants and other staff in central and local public administration;
- Liberalize the civil servants' professional development services by making it possible for the business and non-governmental sector to deliver such services;
- Improve the human resources policy by building the capacity of human resources units and implement the electronic registry of civil service positions at national and local levels.

b. Decentralization and Local Autonomy

Government Objectives:

1. Develop a legal, normative and institutional framework in line with the decentralization and local self-government principles.
2. Devolve powers to local public authorities and build their administrative capacity.
3. Strengthen the financial and patrimonial autonomy of local public authorities.

Priority Actions:

- Create sector and multidisciplinary working groups with the involvement of the academic potential and NGOs for the purpose of bringing the legal framework in line with the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, Law on administrative decentralization and Law on local public administration. Draft and pass a legislative package on the status of Chisinau municipality;
- Draft and approve sector decentralization strategies;
- Pass the Law on financial guarantees and Law on the insolvency of public authorities for the purpose of diversifying the financial instruments and increasing the responsibility of LPA;
- Formulate credible and equitable criteria (size of the managed territory, population, amount of local financial resources, average income per capita) for determining the population in a commune, needed for its management;
- Provide to local public authorities the right to develop their personnel structure and organigram within the financial limits set and prevent the central authorities from interfering in this process;
- Bind legally the central and regional authorities to consult the opinion of local collectivities (their associations) when adopting normative acts that touch upon their rights and interests;
- Finalize the separation of central administration functions from those of rayonal administration, by applying mechanisms of decentralization and deconcentration of public services;
- Revise the role and duties of control bodies in their relations with LPA for the purpose of restraining their interference in the work of LPA;
- Reshape the local public finances system in line with the constitutional principles and European standards of local self-government;
- Remove the political factor in the allocation of budget resources for investments to local governments;
- Improve the contents of legislative and normative acts on public loans at local level;
- Revise the sector legal framework and correlate it with the Civil Code and Law on LPA as far as it concerns the local public administration system and municipal property;
- Devolve the decision making powers linked with the management of local patrimony to the LPA;
- Draft methodological norms on record-keeping of local patrimony, by developing a single and generalized registry of municipal property;
- Develop an integrated informational system of central and local public administration;
- Achieve delimitation of political appointees from civil servants competitively recruited at local/municipal/rayonal levels;
- Secure the stability of civil service positions and make use of the individual experience; guarantee the exercise of rights and obligations by the employees in local public authorities, applying the principles of professionalism and performances;
- Devolve the powers linked to fighting unauthorized constructions to the LPA and legally provide for effective tools in this field;
- Ensure the right of local authorities to association.

c. Balanced Local and Regional Development

Government Objectives:

1. Encourage initiative at local/regional level and promote the cooperation culture between the central and local public authorities.

2. Reduce regional development imbalances by implementing investment projects and stimulate growth in deprived regions.
3. Achieve balanced regional development by ensuring consistency between sector national policies and local development ones.

Priority Actions:

- Create regional development agencies and secure the functionality of all the institutions in the development regions North, Center, South;
- Adopt and implement the National Regional Development Strategy and regional development strategies for the North, Center and South regions, for a better territorial planning and channeling of investments;
- Institutionalize the mechanism of providing funds for regional development from the state budget by means of the National Regional Development Fund;
- Implement, starting with 2011, the regional development policy in the TAU Gagauzia and Transnistria in line with the Law on regional development;
- Ensure efficient and economical use of funds channeled to regional projects in compliance with the decisions made by the entitled authorities and with accounting standards, including by publishing the centralized accounting reports;
- Facilitate and support the local public authorities in submitting applications for financial resources provided under European programs of trans-border cooperation and other external funds, particularly through wide and prompt dissemination of information about such programs, training of potential applicants and consultation of implementers on problematic issues;
- Encourage public-private partnerships in the implementation of regional projects;
- Facilitate cooperation between the local, rayonal and central authorities, as well as between the National Regional Development Council, rayonal councils and regional development agencies, for the purpose of integrating the local and regional development plans and projects with the sector and national ones;
- Provide support to local public authorities in the development of realistic community/rayon development policies and build the capacity of different actors at local level for implementing these policies, including by organizing experience exchange with other localities and drafting national methodological instruments;
- Introduce by means of normative acts the notion of Deprived Zone, the criteria for determining and mapping the Deprived Zones;
- Root out regional disparities, by creating conditions for the development of non-farming businesses in rural areas (agri-tourism, services, handicraft, small industries and other), among other measures.
- Attract investments for the development of infrastructure of public utilities (water and sewage systems, sanitation, natural gas supply and other).

Reintegration of the Country

Government Objectives:

1. Identify a viable and sustainable solution to the Transnistrian conflict based on the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and unitary character of the Moldovan state.
2. Create conditions for the real integration of the Transnistrian region in the economic, political, social and cultural areas of the Republic of Moldova.

Priority Actions:

- Relaunch negotiations on the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict in the 5+2 format;
- Increase the EU and USA roles in finding a solution to the Transnistrian conflict;
- Implement mutual confidence measures. Intensify interhuman relations; involve the inhabitants of the region in the transformation and Europeanization of the Republic of Moldova;
- Create conditions to remove all the existent barriers to the free movement of individuals, goods and services between the two banks of Dniestre river, particularly by canceling the so-called “registration tax” and the 100% tax for the goods produced on the right bank and removing the control posts set up illegally in the security area;
- Improve conditions for carrying out external economic activity for businesses from the Transnistrian region, ensuring a joint Moldovan and Ukrainian control at the crossing points on the Transnistrian segment of the state border;
- Develop a dialogue with the administration, business environment and civil society from Transnistria for the purpose of creating adequate conditions for the reintegration of the country;
- Back the joint projects, which contribute to the improvement of the welfare of the population on both sides of Dniestre river and to the creation of a favorable environment for the 5+2 negotiations;
- Revive the efforts towards the withdrawal of foreign troops from the territory of the Republic of Moldova in compliance with the principles of the international law, provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, Law on basic provisions of the statute of the Eastern rayons (Transnistria) and decisions of the OSCE Summit held in Istanbul;
- Substitute the current peacekeeping forces with an international mission of civil observers.

Foreign Policy

Government Objectives:

1. Implement a consistent, dynamic and coherent foreign policy for the purpose of promoting the national interests of the Republic of Moldova and creating a better image of the country.
2. Intensify the dialogue with the EU and its member states and promote political, economic, social and legal reforms needed to get closer to the European standards and become eligible for EU membership.
3. Improve bilateral and multilateral relationships, promote good neighbor relations and develop strategic partnerships with the EU, Romania, Ukraine, Russian Federation and the USA.
4. Promote an active economic diplomacy for the purpose of overcoming the consequences of the economic and financial crises and create conditions for a sustainable economic growth of the country.
5. Protect the rights and interests of the citizens of the Republic of Moldova abroad.
6. Reshape the institutional framework needed to effectively promote the European integration, foreign policy and economic diplomacy.
7. Improve national security according to the fundamental interests of the country.

Priority Actions:

1. European Integration

- Actively involve the whole society, all the political forces and relevant foreign actors in the process in order to turn the Republic of Moldova into an European state with real prospects of joining the EU;
- Acquire and promote European values and standards in all the areas – political, economic, social and legal – by implementing the Copenhagen criteria and commitments made at the Council of Europe;
- Bring the national legislation in line with the EU acquis;
- Improve the legal and institutional framework needed to promote European integration at the level of Government in general and each ministry in particular, so that the European integration process becomes a major priority for each governmental entity;
- Develop bilateral relations with the EU member states;
- Capitalize fully on the opportunities provided by the “Eastern Partnership”;
- Sign the Association Agreement with the EU;
- Promote real economic integration with the EU, particularly by signing the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement;
- Launch the dialogue with the EU, for the purpose of signing a new Roadmap on visa liberalization, so as to obtain the liberalization of visa regime for the citizens of the Republic of Moldova;
- Implement actions consistent with the Mobility Partnership between the EU and the Republic of Moldova;
- Ensure the energy security of the country by means of the EU tools and join the European energy market;
- Consider connecting to the southern corridor for transiting energy resources from the Caspian Basin to Europe, as well as other options for ensuring the energy security of the Republic of Moldova;

- Connect the Republic of Moldova to the European transport networks; liberalize air transport;
- Increase EU's role in the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict;
- Implement strategies for communication (internal and external) on the European integration process with the society and external factors from the EU, as well as with other international actors. Open information centers across the country to provide correct and comprehensive information about the European integration process to the population.

2. Bilateral and Multilateral Relations

Develop good neighbor relations and build strategic partnerships in the European spirit with **Romania** and **Ukraine**.

- As far as **Romania** is concerned, to capitalize on the existent potential of the Moldovan-Romanian bilateral relations, by reviving and institutionalizing the political dialogue and the commercial-economic and cultural-humanitarian cooperation mechanisms;
- Lead negotiations applying modern principles and sign agreements regulating the interstate relations, including those linked to border regime, which would be fully in line with the interests of both states;
- Sign as soon as possible the Convention on small-scale cross border traffic at the Moldovan-Romanian border;
- Apply mechanisms for consulting on European integration process, making use of the experience of Romania in this area, particularly that of bringing the legislation in line with the EU acquis.
- Deepen the bilateral political dialogue with **Ukraine** and relaunch the permanent cooperation and consultation mechanisms in areas of common interest: intensification of economic cooperation, regulation of Transnistrian conflict, European integration, energy security, regional and international cooperation;
- Intensify cooperation with Ukraine within the 5+2 negotiations, Moldova-Ukraine bilateral mechanisms and Moldova-Ukraine-EU trilateral mechanisms for securing the border and for a sustainable political regulation of the Transnistrian conflict;
- Tackle as quickly as possible the difficulties linked to the demarcation of the border;
- Regulate the property relations based on mutual interest.
- Promote the relations with the **Russian Federation** in line with the principles stipulated in the Basic Political Treaty signed in 2001 by the Republic of Moldova and Russia as an agreement to start a strategic partnership;
- Develop and deepen the bilateral relations in line with the principles of sovereign equality, mutual respect and favorable mutual cooperation;
- Develop the bilateral political dialogue and economic relations based on pragmatism, predictability and respect for mutual interests;
- Develop a close cooperation with the Russian Federation, both bilaterally and within the commonly agreed 5+2 negotiation mechanisms, for the purpose of identifying a comprehensive and viable solution to the Transnistrian conflict, in line with the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova;
- Initiate a strategic partnership with **the USA**, based on the following principles:
 - standing for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova;
 - support in the consolidation of the Republic of Moldova as an independent, sovereign and democratic state, able to contribute to the security and stability at regional and European levels;
 - prompt involvement of the Republic of Moldova in the Millennium Challenge Corporation Program;
 - standing for the European aspirations of the Republic of Moldova;

- development of economic cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and the USA by negotiating a bilateral deepened Agreement on investments;
- extending the access of our country to the Generalized System of Preferences and preparing the ground for the negotiation of a new Free Trade Agreement.

Intensification of cooperation with China, Japan and other countries will be another important trend in the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova. In this respect, the Government will pursue the extension of commercial relations, creation of conditions for attracting investments and technical assistance.

- Promote the European integration agenda of the Republic of Moldova as a priority aim of **regional** and **international cooperation**.
- Develop the political dialogue and cooperation within the Community of Independent States, so as to take advantage of the opportunities provided by this entity for the free movement of individuals, development of trade, those linked with the social sphere and cultural-humanitarian exchanges;
- Intensify political, security and trade cooperation with/within the organizations from Central and South-Eastern Europe, to which the Republic of Moldova is committed;
- Regard the international organizations, particularly the UN, OSCE and Council of Europe, as an important platform for the promotion of our strategic objectives and namely: European integration, country democratization and modernization, regaining territorial integrity, consolidation of sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Moldova;
- Conduct a cost/benefit analysis of the participation of the Republic of Moldova in the international organizations in order to increase the efficiency of our efforts. The Republic of Moldova will be promoted as candidate-country to key and management positions in international organizations.

3. Economic Diplomacy

- Make full use of the Autonomous Trade Preferences provided by the European Union until a new Free Trade Agreement is signed with the EU;
- Disseminate information beyond the country borders about the reforms in economy and those linked to the establishment of a state of law for the purpose of creating an attractive business environment and attracting foreign direct investments; facilitate exports.

4. Reform of the institutional framework needed to effectively promote European integration, foreign policy and economic diplomacy, protection of citizens' rights and interests abroad.

- Introduce an efficient inter-ministerial coordination mechanism by building the capacity of the State Chancellery for monitoring the implementation of the European integration reform internally, assigning the Ministry of External Affairs with the coordination of activities in this area externally and operation of European integration units in all the government structures;
- Improve the work of the MFA through a consistent application of the principles of professionalism, transparency and meritocracy;
- Build the institutional capacity of the MFA and governmental institutions involved in the European integration process, with the support of the European Commission and EU member states. Special attention will be paid to training a group of negotiators on the new Agreement between the EU and the Republic of Moldova;
- Involve the civil society in the drafting of strategies and programmatic documents linked to foreign policy, European integration, national security, necessary communication strategies, etc.;

- Defend the interests of the Moldovan citizens living abroad and ensure a quality consular service. Professional development of consular staff in line with the EU practices;
- Simplify the consular activities and procedures, particularly those linked to the provision of information to citizens abroad. Make the state services closer to the citizens; consider new ways of organizing consular services (the number of services delivered at distance will increase, etc.);
- Intensify bilateral dialogues with the states with large communities of Moldovan citizens and sign agreements for the social protection of the latter;
- Make it possible for the Moldovans to vote in places other than Embassies and consular offices of the Republic of Moldova, by opening additional polling stations, implementing the distance voting and electronic voting systems;
- Improve and extend the institute of the honorary consulate.

National Security and Defense

- The Government will reorganize the relevant institutions to extend the security and democracy environment. The immediate reorganization of these institutions in line with the European norms is an imperative action.
- Reform the security sector in line with international standards. This sector does not confine only to the law enforcement and defense bodies, but includes inherently the area of human rights, freedom of mass media, independence of the judiciary, as well as the existence of a modern national army, controlled in a democratic manner, which is able to respond to the risks and threats posed to our country's security.
- **At global and regional levels** – identify solutions to the global and regional challenges that could pose a real threat to the safety of the Republic of Moldova. At global level, the issues linked to the proliferation of weapons, drugs, separatism and terrorism, illegal migration, instability and energy security will be found on the agenda of our dialogue with external partners;
- Counteract the risks and threats the Republic of Moldova is facing at regional level. The failure to settle the Transnistrian conflict, the presence of military and paramilitary troops beyond constitutional control in this area threatens the national security;
- Turn the Republic of Moldova from a source of insecurity into a contributor to regional and international security through active participation in the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and international stability and peace keeping operations;
- Increase the energy security of the Republic of Moldova, by considering connecting our country to the Southern corridor of transiting energy resources from the Caspian Basin to Europe, as well as other options to ensure the energy security of the Republic of Moldova;
- Hold consultations with the neighboring countries and the EU and take subsequent measures in order to learn and apply the best practices linked to energy and information security.
- **Immediate Government objectives** in this regard:
 - Build the institutional analysis and planning capacity in the field of national security;
 - Conduct the strategic analysis of the country security and defense sector;
 - Approve and bring the strategies and policies meant to reorganize the national security system and the political and legal framework in this field in line with new challenges and tasks and commitments made;
 - Create the necessary capacity and unconditionally implement the whole arsenal of instruments for civil and democratic control in the national security area, including by extending the possibilities for mass media and civil society participation;
 - Implement the Individual Partnership Action Plan– IPAP;
 - Modernize the police, security and intelligence service and other structures in this field with the assistance of external partners;
 - Gradually professionalize the National Army, so that it can cope with the new threats to the country's security at regional and global levels;
 - Apply the modern budget planning mechanisms in the field of national security and defense in line with the European standards and the available financial resources.

Education and Research

a. Pre-university Education

Government Objectives:

1. Improve the legislative framework in this field to meet the requirements of a modern society.
2. Improve the quality of education by gradual transition from the academic principle to the preparation of students for life.
3. Extend the preschool education (preschool institutions) in each locality across the country and make sure all children have access to preschool education.
4. Promote inclusive education, so that no child, including the disabled children, is left out of the education process.
5. Encourage extra-curricular education.

Priority Actions:

- Draft a new Education Code, which would regulate the status of teaching staff and other related issues;
- Reshape the school concept, gradually improving school infrastructure;
- Modify the teaching staff remuneration scheme, by introducing, among other things, the merit and performance criteria;
- Optimize and streamline public expenditures in education;
- Modernize the educational management mechanisms;
- Revise and simplify the school curriculum and bring it in line with the international standards and with the child-friendly school concept;
- Promote the Inclusive Education Concept to make sure the disabled children, children from socially vulnerable families and those of national minorities have access to quality education;
- Reorganize the residential institution system by implementing children deinstitutionalization policies and programs;
- Restructure the initial and continuous training system for the teaching staff in line with the requirements of child-focused education; extend the professional development components, which deal with communication with parents and community; implement new evaluation and teaching methods.

b. Higher Education and Research

Government Objectives:

1. Make the national legislation meet the requirements of a modern society.
2. Ensure quality teaching and research in higher education institutions through adequate financing, promotion of structural and content reforms, without trespassing upon the university autonomy.
3. Focus academic policies in the scientific and innovation field on building the capacity and competitiveness of the research and innovation system through technological transfer and in line with the concept of knowledge-driven economy.

Priority Actions:

- Provide adequate financing to the higher education system;
- Bring the teaching workload in higher education institutions in line with the European norms;

- Optimize the higher education system to achieve streamlined education units, efficient use of budget resources and integration in the European academic network;
- Focus on and encourage research in higher education institutions in line with the social and economic development priorities and link the research with sustainable economic development at republican and regional levels;
- Revise the remuneration scheme for teaching and research staff, including by improving the merit and performance based system;
- Improve the legal and institutional framework for the research and innovation process to make it more efficient and to bring it in line with the European norms;
- Intensify research in the higher education institutions by developing cooperation and partnerships in the field of fundamental and applicative research with the European and international institutions and funds;
- Encourage public-private partnerships to implement research projects and activities in order to develop the national capacity for producing and using advanced technologies; raise the awareness of businesses on the importance of science and innovation;
- Strengthen the 5 university poles (Chisinau, Balti, Cahul, Comrat and Tiraspol) by promoting teaching and research excellence according to the country's socio-economic needs.

Health of Population

Government Objectives:

1. Make sure all citizens of the Republic of Moldova have access to quality health care and pharmaceutical services.
2. Improve the quality and security of health care services by modernizing the technical-material equipment of health care institutions, developing infrastructure, providing necessary equipment and medicines.
3. Improve the training, motivation and employment mechanism for health care and pharmaceutical staff.
4. Increase the citizens' responsibility for own health by propagating and cultivating a healthy lifestyle and consistent struggle against smoking and alcoholism.
5. Wide participation of all the partners in the process of improving the health of population.
6. Modernize and improve the use of financial resources allocated to the health care sector.
7. Create conditions for businesses to deliver health care services.

Priority Actions:

- To carry out multi-sector activities to influence the determinants of health:
 - Reduce discrepancies between rural and urban areas by channeling investments to rural areas;
 - Intensify the community efforts in promoting healthy lifestyles;
 - Reduce the impact of harmful factors and risks of the occupational, habitual and social environment by increasing the role of mass media in motivating the population to lead healthy lifestyles;
 - Motivate the population to increase physical activity, by widening the public green spaces in municipalities and small towns.
- Upgraded primary health care for family and community:
 - Achieve institutional autonomy of primary health care. For this reason, the National Health Insurance Company (NHIC) will contract offices of physicians.
 - Intensify efforts to insure the uninsured individuals, as well as improve the selection of target groups for state-financed insurance coverage;
 - Increase the role of local public authorities in the final stage of decentralization, by implementing financial contribution mechanisms at local level in order to modernize the territorial health care institutions;
 - Create an independent control system for the quality of health care services;
 - Develop public-private partnerships in order to increase the role of the private medical sector in the financing and delivery of services.
- Hospital health care reorganized and adequate for population needs:
 - Draft and implement a general plan for hospital health care development in the Republic of Moldova;
 - Optimize the hospital network by consolidating and restructuring hospitals in line with the above mentioned plan in order to turn the hospital health care network with the available resources into a flexible and quality network of providers, meeting the population needs;
 - Upgrade the existent technical and material equipment of hospitals at rayonal, municipal and republican levels;

- Provide the hospitals with advanced technical health care equipment, depending on their specialization and strategic importance to the country.
- Programs to reduce impact on health:
 - Promote universal iodization of salt and fortify the flour with iron and folic acid; implement public health programs recommended by the WHO to prevent deficiency of micronutrients in women and children;
 - Reduce risks, prevent and combat smoking, alcohol abuse and illicit consumption of drugs by implementing complex measures, including cross-sector ones;
 - Prevent and combat violence and injuries at home, workplace, in public;
 - Improve mental health by carrying out prevention activities and develop mental health services by community principles;
 - Improve the supervision and control of infectious diseases, by implementing the immunization program and other preventive measures, including preventive treatment, as well as early detection of infectious diseases, particularly the ones caused by new pathogens;
 - Reduce the burden of chronic diseases on population health, including the cardiovascular and oncology pathologies, by implementing prevention, assistance and treatment programs. Keep providing support to national public health programs;
 - Introduce the vice taxes on the sale of alcoholic and tobacco products in order to reduce the negative impact on health and use the accumulated resources for public health interventions;
 - Apply licensing of activities, certification of specialists and accreditation of health care institutions as universal methods of ensuring the diversification and quality of health care services delivered.
- Wide participation of all partners in health care:
 - Regard the non-governmental sector as an important partner in providing support to the socially vulnerable groups in the Republic of Moldova, health care and treatment services;
 - Involve the professional organizations and beneficiaries of health care services (including patients) in tackling related problems;
 - Develop an adequate legislative and normative framework, which would allow to develop and implement health care, home care and community social services, removing any barriers to receiving such services;
 - Adequately develop and coordinate different forms of organization of health and social care with a wide range of services focused on meeting the needs of patients and their families.

Social Policies

a. Social Assistance

Government Objectives:

1. Reduce poverty, inequality and inequity in the society.
2. Channel the social assistance programs to the socially vulnerable categories and individuals with low incomes.
3. Reduce and remove the drawbacks of the social protection system.
4. Ensure access of the population to quality social services.
5. Improve the life quality of families from vulnerable environments and meet the minimal quality standards when delivering all kinds of special services to individuals in need.

Priority Actions:

- Inform the population about the social services and their right to social assistance;
- Develop a needs' revision system in order to provide adequate services to beneficiaries and identify the appropriate time to remove the beneficiaries from the social assistance system;
- Improve the community and individual needs' assessment mechanism and apply the needs' prevention concept at community level;
- Provide efficient support to families with children, particularly those in need, with the gradual substitution of benefits with a family allocation system;
- Prevent institutionalization and ensure efficient deinstitutionalization, by developing family-type social services;
- Develop a financing mechanism for the social assistance system, which would channel the resources depending on needs, thus increasing the protection of persons in need;
- Improve the social services' management mechanism in order to have higher quality and efficiency of services provided;
- Gradually substitute the targeted compensation system with the social assistance system based on means testing and needs evaluation, with an increase of the guaranteed minimum monthly income of vulnerable families; ensure the increase of the global average income of vulnerable families to the level of the guaranteed minimum monthly income;
- Monitor the efficiency of the social assistance system by analyzing the impact of social assistance expenditures on the incomes of households and poverty rates;
- Develop a network of social assistants by implementing an efficient social assistants' recruitment, training, promotion and professional development mechanism;
- Create prerequisites for a fair and efficient channeling of social protection resources to disabled individuals;
- Develop the individualized home care service network;
- Gradual and consistent transition from social protection to social inclusion;
- Reorganize the disability grading system based on the evaluation of vitality and work capacity;
- Recover the work capacity of disabled individuals and make them independent from other persons by integrating them in the society;
- Develop public-private partnerships in the area of social assistance and child protection;
- Develop a sustainable partnership with the civil society by involving civil society organizations in the delivery of social services.

b. Social Insurance

Government Objectives:

1. Increase the level of social protection of insured individuals.
2. Ensure the financial sustainability of the public social insurance system.
3. Remove inequities in the public social insurance system and unjustified privileges for certain categories of retirees.
4. Ensure the necessary conditions for the development of additional pension systems.

Priority Actions:

- Unify the legislation on retirement and create unified conditions for providing pensions to all the categories of citizens;
- Identify the risks against which the individual can be insured and the insurance rate for each risk;
- Establish a direct link between the individual contributions and pensions paid for all the categories of citizens;
- Indexation of pensions depending on the evolution of prices and average salary in the economy, achieving gradual minimization of the gap between groups; increase the substitution rate and bring it closer to the European average;
- Avoid any expenditures that have nothing to do with the social insurance benefits;
- Create the necessary conditions for developing an additional pension system (private, professional, so as the individuals exposed to harmful working conditions receive pensions in advance or benefit from possibilities for increase);
- Build the institutional capacity for supervising and regulating private pension funds so as to increase the level of their certainty and credibility;
- Reconsider the contributions to the compulsory social insurance system of employers and employees;
- Facilitate the access of individuals covered by the national pension system to information about the contributions made by the individual and the estimated benefit corresponding to these contributions;
- Draft a strategy for the gradual implementation of the cumulative pension system.

c. Migration and Employment

Government Objectives:

1. Create new jobs on a regular basis and increase the mobility on the labor force market.
2. Develop a professional development system focused on the current needs of the labor market.
3. Provide support and defend the rights of Moldovans living abroad.
4. Reduce the unemployment rate and integrate the returned migrants in the labor market.

Priority Actions:

- Improve the strategic projections of the need in human resources by applying advanced analysis and projection models, computerizing the mediation system and ensuring an efficient and quick flow of information about the labor force market;
- Liberalize the labor relations, simplify employment and resignation procedures and diversify the legal forms of employment for the purpose of reducing the informal activities of businesses;
- Revise the competences and duties of mediation and control institutions on the labor market for the purpose of modernizing the methods and procedures applied;

- Strengthen social cohesion and inclusion by combating any form of discrimination on the labor market; reduce gender-based discrepancies and differences between regions as far as it concerns the employment of healthy and quality labor force;
- Create a unitary initial and ongoing professional training system, wherein the providers of public training would assume responsibility for the initial professional training, while the private training providers – for the continuous professional training, including the non-formal education:
 - To rationalize the training network by creating a limited number of regional training centers;
 - To decentralize the system and ensure managerial and financial autonomy of regional centers;
 - To increase flexibility of training by creating multidisciplinary training institutions and involve the private sector for internships;
 - To involve the social partners in the planning, provision and evaluation of professional development.
- Implement policies for regulating the migration flow by negotiating and signing bilateral agreements on the simplification of rules and procedures for legal employment in other countries applied on our citizens and inform the migrants and the potential migrants on how to defend their rights abroad;
- Effectively protect our citizens and ensure portability of their social rights by negotiating and signing agreements on the social protection of migrant workers with the main destination countries;
- Provide support to the returned migrants and help them reintegrate by providing counseling regarding employment opportunities and provide funds for programs regarding business startup.

d. Gender Policies

Government Objectives:

1. Promote active participation of women in the decision-making process in public administration and reduce discrimination of any kind.
2. Ensure the equality of chances in the social-economic area.

Priority Actions:

- Promote active participation of women in the decision-making process and in the government structures;
- Remove cultural and social stereotypes regarding the roles given to men and women in the society;
- Promote positive models that would reflect the roles of women and men in the society in line with the democratic and gender equality values;
- Remove the discriminatory conditions for women on the labor market, in the social-economic, cultural and political life;
- Bring the national legislation in line with the gender equality principles;
- Strengthen the institutional mechanism for promoting gender equality at central and local levels;
- Develop the domestic violence prevention and combating system; exchange data between the relevant authorities about the cases of domestic violence within a common information system; develop assistance and reintegration services for the victims of domestic violence;
- Protect the victims of domestic violence through the efficient execution of protection ordinances by the law enforcement bodies;

- Ensure the access of victims of domestic violence to assistance and rehabilitation services, by providing support in the development of specialized services at community level and setting new placement centers for the victims of domestic violence and assistance centers for aggressors in domestic violence.
- Develop the system of free-of-charge legal counseling to the victims of domestic violence.
- Build the capacity of specialists involved in the settlement of cases of domestic violence;
- Promote non-violent education and build the capacity of the school system for timely detection and prevention of cases of domestic violence.
- Hold the employers liable for disregarding the principle of the equality of chances.

Integration of National Minorities

Government Objectives:

1. Preserve and develop the cultural and linguistic patrimony of national minorities living on the territory of the Republic of Moldova.
2. Implement a coherent and multidimensional state policy in relation to national minorities.
3. Improve the legal framework for the purpose of integrating the national minorities in the social, administrative, cultural, political and economic life of the Republic of Moldova.

Priority Actions:

- Develop a legal framework focused on the protection and development of culture and languages of national minorities living on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, including promotion of teaching in the languages spoken by the national minorities in pre-university education institutions;
- Develop and implement a State Program to create necessary conditions for the study and use of the official language of the Republic of Moldova by national minorities, including by civil servants and local elected officials;
- Improve the existent legal framework on the relations between the registered ethno-cultural communities and state; widen the cooperation fields and joint activities; bring the existent practices in line with international and European norms;
- Provide support to social cohesion programs with the help of ethno-cultural institutions registered in the Republic of Moldova;
- Create conditions and opportunities for receiving education in native language and preserving the culture of national minorities;
- Develop and encourage the relations with the Moldovan Diaspora abroad.

Culture, Youth and Sports

a. Culture and Arts

Government Objectives:

1. Ensure wide access of citizens to the cultural life and National Cultural Patrimony.
2. Promote culture as the key to preserving and developing national identity.
3. Create a framework for the development and display of cultural diversity for the purpose of building an open and multicultural society.
4. Preserve and develop the National Cultural Patrimony; promote the values as integral components of the European and international cultural space.
5. Develop contemporary arts as a means of asserting national culture.

Priority Actions:

- Develop the legal framework on the protection, conservation and promotion of the value of cultural, historical and archaeological monuments and encourage the active involvement of individuals and businesses in the preservation and development of the National Cultural Patrimony;
- Draft a Strategy for developing culture and protecting the National Cultural Patrimony, which would contain a Program for reconstructing and promoting the value of cultural and historical monuments, providing support to cultural establishments and for infrastructure rehabilitation;
- Improve capacity for managing the National Cultural Patrimony through an adequate management;
- Preserve and use the cultural resources, including by ensuring a framework for the efficient collaboration between public institutions, religious organizations, NGOs and local government for the purpose of promoting, preserving, presenting and studying the cultural patrimony;
- Effectively encourage artists and their works by developing the contemporary arts by drafting and implementing the Law on art unions and the Statute of the artist.
- Provide adequate funds to develop culture and arts, including by identifying mechanisms of stimulating investments in this field;
- Connect the cultural phenomenon in the Republic of Moldova to the regional and international cultural circuits.

b. Youth Policies

Government Objectives:

1. Create conditions for the full use of the potential of youth in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the country.
2. Promote and develop social protection policies for youth and young families;
3. Create conditions for the social and economic integration of vulnerable and socially excluded youth.
4. Reduce the forced exodus and create conditions for the return of youth.

Priority Actions:

- Improve the legislative and institutional framework for promoting youth policies;
- Develop the network of youth assistance services linked with professional orientation, employment, business startup, development of economic abilities, social integration, etc.;
- Provide support in the development of Youth Center networks and local initiative groups for youth;

- Create mechanisms to facilitate the acquisition of housing by young specialists, including by means of the mortgage system;
- Develop protection and social integration mechanisms for the youth in need;
- Encourage provision of preferential credits to young people starting small businesses;
- Encourage social scholarship systems;
- Assist local governments in facilitating the access of youth to services;
- Provide a complex medical and psycho-social assistance in education institutions;
- Diversify youth-related services linked to information, leisure, healthy lifestyles, prevention of violence and abuse, ways to display aptitudes and talents, etc.;
- Encourage participation of youth and youth organizations in decision-making at all levels;
- Promote youth mobility and exchange.

c. Development of Physical Culture and Sports

Government Objectives:

1. Promote healthy lifestyles as a priority.
2. Rehabilitate the sports infrastructure.
3. Support performance sports.

Priority Actions:

- Improve and develop the legal framework and identify mechanisms for stimulating public-private partnerships in order to attract investments in the field;
- Draft and implement a national program for promoting healthy lifestyles and involve sports and education institutions, NGOs, public authorities and institutions, donors in this process;
- Organize different local and zonal sports competitions for different ages and social categories, including disabled individuals and sports veterans;
- Encourage private initiatives for the rehabilitation and extension of the network of sports clubs, centers, sports grounds, leisure facilities for population;
- Stimulate, including through public-private partnerships, the construction and/or modernization of sports facilities for the national teams;
- Promote national sports;
- Improve the mechanisms for encouraging performance sports and interaction with organizations specialized in this field;
- Provide support in psychological and physical rehabilitation of performance sportsmen after injuries;
- Identify increased social protection mechanisms for sports veterans;
- Support sports medicine and research in the field of physical culture and sports;

Environmental Protection

Government Objectives:

1. Develop an adequate framework for environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources.
2. Reduce the negative impact of businesses on environment, natural resources and health of population.
3. Increase protection against natural disasters.
4. Increase the level of citizens' ecological culture.

Priority Actions:

- Finalize the existent legal framework on environment in line with the EU requirements, directives and standards;
- Promote corporate responsibility in the business environment regarding the quality and protection of natural environment;
- Consolidate the institutional potential in the field of environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, to bring the waste management policy in line with the European standards;
- Improve the measures meant to prevent environmental pollution by raising the awareness of the population and incorporating the environmental protection requirements into the sector policies of the national economy and territorial policies;
- Apply measures for drainage and protection of water resources;
- Encourage conservation, perpetuation and protection of biodiversity;
- Extend and protect the state-protected natural areas, by making use of the successful European experience in managing natural resources;
- Achieve transparency and efficiency in the management of the National Ecological Fund;
- Implement the national program containing technical measures, evaluation of costs and possibilities of financing the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in line with the provisions of the Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and Kyoto Protocol (1997);
- Upgrade and streamline the national system for monitoring the status and evolution of hydro-meteorological conditions and environment quality;
- Extend the forest areas to 13% by 2013;
- Implement the green certificates system to reduce environmental pollution and encourage the production of renewable energy;
- Apply "environment-friendly technologies";
- Upgrade and optimize the National System for monitoring, forecasting and preventing the effects of natural disasters, by implementing technical assistance measures and technology transfers;
- Rehabilitate the flood prevention system;
- Extend international cooperation on environment in order to facilitate the technology transfer and acquire innovational technologies;
- Stimulate the applicative research of clean technologies and conduct national awareness-raising campaigns about ecology and sustainable development.