



# International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General  
17 September 2018  
English  
Original: Russian  
English, French, Russian and  
Spanish only

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## Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

### Concluding observations on the combined tenth and eleventh periodic reports of the Republic of Moldova

#### Addendum

#### Information received from the Republic of Moldova on follow-up to the concluding observations\*

[Date received: 24 July 2018]

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



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## Information

1. The Republic of Moldova submits herewith information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 19 and 23 of the concluding observations adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 8 May 2017 at its 2537th meeting following the consideration of the combined tenth and eleventh periodic reports of the Republic of Moldova on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

### I. Introduction

2. This information was prepared by the Bureau of Inter-Ethnic Relations in accordance with paragraph 31 of the concluding observations adopted by the Committee following its consideration of the combined tenth and eleventh periodic reports of the Republic of Moldova on the implementation of the Convention at the 2537th meeting, held on 8 May 2017, at the Committee's ninety-second session.

3. In accordance with the above-mentioned paragraph, the Committee requests the State party to provide information on its implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 19 and 23 of the concluding observations within one year of their adoption.<sup>1</sup>

4. As the national focal point for the preparation of periodic reports on the status of implementation of the Convention, the Bureau translated the Committee's concluding observations into the official language and sent them to the relevant ministries and other government bodies for information, consideration and action.

5. The Bureau worked in cooperation with the ministries and other specialized bodies of central public administration on a plan of action to promote and implement the Committee's concluding observations.

6. The concluding observations of 8 May 2017 and action plan to promote and implement them were posted on the Bureau's website ([www.gov.md](http://www.gov.md)).

7. A number of specific actions were taken during the 2017–2018 period to implement the concluding observations of 8 May 2017. Considerable progress in that respect has been made following the adoption of the concluding observations by the Committee.

8. The most effective actions taken in the period 2017–2018 are as follows.

(I)

9. The Plan of Action for the period 2017–2020 on the Implementation of the Strategy on Strengthening Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2017–2027 was adopted pursuant to Government Decision No. 1019 of 29 November 2017.

10. Four priority areas are identified in the Plan of Action based on the design of the Strategy on Strengthening Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2017–2027: participation in society; language as a means of integration (policies on the official language and minority languages); intercultural dialogue and sense of civic belonging to the Republic of Moldova; and the media.<sup>2</sup>

11. Especially worth noting is the specific objective (No. 3), “Prevent and eliminate discrimination, xenophobia, ethnic stereotypes, ethnic tensions and segregation”, included in chapter III, “Intercultural dialogue and sense of civic belonging to the Republic of Moldova”.

12. The achievement of the objectives contained in the Plan of Action is to be funded from resources set aside in the budgets of the relevant departments and other sources,

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<sup>1</sup> See sect. II of the present report.

<sup>2</sup> Approved in accordance with Government Decision No. 1464 of 30 December 2016.

including external funding, in accordance with the current law. Domestic funding thus totalled 2,570,795 lei and external funding 2,101,822 for the period 2017–2020.

(2)

13. On 1 March 2018, the Bureau organized a meeting of the Interdepartmental Working Group responsible for the implementation of the Plan of Action for the period 2017–2020 on the Implementation of the Strategy on Strengthening Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2017–2027. The meeting was attended by specialists in the ministries and other central public administration bodies, representatives from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Moldova and heads of Bureau-accredited ethnic cultural organizations.

14. The participants in the meeting discussed measures necessary for the full implementation of the actions provided for under the Plan and defined the main objectives for 2018, including the organization of training for specialists at the Bureau and relevant ministries with a view to enhancing their competencies in the areas of monitoring and assessing the progress on implementation of the Plan, developing projects and others. To that end, particularly during the period from 22 to 24 May 2018, the OSCE Mission to Moldova, in partnership with the Bureau, organized a training workshop for members of the Bureau and members of the Interdepartmental Working Group. During the workshop, international experts shared experiences and European best practices in strengthening inter-ethnic relations, drawing on the example of Estonia.

(3)

15. On 19 March 2018, the Bureau held a joint meeting of the representatives of the Office of the People’s Advocate (Ombudsman) and the Council on the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Promotion of Equality, whose main responsibility is to explore avenues of effective cooperation in the area of human rights, including the process of carrying out the 2017–2020 Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Strategy on Strengthening Inter-Ethnic Relations in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2017–2027. The meeting resulted in the adoption of a decision to sign an agreement on cooperation between the three institutions mentioned above.

(4)

16. With the financial support of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, the Bureau has prepared and published 3,000 copies of a collection of texts of the Strategy and 2017–2020 Plan of Action in Romanian and Russian for distribution among the ministries, other central public administration bodies, local public administration bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of ethnic minorities and civil society organizations.

(5)

17. The 2017–2019 Plan of Action on the Implementation of the Declaration of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova on the Acceptance of the Final Report of the International Commission on the Holocaust, chaired by Elie Wiesel, was approved pursuant to Government Decision No. 313 of 22 May 2017. In accordance with the decision, the Bureau is tasked with drafting and submitting periodic reports to the Government on the actions carried out under this Plan.

18. The following are among the most significant events organized following the adoption of the above-mentioned Plan, aiming at preventing racial discrimination, stamping out all forms of racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, and remembering and studying the Holocaust:

(a) On 14 July 2017, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research signed the Agreement on Cooperation with the Jewish Community of the Republic of Moldova. The Agreement centres on forming partnerships for the implementation of joint projects, programmes and other initiatives to develop and adopt approaches to teaching the subject of the Holocaust. The Agreement also provides for the development of new training programmes on the topic of the Holocaust for specialists at the Ministry and on the history,

culture and traditions of ethnic communities in Moldova for teachers of institutions of general secondary and higher education.

(b) The first museum devoted to the Holocaust in Moldova during the Second World War opened on 26 January 2018. Furthermore, the House of Nationalities attached to the Bureau opened the Holocaust Memory and Inter-Ethnic Tolerance Museum and Research Centre, established by specialists at the Bureau, with the backing of the Moldovan Government, including financial support from the State budget.

(6)

19. On 24 May 2018, at its regular session, Parliament approved the National Human Rights Action Plan for the period 2018–2022. The Plan is composed of two sections: a descriptive section and a section made up of tables. The measures included in the Plan are aimed at the achievement of 31 overall objectives and 51 strategic goals and are arranged according to 16 different priority areas.

20. The Plan is the third State policy document at the national level aimed at promoting and ensuring respect for human rights. The Plan was prepared on the basis of the recommendations made to the Republic of Moldova following the second cycle of the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council in October 2016 and those made by other international human rights monitoring mechanisms.

21. The Plan was drafted by a working group made up of representatives of the central public administration bodies, civil society and development partners focusing on human rights.<sup>3</sup>

22. Implementation of the Plan should facilitate measures that will promote the equitable development and well-being of all citizens of the Republic of Moldova. The priority objective is to create an environment for all citizens, especially those belonging to the most vulnerable groups, that is conducive to the enjoyment of basic rights, legal guarantees and services, provided in accordance with international human rights standards.

23. The actions included in the Plan are aimed at the achievement of a number of strategic goals in the area of harmonization of the legal framework with international standards, in particular with respect to justice, transparency, access to information and freedom of expression, gender equality and the campaign against domestic violence, non-discrimination and equality. The document also covers actions aimed at upholding the rights to education, health care, employment and social protection and the rights of young people, older people, persons with disabilities, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and inhabitants of the left bank of the Dniester River.

24. The Government of the Republic of Moldova is required to establish a national human rights council to monitor and assess the status of implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan for the period 2018–2022 and other national policy instruments in this area.

(7)

25. While acknowledging the role and importance of the community-based mediation service in the lives of the Roma people, the Moldovan authorities have taken appropriate measures to address the problems encountered in that area, in particular to increase the number of community-based mediators recruited.

26. On 4 August 2017, the principal adviser to the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, Ms. Viorelia Moldovan-Batinac, met with officials responsible for making decisions in order to come up with measures to improve the situation with the Roma community-based mediators. A decision was taken at the meeting to amend paragraph 3 of Government Decision No. 557 of 17 July 2013 on the approval of framework regulations on the organization of the activities of community-based mediators. In particular, it was proposed to finance the activities of mediators from the State budget rather than from

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<sup>3</sup> The working group was established by Ministry of Justice order No. 1056 of 18 November 2016.

appropriations approved from the budgets of first-level administrative divisions, which will help boost the recruitment of mediators at the local level.

27. Government Decision No. 425 of 15 May 2018 amending Government Decision No. 557 of 17 July 2013 was amended as a result of the proposed measures. Under the amendments adopted, funding for the activities of the community-based mediators will be provided through specially earmarked transfers from the State budget to first-level local budgets, the central budget of the autonomous territorial unit with special legal status and the municipal budgets of Bălți and Chisinau, along with other sources in accordance with the current law, taking account of the proposed changes in the financing of community-based mediation service.<sup>4</sup>

(8)

28. With the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Bureau organized seven working meetings in seven district councils of the country in the second half of 2017 aimed at increasing awareness about the effectiveness of the work of community-based mediators and the need for finding them employment and at discussing general issues that arose during the implementation of the Plan of Action to Support the Ethnic Roma Population in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2016–2020.<sup>5</sup>

(9)

29. On 16 May 2018, a youth forum entitled “Minorities and the Media: Changing Images, Giving the Unheard the Microphone”, organized by the voluntary association Inter-Ethnic Solidarity Youth Platform, was held in Chisinau with support from OHCHR.

30. Young journalists and representatives from civil society from the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, Taraclia district, Transnistria and other districts of Moldova took part in the forum.

31. The following persons also took part: United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Moldova, Ms. Dafina Gercheva, OHCHR Indigenous Peoples and Minorities Unit expert Belen Rodriguez de Alba, a representative of the Commission on Human Rights and Inter-Ethnic Relations of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, the chair of the Council on the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Promotion of Equality, the People’s Advocate, a representative of the Television and Radio Coordinating Council and other public officials.

32. The participants, coming from various ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds, discussed issues involving the promotion of tolerance and mutual understanding, non-discrimination and the strengthening of inter-ethnic relations through the media.

## **II. Information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 19 and 23**

### **Paragraph 19**

**The Committee recommends that the State party take the measures necessary to ensure access by ethnic minority children to mother-tongue education in schools. It also recommends that the State party take the measures necessary to ensure that**

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<sup>4</sup> The community-based mediation service was established in 2013 and in the period 2013–2014 was funded from the State budget. In 2015, responsibility for the financing of activities of the community-based mediators was transferred to local administration bodies, which were unable to ensure its functioning because of funding gaps in the local budgets. Of the 48 mediators required, only 9 were paid from the budgets of the local authorities. Thus, since 2018, the community-based mediation service is financed from the State budget through the transfer of funds from the State budget to the budgets of the first-level local public administrations.

<sup>5</sup> Approved by Government Decision No. 734 of 9 June 2016.

**minority students studying in schools offering mother-tongue education are provided with quality instruction on the State language and all efforts are undertaken to prevent discrimination against such students in obtaining higher education and employment on the basis of language.**

**Access of ethnic minorities to education — Access of ethnic minorities to preschool education in their mother tongue**

Table 1

**Distribution of institutions of early childhood education<sup>6</sup> by language (Romanian and Russian)**

|   | 2014           | 2015           | 2016           |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Facilities where education is provided in one of the following languages:                           |                |                |                |
| Romanian  | 1 332          | 1 338          | 1 351          |
| Russian   | 210            | 210            | 217            |
| Facilities where education is provided in several languages (a combination of Romanian and Russian) | 119            | 122            | 118            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1 451</b>   | <b>1 460</b>   | <b>1 469</b>   |
| <b>Children (total)</b>   | <b>147 733</b> | <b>149 936</b> | <b>150 177</b> |
| Including those being taught in one of the following languages:                                     |                |                |                |
| Romanian  | 121 054        | 123 239        | 123 809        |
| Russian   | 26 527         | 26 543         | 26 368         |
| % relative to the total number of children  | 100%           | 100%           | 100%           |
| Including those being taught in one of the following languages:                                     |                |                |                |
| Romanian  | 81.9           | 82.2           | 82.4           |
| Russian   | 18.0           | 17.7           | 17.6           |

**Access to primary and general secondary education**

33. The network of primary and secondary general education institutions in the 2016/17 academic year comprised 1,291 establishments (primary, lower secondary (gymnasiums) and upper secondary (lyceums) schools) (with 333,729 students), including:

- 1,004 institutions (257,335 students) with instruction in Romanian, 227 schools (58,930 pupils) with instruction in Russian
- 2 establishments (411 students) with instruction in Ukrainian
- 58 bilingual schools (17,053 students), 57 of which provide instruction in Romanian and Russian and 1 (326 pupils) in Bulgarian and Russian

Table 2

**Number of schools in which minority languages are studied**

| Language studied | 2017/18 academic year |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Ukrainian        | 41 schools            |
| Gagauz           | 42 schools            |
| Bulgarian        | 28 schools            |
| Polish           | 3 schools             |

<sup>6</sup> According to art. 3 of the Code of Education, No. 152 of 17 July 2014: “Early education means the educational process covering children aged up to 6 (or 7) years old in educational institutions or in the family for the purpose of their physical, cognitive, emotional and social development.”

| <i>Language studied</i> | <i>2017/18 academic year</i> |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Hebrew                  | 2 schools                    |
| German                  | 3 schools                    |

Table 3

**Language, which is being studied as a separate or an optional subject in the 2016/17 academic year in educational establishments providing instruction in ethnic minority languages**

| <i>Language that is studied as a separate or an optional subject</i>                     | <i>Number of students in schools with instruction in ethnic minority languages</i> | <i>Including per year of study</i> |               |               |              |
|--|--|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
|  |  | <i>%</i>                           | <i>1–4</i>    | <i>5–9</i>    | <i>10–12</i> |
| <b>Total number of students in schools with instruction in ethnic minority languages</b> | <b>64 955</b>  | <b>100</b>                         | <b>26 306</b> | <b>31 089</b> | <b>7 560</b> |
| Including those studying:  |  |                                    |               |               |              |
| Romanian   | 64 955   | 100                                | 26 306        | 31 089        | 7 560        |
| Ukrainian  | 3 807  | 5.9                                | 1 495         | 2 054         | 258          |
| Gagauz   | 12 724   | 19.6                               | 5 735         | 6 097         | 892          |
| Bulgarian  | 4 938  | 7.6                                | 1 915         | 2 443         | 580          |
| Hebrew   | 1 044  | 1.6                                | 406           | 491           | 147          |

34. The framework curriculum includes a course of study entitled “History, culture and the traditions of the Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz, Bulgarian, Roma and other peoples”, which is mandatory for years 1 to 9 in educational establishments with instruction in ethnic minority languages. The list of optional subjects includes a course entitled “Culture of Neighbourhood” for years 1 to 4.

35. Currently, schools with instruction in ethnic minority languages have a wide range of training materials in the Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz and Bulgarian languages, including:

- Standards in language and literature for years 1 to 12
- Language and literature programmes of study/curriculums for years 1 to 12
- Teaching manuals/guides for the implementation of the programmes of study
- Language and literature textbooks for years 1 to 9
- Syllabuses and tests for the national examination for years 4 and 9
- Language and literature syllabuses for the bachelor’s degree

36. Training in minority language instruction is provided to teaching staff in the country’s educational establishments, as follows:

- For kindergarten teachers of Gagauz and Bulgarian, at the professional schools of Comrat and Taraclia
- For teachers of Russian language and literature, at Moldova State University
- For teachers specializing in Romanian and Ukrainian philology, at Alecu Russo State University of Bălți
- For teachers specializing in Russian and Romanian philology, Romanian and Gagauz philology and Romanian and Bulgarian philology, at the Ion Creangă Pedagogical State University in Chisinau.
- For teachers specializing in Gagauz and Romanian philology and Bulgarian and Romanian philology, at Comrat State University

37. Taraclia State University has been operating successfully since 2004. In the meantime, the structure of the university has taken shape, a highly regarded teaching staff

has been established and facilities and equipment have been upgraded. The establishment of a university in Taraclia has given members of the Bulgarian ethnic minority community access to higher education in an area where they live in large numbers. The courses at Taraclia State University are taught in three languages: Romanian; Bulgarian; and Russian. The University trains teachers of Bulgarian language, history, literature, culture and traditions and specialists in the Romanian and English and Bulgarian and Romanian language and literature combinations. University alumni are provided with jobs in the district of Taraclia and other districts in the south of the country.

38. It should be noted that, in Moldova, the problem of ensuring the availability of teachers proficient in minority language instruction has been largely addressed. For example, between 1993 and 2017, training and further training was provided as follows:

- In Ukrainian, to 254 teachers
- In Gagauz, to 309 teachers
- In Bulgarian, to 232 teachers

#### **Access to technical, vocational and tertiary education**

##### **Secondary technical educational institutions: 43**

Table 4

##### **Students of secondary vocational and technical educational institutions disaggregated by language of instruction**

|                                 | 2014–2015            | 2015–2016            | 2016–2017            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Total number of students</b> | <b>17 508 (100%)</b> | <b>16 098 (100%)</b> | <b>18 980 (100%)</b> |
| Including students studying:    |                      |                      |                      |
| Romanian                        | 15 107 (86%)         | 14 162 (88%)         | 16 642 (88%)         |
| Russian                         | 2 401 (14%)          | 1 936 (12%)          | 2 338 (12%)          |

##### **Post-secondary vocational and technical education institutions (colleges and centres of excellence<sup>7</sup>): 43**

Table 5

##### **Students enrolled in post-secondary vocational and technical educational institutions disaggregated by language of instruction**

|   | 2014–2015            | 2015–2016            | 2016–2017            |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Total number of students, including by language of instruction</b> | <b>29 810 (100%)</b> | <b>30 428 (100%)</b> | <b>29 811 (100%)</b> |
| Including:  |                      |                      |                      |
| Romanian  | 25 836 (87%)         | 26 445 (87%)         | 25 824 (87%)         |
| Russian   | 3 568 (12%)          | 3 566 (12%)          | 3 591 (12%)          |
| Other languages (Gagauz/Russian, Bulgarian/Russian)                   | 406 (1%)             | 417 (1%)             | 396 (1%)             |

#### **Access to higher education**

39. Under the framework regulations on the organization and implementation of entry into higher educational establishments in the Republic of Moldova, which are approved for each academic year, concessionary fees are offered to persons from socially vulnerable backgrounds entering higher education; 15 per cent of the State-funded places are set aside for such prospective students, including ethnic Roma children, for each field of study or area of vocational training and form of education, in accordance with the admissions quota. Coverage by the quota is provided at the candidate's request.

<sup>7</sup> According to art. 15 (1) (i) of the Education Code, No. 152 of 17 July 2014, a centre of excellence is a vocational and technical educational institution that combines vocational and technical training with academic learning.

40. Currently, the network of higher educational institutions consists of 30 universities (19 public and 11 private) in which 74,726 students are enrolled.

Table 6

**Students enrolled in institutions of higher education disaggregated by language of instruction**

|   | 2014–2015            | 2015–2016            | 2016–2017            |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Total number of students, including by language of study</b> | <b>89 529 (100%)</b> | <b>81 669 (100%)</b> | <b>74 726 (100%)</b> |
| Romanian  | 75 065 (83.8%)       | 69 181 (84.7%)       | 63 665 (85.2%)       |
| Russian   | 12 554 (14.0%)       | 10 429 (12.8%)       | 9 242 (12.4%)        |
| English   | 1 103 (1.2%)         | 1 400 (1.7%)         | 1 217 (1.6%)         |
| French  | 603 (0.7%)           | 512 (0.6%)           | 401 (0.6%)           |
| Other (Italian/German)  | 204 (0.2%)           | 147 (0.2%)           | 141 (0.2%)           |

**Access of ethnic minorities to the study of the official language**

41. The National Programme to Improve the Quality of the Study of Romanian in General Secondary Educational Establishments with Instruction in Minority Languages (2016–2020) and plan of action for implementing the Programme were approved by Government Decision No. 904 of 31 December 2015.

42. The Programme is aimed at laying the groundwork for improving children's communication skills in Romanian educational establishments where instruction is provided in minority languages.

43. Priorities include:

- Introduction of models for teaching Romanian in early educational establishments with courses taught in minority languages
- Updating of the process of teaching, learning and evaluating the subject of Romanian language and literature in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education
- Promotion of the social and linguistic integration of students speaking other languages through the study of a number of school subjects in Romanian
- Expansion of the environment for communication in Romanian through extracurricular activities
- Increase in opportunities for teaching staff speaking another language (teachers of different subjects) by developing communication skills in Romanian

44. In this connection, it is important to take specific actions to motivate students, parents, teachers and school administrators speaking other languages to improve their skills in the subjects studied and to provide them with comprehensive information about the advantages of multilingual education and the prospects for receiving a vocational education and finding employment.

**Projected budget for the implementation of the Programme under the budget forecast for the mid-term period 2016–2018**

| <i>State-financed measures</i>  | <i>Budget forecast for the mid-term period, thousands of lei</i> |             |             | <i>Budget plan</i>            |
|---|--|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
|   | <i>2016</i>  | <i>2017</i> | <i>2018</i> |                               |
| National Programme to Improve the Quality of the Study of Romanian in General Secondary Educational Establishments with Instruction in Minority Languages | 605.6  | 579.4       | 512.9       | General services in education |

45. Funding is expected to come from the State budget, local budgets and grants, sponsorship and other lawful sources.

46. Implementation of the Programme through the plan of action for its implementation will greatly help increase the quality of the study of Romanian for persons from ethnic minority groups.

47. Some progress has been made in this regard. For example, the educational project to promote the social and linguistic integration of students speaking another language by increasing the number of school subjects taught in Romanian<sup>8</sup> was expanded under the plan of action to carry out the National Programme to Improve the Quality of the Study of Romanian in General Secondary Schools with Instruction in Minority Languages (2016–2020). The project is currently being carried out in 168 classes in 40 pre-university educational establishments in the country, with 89 teachers teaching 8 school subjects in Romanian, which has led to significant improvement in students' command of Romanian.

48. The educational project to promote the social and linguistic integration of students speaking another language by increasing the number of school subjects taught in Romanian is actively being implemented in several educational establishments in Gagauzia with the objective of expanding the use of the official language in the education process. For example, for eight years now, the course on spiritual and moral development has been taught in the official language to students in years 1 to 3 in the Gavriil Gaydarzhi secondary school in Comrat. At the Mihail Guboglo secondary school in Ceadîr-Lunga, the course Culture of Neighbourhood is taught to students in year 3 and the optional course Multicultural Education in year 7 in the official language.

49. In the 2017/18 academic year, 13 schools with a total of 857 students, have been participating in the project to promote the social and linguistic integration of students speaking another language by increasing the number of school subjects taught in Romanian. Subjects are taught in the official language by 24 teachers with a higher education, the majority of whom specialize in Romanian language and literature. The following subjects are taught in the official language under this project: technology; music; physical education, civics; and spiritual and moral development.

50. The National Association of European Teachers in Moldova (ANTEM)<sup>9</sup> is continuing to implement the Programme on Integration with Respect for Diversity: Simultaneous Study of Romanian and Gagauz in Gagauzia.<sup>10</sup> The second phase of the Programme was presented in December 2017 in Comrat.

51. The main objective of the project is to create the conditions for the parallel study by children aged 5 and 6 and their parents of Romanian and Gagauz, which will facilitate their linguistic, social and professional integration while preserving their ethnic identity and cultural heritage.

52. The second phase of the Programme includes 10 new kindergartens benefitting 7 Gagauz communities, which have received 300 textbooks, 100 sets of cards, 200 collections of poetry and songs, and 200 collections of fairy tales and short amusing stories compiled by specialists at the Association. All the materials were published in two languages, Romanian and Gagauz, featuring audio recordings. A total of 224 children and 180 parents participated in the second phase of the Programme.

53. In the 2017/18 academic year, the following measures were taken under the Programme on Integration with Respect for Diversity: Simultaneous Study of Romanian and Gagauz in Gagauzia:

<sup>8</sup> The project was launched in 2011 by the Ministry of Education and approved by order of the Minister of Education, No. 751 of 20 August 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Established in 2005 and registered in 2008, the Association has become a promoter of the study of the official language for speakers of other languages in the Republic of Moldova and has taken a professional, appropriate and responsible approach to the integration of ethnic minorities through the improvement of communication skills.

<sup>10</sup> The project is being carried out with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

- Four workshops for the heads of kindergartens in Gagauzia attended by heads and teaching methodology specialists from 10 kindergartens covered by the project, which gave 20 teachers of Romanian and Gagauz the opportunity to familiarize themselves with best practices in the area of simultaneous teaching and study of Romanian and Gagauz for children and their parents, along with the best methods of using teaching aids developed for the above-mentioned Programme
- Series of awareness sessions for parents during which 150 parents were provided with information on the specificities and practical activities under this Programme, resulting in parents agreeing to participate in the Programme together with her children and filing applications to that effect

54. It should be recognized that simultaneous teaching in two languages in kindergartens of the Republic of Moldova is a truly innovative and effective method. An increasing number of kindergartens with children who speak other languages are calling attention to the need for the introduction of such curricula. Accordingly, in 2018, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research is planning to introduce a Romanian language study programme in preschools in which instruction is provided in Russian.

55. In 2017 and 2018, with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning Romanian and facilitating the social and linguistic integration of schoolchildren from ethnic minority backgrounds, the Ministry organized a series of various events, including the following:

- Presentation of the programme entitled “Ambassadors of Romanian”, organized in the districts of Ocnița, Fălești and Comrat, in partnership with the Embassy of Romania in the Republic of Moldova
- Working visits by the Ministry to 18 general education establishments (7 in Taraclia, 1 in Gagauzia and 10 in Chisinau) for monitoring and evaluating the process of teaching and learning academic subjects studied in the Romanian
- Two round tables organized in Taraclia and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia for heads of educational establishments that provide tuition in Russian, which aimed at drafting recommendations to help modernize the process of teaching Romanian language and literature
- Two workshops with the participation of teachers of Romanian language and literature from Taraclia and the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia
- District-level workshop in Taraclia for teachers speaking languages other than Romanian during which six demonstration lessons were held and discussed for learning purposes with the aim of providing methods of teaching the optional course Culture of Neighbourhood
- Development of a syllabus and curriculum for year 3 (in Russian and Romanian)
- Development of a textbook for year 3 (Russian and Romanian);
- Distribution of teaching aids to educational establishments in the country, including those on the left bank of the Dniester
- Monitoring of the teaching of the optional course Culture of Neighbourhood in educational establishments in the districts of Comrat, Ceadîr-Lunga and Rîșcani and the cities of Bălți and Chisinau
- Advanced courses for teaching staff offered to 82 teachers of Romanian language and literature

### **School enrolment and non-attendance among ethnic Roma school-aged children between 7 and 16**

56. According to data provided by the local bodies specialized in education 1,739 Roma students were registered in the Republic of Moldova.<sup>11</sup>

57. Local public administration bodies at the primary and secondary levels actively cooperate with NGOs engaged in facilitating the integration of Roma people, with a view to increasing the participation of the Roma community in resolving problems concerning the involvement of Roma children in the education process. The local authorities and NGOs make joint efforts to detect children who fail to attend school or are systematically absent from class.

58. As a result of the measures taken, the number of such Roma children is decreasing. For example, whereas 29 children aged 7 to 16 did not attend school as at 15 October 2016, the number of such children dropped to 17 as at 29 December 2016.<sup>12</sup>

59. The reasons for Roma children's non-attendance at school include a poor financial situation, wandering from place to place, change of residence, parents' refusal to send them to school, etc.

60. The situation regarding non-attendance by Roma children in school is improving. For example, as at 31 May 2017, 108 students did not attend school, whereas, in the 2015/16 academic year, there were 121 such students. The Ministry constantly monitors the process of school enrolment and non-attendance on the part of Roma children aged 7 to 16. Children from communities with large Roma populations located more than 3 km from the nearest educational establishment are transported to school free of charge. Roma students benefit from additional time for study so that they may complete their homework and from mindfulness exercises.

### **School meals for Roma children**

61. Roma children (in total, 1,739 persons) are provided with free school meals in accordance with Government Decisions Nos. 234 of 25 February 2005 and 188 of 16 April 1993.

### **Provision of textbooks for Roma children**

62. Roma children in pre-university educational establishments are provided with textbooks through textbook loans from the Special Textbook Fund.<sup>13</sup> In accordance with Government Decision No. 1040 of 5 October 2005, students in years 1 to 4, including Roma students, are provided with free textbooks. According to information from the Ministry, children from vulnerable family backgrounds in communities where Roma make up a significant percentage of the population receive at the beginning of every academic year financial assistance to help pay for school items and, if necessary, clothing and shoes.

### **Study of the official language in educational establishments in the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia**

63. Gagauzia has 47 pre-university educational establishments attended by 14,814 students studying the official language as a mandatory course. There are two upper secondary schools, one with the official language as the language of instruction and the other bilingual, where instruction is provided in Romanian and Russian.

64. Currently, 98 per cent of all educational establishments in Gagauzia have qualified teachers of Romanian language and literature. The total number of teachers is 168.

<sup>11</sup> In accordance with international standards, the National Bureau of Statistics has not included any data on the ethnicity of persons under 16 years of age in its records since 2004.

<sup>12</sup> The data were collected by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research based on information provided by the local authorities.

<sup>13</sup> Established in accordance with Government Decision No. 448 of 9 April 1998 on the provision of textbooks to students in primary and lower and upper secondary school.

65. Teachers of Romanian are provided with continuous training. For example, advanced training is provided to teachers who study in Romania under the Programme on Increasing the Effectiveness of Teaching Romanian in Schools in Gagauzia and the Taraclia district in the Republic of Moldova. Under the Programme, 30 teachers from those regions received further training in Romanian in 2016 and 27 retraining in 2017.

66. Increased interest in Romanian among students has been facilitated by use of various interactive forms of extracurricular activities to create a Romanian linguistic environment, such as Romanian language weeks, literary evenings, folk festivals, quizzes, arts contests and academic conferences for upper secondary students in Romanian.

67. In 2016, the Directorate General of Education of Gagauzia organized a reading contest in Romanian, which among other things greatly promoted the development of the spoken language. There were 115 students of various ages who took part in the contest.

68. In 2017 and 2018, another contest sponsored by the Directorate was organized, entitled “Our language is treasure”, which was aimed at raising the profile of the Romanian language and motivating young people to study it. In 2018, 29 collective and individual works of students were presented at the contest, including thought papers, thematic films and interviews and individual and group projects aimed at the development of fluent speech when communicating with various communities.

69. However, there are some problems having to do with the dearth of Romanian literature in the school libraries and technical equipment. Specialists of the Directorate of Gagauz are working together with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research to find ways and means of resolving these problems.

#### **Access to education of persons from minority coming from ethnic minority backgrounds in the district of Taraclia**

70. In the district of Taraclia, all educational establishments have taken measures to ensure effective teaching of mother tongues and the official language to minority students.

##### *At the level of early education*

71. Beginning in the 2017/18 academic year, seven preschools located in communities with a large Bulgarian population introduced the study of Bulgarian (in Taraclia and the villages of Albota de Sus, Tvardița and Cairaclia) and a total of 635 children study Bulgarian as the mother tongue. Bulgarian language teaching in these establishments is funded from local budgets.

72. The official language is taught twice a week in 14 preschools with Russian as the language of instruction, with a total of 865 children. The children are taught by 11 teachers with a higher education.

##### *At the school level*

###### **Mother tongue**

73. In 12, out of 18 schools operating in the district (67%), Bulgarian is taught as a mother tongue. A total 2,845 students (79.2 per cent) take the following courses of study: Bulgarian language and literature (3 hours) and a course on the history, culture and traditions of the Bulgarian people. Classes of 25 students or more are divided into subgroups. Bulgarian is taught in the district’s educational establishments by 73 teachers who have received specialized education in Bulgarian language and literature.

74. In the Nikolai Gogol lower secondary school and kindergarten located in the village of Musaitu, where there is a large Ukrainian population, Ukrainian is taught as a mother tongue (in 4 classes with 53 students) along with Ukrainian language and literature (3 hours) and a course on the history, culture and traditions of the Ukrainian people (1 hour per week).

#### Official language

75. The official language is taught in all schools with Russian as the language of instruction (4 hours per week). Classes of 25 students or more are divided into subgroups. There is a staff made up of 54 teachers with a higher education.

76. At the request of parents and students, the study of separate optional courses in the official language is also provided for, including: Economics and Business in the Ivan Bazov academic upper secondary school in Taraclia; Multicultural Education in Ivan Inzov lower secondary school in Taraclia; and Harmonious Family Relations in the Saint Paisius of Hilendar academic upper secondary school in the village of Corten.

77. These courses are taught in the official language for several years and are chosen by children for the express purpose of improving their knowledge of and communication skills in Romanian. Teachers use various interactive methods for creating a Romanian language environment in their lessons.

78. The local authorities of the district of Taraclia have done much and actively work to facilitate access by ethnic minorities to education in general for the study of their mother tongues and mastery of the official language. However, education establishment and teachers have experienced a number of shortcomings when it comes to literature on teaching methods, textbooks, visual aids and technical equipment.

#### Paragraph 23

**Recalling its general recommendations No. 30 (2004) on discrimination against non-citizens and No. 22 (1996) on article 5 of the Convention on refugees and displaced persons, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that non-citizens are given access to education, housing, health care and employment, without discrimination. The Committee recommends that the State party provide information on the implementation and impact of the National Strategy for Migration and Refugees 2011–2020, and the Action Plan 2016–2020 on the ability of non-citizens such as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to have access without discrimination to employment, housing, health care and basic services.**

#### Statistical data<sup>14</sup>

79. As at 30 June 2017, 18,936 foreign nationals with the right of residence were registered in the Republic of Moldova, 8,715 of whom had the right of permanent residence and 10,221 the right of temporary residence in the country, with residence permits granted to applicants staying in the country for:

- Work, 1,067 persons
- Family reunification, 4,714
- Studies, 2,688
- Humanitarian activities, 110
- Medical treatment, 2
- Religious activities, 302
- Voluntary work, 34
- Foreign investment activities, 558
- Other reasons, 746

80. There are 3,164 foreign nationals with valid identity papers registered in the territory of Transnistria, 2,427 of whom have the right of permanent residence and 737 to temporary residence.

<sup>14</sup> [https://gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/intr11\\_138.pdf](https://gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/intr11_138.pdf).

81. As at 30 September 2017, 477 persons were registered in the asylum system, as follows:

- 72 asylum seekers (8 from Afghanistan, 3 from Armenia, 1 from Azerbaijan, 2 from Cameroon, 2 from Côte d'Ivoire, 4 from the Russian Federation, 5 from Georgia, 1 from Guinea, 1 from Iraq, 2 from Kazakhstan, 2 from the Islamic Republic of Iran, 3 from Kyrgyzstan, 2 from Lebanon, 2 from Nigeria, 1 from Pakistan, 1 from Poland, 9 from the Syrian Arab Republic, 4 from Turkey, 1 from Turkmenistan, 14 from Ukraine, 3 from Uzbekistan and 1 from Yemen)
- 153 refugees (17 from Afghanistan, 3 from Armenia, 3 from Azerbaijan, 1 from Belarus, 2 from Egypt, 1 from India, 2 from Jordan, 8 from Iraq, 11 from Kyrgyzstan, 2 from Nigeria, 4 from the State of Palestine, 3 from the Russian Federation, 77 from the Syrian Arab Republic, 3 from Sudan, 7 from Tajikistan, 2 from Turkey, 1 from Turkmenistan, and 6 from Uzbekistan)
- 252 beneficiaries of humanitarian protection (2 from Afghanistan, 1 from Angola, 16 from Armenia, 1 from Egypt, 1 from Georgia, 18 from Iraq, 4 from the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1 from Liberia, 2 from Libya, 1 from Nepal, 1 from Pakistan, 1 from the State of Palestine, 129 from the Syrian Arab Republic, 6 from Sudan, 1 from Turkmenistan, 61 from Ukraine, 2 from Uzbekistan and 4 from Yemen)

### **Legislative amendments**

82. As a result of amendments made to the Asylum Act, No. 270 of 18 December 2008,<sup>15</sup> the following definitions were introduced in the Republic of Moldova:

- *Applicant or asylum seeker* means a foreign national who has submitted an application for asylum on which no final decision has yet been taken
- *Refugee status* means a form of protection, recognized by the Republic of Moldova, of a foreign national or a stateless person who meets the criteria provided for by the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951 and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees of 31 January 1967

83. In accordance with the amendments to the Act on the Regulations Governing Foreign Nationals in the Republic of Moldova (Act No. 200 of 16 July 2010), the following definitions were given:<sup>16</sup>

- *Stateless person* means a person who is not considered a citizen of any State under its law
- *Unaccompanied minor* means a foreign national under 18 years of age who is staying in the territory of the Republic of Moldova unaccompanied by an adult responsible for him or her according to the law or juridical act until he or she is actually given over to such person's care; such a definition also applies to minors who are left unaccompanied after their stay in the territory of the Republic of Moldova

84. The Asylum Act (No. 270 of 18 December 2008) was brought into line with European Union law. The amendments entered into force on 19 August 2016 and provided for changes to the Act in accordance with the directives listed below:

- Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted

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<sup>15</sup> In accordance with Act No. 151 of 1 May 2016 on the introduction of amendments to certain legislative acts.

<sup>16</sup> In accordance with Act No. 284 of 28 December 2011 on the introduction of amendments to certain legislative acts.

- Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection
  - Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection
85. Such changes concern:
- Strengthening of procedural guarantees for categories of vulnerable persons, particularly minors and unaccompanied minors
  - Broadening of the rights of beneficiaries of international protection with respect to access to health care, all forms of education and financial assistance
  - Transition to standards set out in the directives of the European Council for the procedures of considering applications for asylum
  - Some aspects of accommodation
  - Waiver of the obligation for beneficiaries to pay compensation for assistance provided for international protection

### **Intersectoral cooperation**

86. A mechanism to involve foreign nationals in integration activities was approved pursuant to order No. 42/26/46/128/61/28-A/107-A of 16 February 2016, which was signed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and the Family, the National Social Security Fund and the National Health Insurance Company.

87. The Agreement on Cooperation between the Bureau for Migration and Asylum of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Municipal Office for the Protection of the Rights of Children of the Chisinau Municipal Council on Assistance to Unaccompanied Foreign Minors was signed on 5 May 2016.

88. With a view to carrying out continuous and constructive dialogue with civil society and managing migration and asylum processes effectively, the Bureau has signed a number of cooperation agreements with the NGOs working in this area, including:

- Ave Copiii Association for Child and Family Empowerment to help provide assistance to asylum seekers, beneficiaries of humanitarian protection and refugees in the Republic of Moldova, on 24 May 2016
- Pamyat (Memory) Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture to provide comprehensive assistance for the rehabilitation of victims and documentation of specific cases and medical, psychological, social and legal counselling to asylum seekers, beneficiaries of protection and refugees in the Republic of Moldova, on 24 May 2016
- State-guaranteed National Council of Legal Assistance and Lawyers Legal Centre to provide counselling and legal services to asylum seekers, beneficiaries of one of the forms of protection, persons applying for the status of stateless person, stateless persons and foreign nationals, including those who have been ordered to be placed in custody, on 25 August 2016; this cooperation agreement is aimed at establishing an effective mechanism for legal assistance and facilitate institutional and professional capacity-building of those involved in this area
- Artico National Centre for Children and Youth to provide assistance for the integration of minors and young people into society and promote intercultural dialogue, on 14 September 2016; this cooperation agreement provides for assistance and services in the areas of education, counselling, training, information, protection, leisure and others

## **2016–2020 Plan of Action for the Implementation of the National Migration and Asylum Strategy (2011–2020)**

89. The 2016–2020 Plan of Action for the Implementation of the National Migration and Asylum Strategy was developed in accordance with Government Decision No. 655 of 8 September 2011 on the approval of the National Migration and Asylum Strategy (2011–2020) and within the framework of the realization of article 14 (3) of the European Union–Republic of Moldova Association Agreement under the National Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova for the period 2014–2016, approved by Government Decision No. 808 of 7 October 2014.

90. In the light of the fact that the National Migration and Asylum Strategy (2011–2020) covers all aspects of the migration process (emigration, immigration, integration, reintegration, granting of asylum, statelessness, efforts to combat unlawful migration, measures to manage migration and national policy in that area) that fall within the jurisdiction of various State bodies, the Plan of Action was developed by the Bureau for Migration and Asylum together with an interdepartmental working group and approved by Government Decision No. 736 of 10 June 2016.

91. The Plan is aimed mainly at carrying out actions envisaged under the Strategy and, accordingly, building the capacity of State institutions to manage migration effectively, bringing legal instruments and institutional systems into line with effective models on the basis of European and international practices, and providing for the necessary legal framework in the context of dialogue with the European Union on the liberalization of the visa regime for citizens of the Republic of Moldova and sectoral development strategies in the provinces that are governed by various ministries (such as the labour market, health care and comprehensive border control).

92. The achievement of such objectives with respect to foreign nationals should help prevent xenophobia and uphold the human rights provided for in the Constitution and international agreements to which the Republic of Moldova is a party. At the same time, given the negative consequences of the mass flows of foreigners into the countries of the European Union, the relevant measures should lead to a decrease in social instability, security risks, threats to public order and other aspects involving social and cultural differences between the members of various countries.

93. The Plan of Action includes 30 goals and 121 actions, which are divided into 6 sections:

- Section I — Stabilization and development of the basis for international cooperation in the area of migration and asylum
- Section II — Legal migration
- Section III — Migration and development
- Section IV — Management of migration in the event of an increase in the flow of foreigners (migrants, refugees)
- Section V — Fight against illegal migration
- Section VI — Migration control instruments

94. In this context, it is worth mentioning section II, Legal migration, which includes the following main subsections:

- *Immigration*, a subsection covering measures to facilitate the entry and stay in the Republic of Moldova of foreign investors and managers of foreign investments, the admission of foreign nationals for the purpose of employment in accordance with the needs of the domestic labour market that have been identified and access of highly skilled foreign nationals, to protect the rights of foreign nationals lawfully staying in the Republic of Moldova and to build the capacity of staff working in the fields of migration and asylum

- *Asylum and statelessness* is a subsection designed to develop an asylum system, build the capacity of staff with respect to asylum procedures, strengthen institutional capacity for stateless persons and standardize procedures for recognizing the status of stateless persons
- *Integration and reintegration policies* is a subsection that includes measures for the development at the central level of a policy framework for the reintegration of Moldovan migrants and the integration of foreign nationals, the introduction of a proper framework at the local level, the effective implementation of measures to reintegrate Moldovan citizens and the creation of conditions conducive to the integration of foreign nationals

95. In the period 2017–2018, a number of measures were taken to carry out this Plan, as follows.

(1)

96. The Government approved decision No. 533 of 12 July 2017 on the establishment of integration centres for foreign nationals. Pursuant to the decision, three integration centres for foreign nationals were established under the Bureau for Migration and Asylum, complete with the necessary facilities, with support from the International Centre for Migration Policy Development and Embassy of Romania, and budget support from the European Union.

97. The Regulations on Centres for the Integration of Foreign Nationals were approved under Government Decision No. 533 of 12 July 2017. According to the Regulations, an integration centre is a specialized centre under the jurisdiction of the Bureau for Migration and Asylum that acts as a separate service designed to carry out integration activities and provide foreign nationals with counselling, information and assistance. The centres do not have legal personality.

98. The centres conduct their activities in three areas, namely the north, in the municipality of Bălți, in the centre, in the municipality of Chisinau, and in the south, in the municipality of Cahul, as follows:

- Integration Centre for Foreign Nationals of the North Regional Service (Bălți), which serves the municipality of Bălți and 14 districts
- Integration Centre for Foreign Nationals of the Centre Regional Service (Chisinau), which serves the municipality of Chisinau and 12 districts
- Integration Centre for Foreign Nationals of the South Regional Service (Cahul), which serves the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia and 6 districts

99. The activities of the centres are funded from State budget allocations approved by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other sources of funding in accordance with current legislation.

100. The centres were established to provide long-term support for the integration of foreign nationals and constitute a single point of contact for the processing of applications to participate in integration activities or programmes, serving as a referral mechanism and ensuring interdepartmental coordination at the local level. Furthermore, the centres are a long-term service focusing on the local majority population.

(2)

101. The procedure for documenting seconded workers has undergone changes through the adoption of Act No. 165 of 20 July 2017 amending the Labour Migration Act (No. 180-VI of 10 July 2008) and the Act on the Regulations Governing Foreign Nationals in the Republic of Moldova (No. 200 of 16 July 2010). The amendments introduced have simplified the procedures for receiving the right to temporary stay for work and abolished the procedures for obtaining approval from the National Employment Agency. At the same time, under the new provisions, seconded workers do not receive the right to work, with the exception of workers seconded for a total period of more than 90 calendar days.

(3)

102. In accordance with the Employment and Social Protection Act (No. 102 of 13 March 2003), 3,774 foreign nationals seeking employment in 2017 received the right to either temporary or permanent residence. Of that number, 66 received the right to permanent residence and 3,708 to temporary residence. There were 829 migrant workers registered and 1,437 persons received the right to reside in the country for family reunification purposes. Those persons were given the right to work under the law.

(4)

103. The Bureau for Migration and Asylum monitors compliance with labour legislation with respect to foreign nationals and ensures that national legislative acts in this area are consistent by bringing them into line with the requirements of the Association Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova and by introducing changes to documentation procedures. In this connection, the following should be mentioned:

- Government Decision amending Government Decision No. 331 of 5 May 2011 on extending invitations to foreign nationals (approved by Government Decision No. 424 of 12 June 2017)
- Act No. 165 of 20 July 2017 amending the Labour Migration Act (No. 180-VI of 10 July 2008) and the Act on the Regulations Governing Foreign Nationals in the Republic of Moldova (No. 200 of 16 July 2010)
- Government Decision amending the Regulations on the Functioning of a Single Point of Contact for Documenting Foreign Nationals<sup>17</sup> (approved by Government Decision No. 710 of 6 September 2017)

(5)

104. With a view to ensuring continuous and constructive dialogue with civil society and the effective management of migration and asylum processes while implementing the cooperation agreements between the Bureau and partner NGOs, a number of workshops and training sessions were held in 2017. They include:

- Round table entitled “Aspects of integrating foreign nationals in the Republic of Moldova”, organized in cooperation with the Lawyers Legal Centre, which was aimed at building the capacity of national authorities responsible for the integration of foreign nationals, with 23 persons involved in the training
- Exhibition of drawings by refugee children held in collaboration with the Charity Centre for Refugees on the occasion of International Children’s Day
- Summer school 2017, organized in cooperation with the Charity Centre for Refugees, at which lessons on Independence Day were given and Our Language Day was celebrated
- Workshop for judges and prosecutors on the rights of migrants, organized in cooperation with the National Institute of Justice
- Presentation of teaching material for refugees, entitled “Curriculum for the study of Romanian and Romanian distance learning module”, developed by the National Association of European Teachers in Moldova

(6)

105. The Ion Creangă Pedagogical State University runs a centre that organizes courses for the study of Romanian for foreigners who have received a form of protection in the Republic of Moldova. In 2017, some 40 foreign nationals took training courses in Romanian at the centre. At the request of the Bureau for Migration and Asylum, the centre holds workshops on social and cultural integration once or twice a year. In 2017, one such

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<sup>17</sup> Approved by Government Decision No. 1187 of 22 December 2010 on the introduction of a single point of contact for documenting foreign nationals.

workshop was held in August, attended by 30 foreign nationals, and in September by 19 foreign nationals from Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and Spain.

(7)

106. With a view to implementing the Act on the Integration of Nationals in the Republic of Moldova (No. 274 of 27 December 2011), the Plan of Action for the Integration of Foreign Nationals for 2018 was approved pursuant to Government Decision No. 71 of 23 January 2018.

107. The Plan of Action for the Integration of Foreign Nationals for 2018 is aimed at achieving the goals set out in the National Migration and Asylum Strategy (2011–2020) and implementation of the provisions under the fifth action to be taken under the nineteenth goal of the Plan of Action for the period 2016–2020 for the implementation of the National Migration and Asylum Strategy (2011–2020).

108. This last plan sets priorities for the activities and combined efforts for the achievement of the main goals, which will help ensure access to rights, improve the regulatory and legal framework and build the capacity of organizations involved in the process of providing foreign nationals with services throughout the country.

109. Furthermore, on the one hand, the Plan is expected to help the authorities to programme integration measures, increase the participation of regional organizations, ensure that provisions on the integration of foreign nationals under the law are carried out consistently throughout the country. On the other hand, the Plan will promote a clearer understanding by foreign nationals of the level of State involvement in the implementation of integration measures.

### **III. Conclusion**

110. The information on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 19 and 23 of the concluding observations adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 8 May 2017 was compiled by the Bureau for Inter-Ethnic Relations<sup>18</sup> on the basis of background material submitted by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, the Bureau for Migration and Asylum attached to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, local specialized agencies in the field of education of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia and Taraclia province and other official sources of information (reports on the work of the Bureau for Inter-Ethnic Relations, the web pages [www.justice.md](http://www.justice.md), [www.bri.gov.md](http://www.bri.gov.md) and others).

111. During the reporting period, the Moldovan authorities, in the process of implementing the obligations undertaken by them, achieved certain progress in the area of carrying out the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

112. The State authorities of the Republic of Moldova will continue to act on the Committee's observations of 8 May 2017 with a view to achieving the overall objectives of the Convention.

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<sup>18</sup> In the context of the current reforms of central public management, in accordance with Government Decision No. 593 of 25 June 2018, the name of the Bureau for Inter-Ethnic Relations was changed, without limiting or changing its main functions, to the Agency for Inter-Ethnic Relations, which is a central administrative body under the Government.