

APE Activity Report

Reporting period January – December 2021

1. APE research activity

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

- Published **12 monthly foreign policy newsletter** were distributed electronically to over 1000 subscribers comprising the representatives of all target groups;
- Published **12 analyses and studies** on the US foreign policy and US-Moldova relations after the 2020 presidential elections; Romania support for the pro-European agenda of Moldova; Romania-Moldova strategic partnership; Moldova and the EaP agenda; China-Georgia and China-Belarus relations; Moldovan foreign policy after the 2020 presidential elections; the Transnistrian conflict; Moldovan cybersecurity; offsetting hybrid threats in Moldova; Moldova security dynamics and challenges (Annex 1);
- Recorded and published **24 interviews and commentaries** with APE experts and members for national and foreign mass-media and APE Live (Annex 1);
- Participated in over **10 national and international conferences, round tables and debates**, mostly online, only one being in Ukraine (Annex 1);
- 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;
- Updated **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.
- Updated the APE Twitter page (<https://twitter.com/APEMOLDOVA>) with the most relevant information about the activities carried out, as well as for maintaining contacts with experts, national and international officials.
- Launched, maintained and updated regularly **the EaP Security Forum website <https://www.eapsecurityforum.md/>**, which contains policy briefs, monthly analyses and regional news, developed and researched within the *EaP Security Forum* project.

2. APE projects' implementation:

1. Grass roots civil society development facility 2019-2021/ EU, KAS <https://www.dezvolt.md/>

The project aimed to contribute to development of civic engagement and the grass root civil society actively involved in policy and decision-making process which promotes and monitors transparency and accountability of public institutions, including in the implementation of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement at local and regional levels. In the framework of this project APE has achieved the following results:

- subgrating 26 CSOs (local and regional CSOs), being implemented 30 projects (4 national projects, 19 regional projects and 7 civic initiatives) mainly in the Center region of Moldova, reaching out over 500 direct beneficiaries, and more than 10 thousand indirect; tens of strategies,

guidelines, action plans and other important documents have been elaborated and some of them adopted by the local authorities;

- provided permanent support, mentoring and coaching to the CSOs in the field of project and budget management, communication according to the program grant request;
- facilitating partnerships with relevant stakeholders;
- contributed to creating a network of CSOs in different fields of activity.

2. Eastern Partnership Security Forum (Georgia, Moldova Ukraine), May - December 2021/ KAS, <https://www.eapsecurityforum.md/>

The key goal of the project was to enhance civil society and governmental cooperation in strengthening the security resilience of Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine (the Association Trio) on matters of cybersecurity, offsetting hybrid threats and increasing the national defense capabilities. Therefore, the following results have been achieved:

- 3 bimonthly security monitors performed, entitled “Association Trio Security Monitor”, assessing the main developments, trends, issues at all levels with impact on the targeted countries;
- 9 policy briefs elaborated on reforming the intelligence service, strengthening the cyber security and offsetting hybrid threats in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine;
- public presentation of the official launching of the security monitors and policy briefs;
- a network of experts in field of security established;
- a wide target group - representatives of civil society organizations, state officials in the field of security and defense sectors, think-tanks, community of experts, academia, media outlets, foreign international organizations and diplomatic corps accredited to Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, as well high education institutions and students was reached out;
- the issue addressed within the project interested different range of target group, in particular, state institutions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Ministry of Defense, Security and Intelligence Service, Bureau of reintegration policies etc.), foreign diplomatic corps (e.g., Romania, Estonia, Czech Republic, Hungary etc.), as well community of experts, civil society organizations, think-tanks, academia etc., by attending the online presentations of policy papers either requesting the electronic format of those papers.
- the project’s visual identity was created: an official logo along with a web page: <https://www.eapsecurityforum.md/> and official accounts on the most popular social networks on Twitter: https://twitter.com/EaP_Sec_Forum and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/eapsecforum>.

That enabled to publish pertinent analytical materials, including important official documents, strategies, reforms, legislative drafts etc. of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in the field of defense and security sectors. Using these digital communication instruments allow the public opinion to easily access the last developments, knowledge, expertise and assessments on such sensitive issues.

3. Building Resilience for the Eastern Neighbourhood/ Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, November-December 2021

As part of GNWP’s continuing efforts to effectively implement UNSCR 1325 and the supporting resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS), APE provided an in-depth report of the key drivers of conflict and insecurity, conducting an intersectional analysis of how gender inequality and discrimination against minority groups intersect with conflict. For this purpose, it was conducted 17 interviews with different relevant stakeholders, and 1 focus group with women from Gagauzia autonomy. As well, it was performed a mapping of CSOs in the field of gender issue, peacebuilding initiatives, minorities and human rights, and an analysis of existing foundations or sources available, aimed to get a better understanding of the needs and barriers of CSOs.

4. “Speranta”- The School of Young Women Leaders from both Banks of the Nistru River, June 2021- January 2022/ U.S. Department of State

The project’s main goal was to recruit a network of young women from both banks of the Nistru River and empower them to take on a leadership role in the political, social, and economic life of the Republic of Moldova. The project was implemented by the Association of Foreign Policy and the Resonance Center (NGO from left bank of the Nistru River), in cooperation with the American Center from Chisinau.

The project recruited 34 young women from both banks of the Nistru River and offered them extensive theoretical knowledge and practical skills of leadership values and vision, taught them communication and negotiation skills, and one-to-one coaching regarding their career path and leadership role. The total of 30 young women graduated from Speranta School and received the Certificate of Completion.

The participants had the opportunity to meet with seven prominent social leaders and businesswomen from the country to learn from their professional and personal experience, and their leadership style.

By the end of the program every young woman -participant had elaborated her career road improvement and her personal leadership career path plan. During the entire period of the project the trainers provided coach one-to-one the participants to self-evaluate their leadership proficiency, skills, and their communication abilities.

The experts developed and implemented “Women in Leadership” curriculum, which will serve as a guide for future seminars and trainings in leadership instruction.

[Five thematic video clips](#) were created “Inspiring Women Leadership”, which were uploaded to social media and will serve to encourage young women to take the leadership in their community.

The project created a [Facebook page of School of Young Women Leaders](#) from both Banks of Nistru River.

5. Contribution of the civil society to the development of the Romania - Republic of Moldova Strategic Partnership for the European integration of the Republic of Moldova, BST/GMF

The project aimed to undertake an exhaustive and independent evaluation of the Strategic Partnership between Romania and the Republic of Moldova, as well as to develop a roadmap highlighting the strategic areas of cooperation between these two states that requires medium to long term efforts aiming to develop sizable reforms and bolster the European path of the Republic of Moldova. The project was implemented by APE in partnership with CRPE, a well-known think-tank from Romania.

The project's experts both from APE and CRPE conducted a series of structured interviews and meetings with experts and high-level officials from Romania and the Republic of Moldova, as well as diplomats and experts with relevant experience in the field of projects and programs carried out under the Strategic Partnership. A broad public event was organized in online format due to pandemic restrictions. However, both sides Chisinau and Bucharest expressed a high interest towards the first assessment report of the Strategic Partnership outlining the key-findings and main recommendations to maximize the impact of the special relationship between these two countries. In addition, it was elaborated a short paper after the joint meeting of Chisinau and Bucharest governments, analyzing the new commitments within old – new projects and programs taking into consideration the favorable political landscape in both countries.

3. 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:

- Assist governmental institutions in achieving Moldova's European integration goals. APE will do so through constructive monitoring and research, expertise input and project partnerships (focus on the cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Ministry of Defence, Bureau for reintegration and other relevant state institutions, etc.);
- Conduct research on Eastern Partnership format of cooperation and further developments for EaP countries, in particular for Moldova. To this end, APE will renew and continue the EaP Security Forum project implemented throughout 2021. The project focused its activities on three main security dimensions: enhancing cybersecurity, ensuring intelligence reform, and offsetting hybrid threats and strengthening the national defense capabilities, but the new project proposal will follow a revised and updated concept, with its security policy areas substantially expanded to cover the new priorities on the EaP agenda and global security trends and challenges;
- Continue issuing the local Newsletter Synthesis of Foreign Policy;
- Provide monthly comments and analysis on domestic and external events also on matters related to good governance and European affairs, as well as security and defense issues, in English, Romanian and Russian; In the coming year, APE will expand its research and project activities to cover security issues better and will collaborate with foreign NGOs from Ukraine, Georgia and Romania;

- Participate in the activities organized within the Civil Society Platform in the Security and Defense Sector;
 - Continue the format of discussions and debates on Moldovan European integration, security and foreign policy with APE Live and the public events and discussions organized within the EaP Security Forum project;
 - Increase 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; APE will make use of its publications, written analyses and publications, public presentations and events, as well as participation and appearances in mass-media to educate the public and raise the awareness of Moldovan citizens and enable them to be better informed about these topics/issues;
 - Improve the communication of both public authorities and non-governmental experts on issues and matters related to Moldova's foreign policy developments, challenges and choices in ensuring national security, the implications of regional in/security dynamics and the foreign policy choices of global powers and Moldova's strategic partners. APE will develop a project that is dedicated to strategic/public communication, in partnership with a local media outlet.
2. Facilitating the Transnistrian conflict settlement:
- Promote confidence building measures between the Republic of Moldova and its Transnistrian breakaway region at all levels: civil society, business community, local administrations;
 - Increase the role of civil society in promoting confidence building measures in the areas of "frozen conflicts" of the Eastern Partnership;
 - Work on doing research, writing articles, short analyses and commentaries on this topic to pursue this goal.
3. Strengthening the role of authorities and other entities in Security Sector Reform:
- Raise the awareness of authorities and journalists about their role in promoting and implementing the security sector reform as part of the good governance process;
 - 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; Continue developing APE's network of security experts through the EaP Security Forum Project.
4. Strengthening the skills of APE staff, institutional communication, organizational management and advocacy practices:
- Improve the APE communication strategy with a focus on having national and international outreach; elaborate a new communication strategy in accordance with existing and emerging trends and challenges;
 - Enhance the analytical and advocacy skills of APE staff, as well as their knowledge on research methodology to ensure quality research, publications and policy recommendations from APE. Share and promote among the APE staff training opportunities related to: strategic communication, leadership and advocacy, fundraising, research methods (qualitative and quantitative) and design, policy analysis, policy memo/briefs writing; (e.g. complete online courses on Coursera/Udemy);

- Initiate an internal governance audit and a financial audit; Work on all necessary internal documentation;
- Initiate a process of elaborating a public relations strategy;
- Diversify its projects and sources of financing/income.

In order to achieve the aforementioned plans and goals, APE will undertake the following actions in the coming year 2022:

- Publish at least 15 Policy Briefs on Moldova's European association challenges and perspectives, Transnistrian Confidence Building processes, Information resilience, Security Sector Reform, Human rights, Resilience building, cooperation between Moldova and USA, EU, Ukraine, Romania, Russia Federation, etc;
- Continue the analytical public debates "APE Live: European Integration, Security and Foreign Policy Debates" and the EaP Security Forum project public debates, discussions and presentations, whether as online or in person events;
- Organize around 5 public discussions for academia and universities (students, professors) from Moldova;
- Organize with FES the 9th Annual Moldovan European Integration Debate Forum, Chisinau, 2022;
- Drafting and receiving financial support for the submitted project proposals according to the APE objectives.