

APE Report

Reporting period January – December 2019

1. Implementation of projects and achievement of planned objectives

During the current reporting period, Foreign Policy Association implementing 4 core projects with a cumulative funding envelope of 61,110.00 EURO¹. The projects are being implemented with the support of the Foundation Open Society Institute (FOSI), German Marshall Fund (GMF), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) and the European Union (EU). The present amount represents the total cost of the projects and not necessarily the spending during the January – December 2019 period.

APE has focused its main activities on the following priorities:

- Promoting European association agenda of the Republic of Moldova;
- Facilitating Transnistrian resolution and strengthening Moldova's security sector;
- Monitoring of the Security Sector Reform;
- Promoting human rights values focusing on antidiscrimination and the gender aspect;
- Developing APE Think-Tank capacities.

1.1. Project: “Grass roots Civil Society Development Facility in the Republic of Moldova (2019-2021)”/ EU, KAS

The project aims to contribute to the development of civic engagement and of grass roots civil society from different Moldovan regions actively involved in policy and decision making which promotes and monitors transparency and accountability of public institutions, including in the implementation of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement. The project is implemented in partnership with the other three NGOs, namely, ADEPT, Expert- Group and Pro-Europa Centre from Comrat, under the coordination of a core project team, and is financially supported by the European Union and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. The total amount of the project is 3 mln EURO. Each of the partners involved are responsible for one of the Moldovan development regions. In particular, Foreign Policy Association is coordinating project activities in the Central part of the Republic of Moldova.

During the reporting period, APE undertook the following activities:

- ✓ Conducted 3 info sessions for local and regional civil society organizations (CSO) in the Central part of Moldova: in Orhei and Anenii Noi cities, including in Chisinau.
- ✓ Conducted 22 mentoring and coaching sessions for pre-selected sub-grantees from the Central region of Moldova.
- ✓ Organized together with Project office team one networking forum;
- ✓ Currently is coordinating 19 projects of CSOs from the Center region.

Must be done the following activities:

- ✓ Grass-roots CSOs Forums – organization of 2 networking forums.
- ✓ Submitting recommendations for the 2nd call of the grant program, conducting at least 3 info sessions in the Central region of Moldova.
- ✓ Assessing submitted project proposals from CSOs together with the Project office and CSOs partners for the 2nd call of the grant program.

¹ Is the total amount of 3 projects, funded by the KAS; KAS/UE; and IWPR

- ✓ Monitoring and coordinating sub-grantees project's implementation.

1.2. Project: “Local, National and Regional Strategies to improve the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine”/ ADA

The project aimed to mobilize local, national, regional and global actors to support UNSCR 1325, 1820 and women in peace and security, the project was financially supported by the Austrian Development Agency. The project was implemented by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders in partnership with local organizations: Foreign Policy Association of Moldova and Gender Centre. The projects activities contribute foresee the development and implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 Action Plan by involving national actors (local and central public authorities) and representative of civil society in various activities ranging from research to raising awareness, capacity building and advocacy.

During the reporting period, APE undertook the following activities:

- ✓ Mapping and analysis of peacebuilding initiatives in Moldova;
- ✓ Drafting of country-specific Localization module and actual Localization of UNSCR 1325 and 20 workshops in UTA Gagauzia, Cahul and Ungheni provinces;
- ✓ Drafting of country specific National Action Plan (NAP) module and actual NAP workshop in Moldova;
- ✓ Drafting of country-specific module and actual media workshop on UNSCR 1325 and the supporting WPS resolution in Moldova, which took place during the period of 15-17 August 2019, in Vadul lui Voda city, bringing mass-media representative from the entire territory of Moldova including from the Transnistrian region;
- ✓ Created and officially launched on 25th of April 2019, the online Facebook platform (@FemeiaDeAziPaceaDeMaine/<https://www.facebook.com/FemeiaDeAziPaceaDeMaine/>): “Femeia de azi Pacea de mâine! Dialog-Siguranță-Progres” (Woman of Today, Peace of Tomorrow! Dialogue, Safety, Progress) dedicated to women, peace and security agenda.

1.3. Project: “The white book of Moldovan foreign policy – Evolution of the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova” / KAS (June – December 2019)

The core idea of the project was to elaborate a comprehensive study analyzing the evolution of the Moldovan foreign policy in the period of 2009-2019 and subsequently, to disseminate the scientific material to a large target group. In context, five professional experts were contracted in order to perform a profound analysis based on their own expertise in the field of foreign policy.

Therefore, on December 3rd, in Chisinau took place the public launch of the study entitled “*A policy brief on the foreign policy evolution of the Republic of Moldova during the period of 2009-2019*” (please see the attached study). The analytical collection of policy briefs reflects and examines the most important political events occurred at national and international level from 2009 until 2019, which had a direct impact on the further development of the bilateral and multilateral relations of the Republic of Moldova in relation to the regional and global political actors. The above-mentioned collection of policy briefs was elaborated and afterwards presented by the following experts:

1. Ion Tăbârță, Expert in politics at the Institute for Development and Social Initiatives “Viitorul”. He evaluated the relations between Moldova and Romania, as well the cooperation with the EU.
2. Natalia Stercul, political scientist, APE Program Director. She analyzed the relationship of Moldova with Ukraine, Russia and CIS states.
3. Octavian Milewski, expert affiliated to the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy, RFI Romania correspondent in Poland. He examined the cooperation with the Visegrad group states, focus on Poland.
4. Mihai Popșoi, Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. He evaluated the relationships of Moldova with the USA, as well as with the UN, Council of Europe and GUAM.
5. Victoria Roșă, senior APE expert. She analyzed the regional and security policy of Moldova from the perspective of Moldova’s cooperation with NATO.

1.4. Project: “European integration and Foreign Policy Dialogues / Annual Moldovan European Integration Debate Forum”/FES

The project was implemented with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Moldova. Its main goal is to bring Moldovan foreign policy issues closer to the citizens of Moldova, by making information more accessible to them. Therefore, APE has institutionalized a permanent informational and debating platform on European integration and foreign policy issues that gives space and explores the relevant and competent opinions – of the officials, politicians, businessmen, diplomats, local and international experts. The main beneficiaries of the project were Moldovan NGOs, journalists, foreign policy experts, international relations professors, political parties, politicians, parliamentarians, governmental officials, diplomats and of course ordinary people.

Note: The 7th *Annual Moldovan European Integration Debate Forum* was postponed due to domestic political circumstances.

During the reporting period, APE undertook the following activities:

- ✓ *Developed 13 newsletters “Synthesis and Foreign Policy Debates”, together with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Moldova.* The electronic newsletters were developed based on the radio programmes interviews with political analysts, politicians, decision-makers, representatives of the ruling parties and the opposition and distributed electronically to more than 1000 recipients.

1.5 Round table: “The hybrid politics phenomenon in the Eastern European region: informational security from the media perspective in Moldova and Ukraine”. The event took place in Chisinau, Moldova, on May 31, 2019 and was organized APE with financial support of the **Institute for War & Peace Reporting (IWPR)**.

The round table aimed to bring into discussions topical issues regarding to the phenomenon of hybrid threats in the Republic of Moldova from different aspects. In particular, concerning the challenges and national resilience capacity; practical understanding of hybrid threats; the impact of misinformation, propaganda and false news on the political and social development of the Republic of Moldova; the media outlook through information security; the legal framework and practical actions to strengthening national capabilities to respond to hybrid threats; trends in

strengthening information security policies by addressing media sector in the Eastern Europe region and partnership and cooperation formats in the Euro-Atlantic area.

The main target audience were experts and representatives of civil society, mass media, public institutions including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Ministry of Defense, Intelligence and Security Service, the Broadcasting Council of Moldova etc. In addition, the round table brought together national academia, and representatives of the diplomatic community and main development partners and donors of Moldova.

Results and recommendations:

- Elaboration and adoption of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Moldova according to the last developments at different levels;
- Developing a communication strategy on information security at national level;
- Increasing and strengthening the cooperation between public institutions and civil society on combating hybrid threats;
- Creating inter- institutional/sectorial platforms aimed to effectively approach the hybrid threats phenomenon;
- Developing programs aimed to increase media literacy and critical thinking among the citizens;
- State institutions to come up in time with reactions on main security issues related to Moldova and beyond.

2. Use of the core and institutional funding by Foundation Open Society Institute (FOSI):

OSI's core and institutional funding has enabled APE to undertake the following organizational development activities:

- 1) Team building and research objectives;
- 2) Implementing APE Communication Strategy.

During the reporting period, APE has undertaken the following activities in accordance with its Communication Strategy:

- Published 10 monthly Foreign Policy Newsletter were distributed electronically to over 1000 subscribers comprising the representatives of all target groups;
- Published over 20 analyses, commentaries and studies on European Association Agenda, Transnistrian conflict and Moldovan relations with Ukraine, Russian Federation and media literacy, Eastern Partnership (Annex 1);
- Recorded and published over 20 interviews with Moldovan and European officials and experts, including APE experts and members (Annex 1);
- Organized two study visits for experts from Moldova and Transnistrian region. The first one took place in Warsaw, Poland, March 8, 2019, in the context of the parliamentary elections in Moldova, what are perspectives and challenges of promoting the reform agenda, developing cooperation relations with external partners. The second one took place in Tallin, Estonia, March 28 2019, in the context of the results of the parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova and their impact on regional security;

- Organized and hosted a study visit to Chisinau, Moldova, October 25-30, 2019, for 6 United States scholars of the Marshall Memorial Fellowship program awarded by the German Marshall Fund of the United States.
- Maintained and updated regularly **APE website** www.ape.md, which contains APE studies, publications and commentaries, as well as ads and press releases on events organized by the Association. Currently the APE webpage is updated technically;
- Updating **APE Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/ape.md>), where APE experts post their policy papers, studies, interviews, projects and jobs announcements, press releases, as well as photos from events that have already taken place.
- Maintaining and updating new created by APE Facebook page -“**Femeia de azi Pacea de mâine! Dialog-Siguranță-Progres**”/Woman of Today, Peace of Tomorrow! Dialogue, Safety, Progress (<https://www.facebook.com/FemeiaDeAziPaceaDeMaine/>), dedicated to women, peace and security agenda (WPS), where different experts, officials, diplomats, mass-media can share their policy papers, comments and opinions, interviews, as well as to publish relevant information about WPS.

3) Enhanced APE staff skills and capacities

4. Financial sustainability/fundraising/income generating activities

During the reporting period, APE has succeeded to extend its cooperation with new donors and previous donors, such as: The German Marshal Fund of the United States/Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation, Austrian Development Agency, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung – Moldova office. In addition, APE established cooperation with new donors, namely, the European Union and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. In 2018/2019, APE has applied 2 new projects together with other three local partners, designed to develop Moldovan civil society organizations at local and regional level and increase their capacities; promote Moldovan foreign policy options and political vector of its development (“White book of Moldovan foreign policy 2009-2019”).

Future plans and challenges

During the next period, APE will continue to focus its activity on the following key objectives:

1. Supporting European Integration of the Republic of Moldova:
 - Assisting governmental institutions in achieving Moldova’s European integration goals through constructive monitoring, expertise input and project partnerships (focus on the cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Ministry of Interiors, Ministry of Defence etc.);
 - Organize 2 networking CSOs forums within the project aimed to develop Moldovan local grass-roots, financed by the EU and KAS; conducting mentoring and coaching session for sub-grantees in the Central region;
 - Continue issuing the local Newsletter Synthesis of Foreign Policy;
 - Conduct research on EU – Moldova and EU member states – Moldova relations;
 - Conduct research on Eastern Partnership format of cooperation and further developments for EaP countries in particular for Moldova;
 - Increasing the awareness of Moldovan society on the European integration domestic and external challenges through constant and unbiased information on the way reform agenda agreed with the EU is implemented;
 - Initiate an assessment of the cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and EU, EU member states and provide the result in public debates and press clubs;

- Provide monthly comments and analysis on domestic and external events in the field of foreign policy, security and European affairs both in Romanian and Russian;
2. Facilitate the Transnistrian conflict settlement:
 - Promoting confidence building between the Republic of Moldova and its Transnistrian separatist region at all levels: civil society, business community, local and central administrations;
 - Facilitating political settlement through joint analytical and research inputs;
 - Increasing the role of civil society in promoting confidence building measures in the areas of “frozen conflicts” of the Eastern Partnership.
 3. Strengthening the role of the Law enforcement agencies in Security Sector Reform:
 - Raise the awareness of the authorities and journalists about their role in promoting and implementing the security sector reform as part of the good governance process;
 - Increase authorities’ understanding on the need to better communicate and cooperate in accordance with the Association Agenda and National security interests;
 - Provide a continuous platform for discussing the national security agenda and increase the awareness on the public on topics related to national, regional and international security.
 - Create a network of security experts;
 - Issue the third issue of the Newsletter on security sector reform monitoring;
 - Enhance the capacities of the gender aspect in security relate topics in the framework of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.
 4. Strengthening the APE staff skills and capabilities as well as institutional communicational and advocacy procedures:
 - Improving the APE communication strategy with a focus on national and international outreach; elaborate a new communication strategy in accordance with the existing emerging trends.
 - Enhancing the analytical and advocacy skills as well as research methodology in order to provide qualified policy recommendations. Training on: communication, advocacy and fund raising.
 - Initiate an internal governance audit and a financial audit;
 - Initiate a process of rebranding and elaborating a public relations strategy;
 - Extend the area of research on regional level.

In order to achieve the abovementioned, APE will undertake the following actions in the coming 6 months:

- Publish at least 8 Policy Briefs on Moldova’s European association challenges and perspectives, Transnistrian Confidence Building processes, Information resilience, Security Sector Reform, Human rights and gender aspects, Resilience building, Moldova- Russia relations, EU – Moldova relations, Moldova – Romania relations, Moldova-Ukraine relations;
- Broadcast Radio Program “European Integration and Foreign Policy Debates” on the Public Radio Moldova 1 and Issue Newsletters;
- Organize together with FES the 7th Annual Moldovan European Integration Debate Forum, Chisinau, 2020;
- Organize up to 5 public debates on foreign policy and security topics (Relations of the Republic of Moldova with Germany, Russia, USA, EU and Romania, Assessment of the Moldovan Foreign Policy);

- Organize 6 public discussions regarding the Euro-Atlantic cooperation with academia environment (students, professors) throughout Republic of Moldova;
- Issue 2 newsletters on the Security Sector Reform process of the Republic of Moldova.
- Undertake trainings on research methodology and advocacy as well as improve the communication strategy and outreach.

The key challenges for the next period would be to:

1. Lack of human and financial resources in order to extend the research are and increase the capacity of APE team. APE intends to identify new talented associate researchers, experts and to focus on elaborating good project proposals;
2. Political concentration of power could impede the partnerships with major public institutions. APE will continue to maintaining its unbiased position towards cooperation with all state institutions and high officials at all levels.
3. APE needs to a rebranding process in order to face the new realities and challenges.