

PARTNERS REPORTING TEMPLATE

Guidance to the PM when tailoring the reporting format to the specific programme or partner: the green sections should preferably be obligatory. The orange sections can be left out and deleted, or the partner can be asked to only fill it out, if relevant.

Project title and name of partner	Strategic development & strengthening of legal and regulatory framework for independent media in Moldova Association of Electronic Press
Project period/duration of contract:	From 1 January 2023 until 30 June 2023
Budget and spendings – please state the budget, the actual spending and explain deviations exceeding +/- 10% per budget line.	Total budget – 31.054,00 EUR. Total expenses – 30.872,29 EUR. We have no deviations exceeding +10% per budget line. On 4 out of 5 budget lines, the expenses are one hundred percent. Only in Operational Costs, EUR 181.71 less was spent than was fixed in the budget. This saving (about 3% of the budget line amount) is due to the fact that the rates for some services became cheaper in the spring, including electricity and other utilities. Currency exchange rates also contributed to this. If in January, at the first installment, 1 EUR was equivalent to 20.32 MDL, then in April (installment 2) it was 19.70 MDL, and in May (installment 3) it was 19.40 MDL.

1. QUALITATIVE RESULTS - MOST SIGNIFICANT RESULTS

Please write the most significant results achieved during the project period. This could be examples of actions taken (changes in structures, cooperation/relationships, practices and/or resource allocations) by communities, civil society or duty-bearers (authorities, international tech companies etc) to further democracy, accountability and human rights. It could also be if you as a partner has changed practice or established new cooperations etc. In this section it's important to focus on the results and not the activities – e.g. what happened after a training, how was a research used, how did authorities and communities react to a journalist investigation etc.

IMS is using Outcome Harvesting as a method to describe the most significant results. For inspiration please watch this video: [How is an Outcome Statement formulated? on Vimeo](#)

Make sure to state 1. **The outcome description:** WHO and WHAT changed and WHEN and WHERE the change took place; 2. **The significance:** why is change important; 3. **The contribution:** What did IMS, the programme and/or you as a partner did that led to the changes.

See examples of outcome statements in the annex at the end of the document

Outcome 1: Adoption of the law on access to information of public interest

The outcome description (3-5 sentences)

On June 9, 2023, the Parliament of Moldova adopted the Law on access to information of public interest, a particularly important document aimed at ensuring transparency in the public sector (the document had been adopted in the first reading on May 11, 2023). The draft law was developed by the Ministry of Justice with the support of the European Union back in 2022 and since then it has been improved including with the support of civil society. The new law provides for the expansion of the list of information providers, as well as the reduction of the deadline for examining and resolving requests.

The significance (5-8 sentences)

The legislation related to freedom of access to information in Moldova, as a framework law transposing this constitutional right this is why it is a very important law. Finally, this law is an action expressly drawn up in the Action Plan for the implementation of the measures proposed by the European Commission in its Opinion on Moldova's application to join the European Union.

The contribution (5-8 sentences)

This topic was discussed within the Working Group (WG) for the improvement of media legislation in two consecutive meetings at the beginning of this year. At the same time, APEL was among the first NGOs to propose amendments to the draft law under debate, even before the adoption of the document in the first reading, sending the suggestions of its experts both to the Legal Parliamentary Committee and to the Media Parliamentary Committee. Moreover, he managed to carry out an international expertise on the draft law which was sent to the two committees on May 24, 2023.

Outcome 2: The National Program for development of media and the Action Plan on the agenda of the Parliament

The outcome description (3-5 sentences)

After some deadlock that existed last year due to the fact that the financial cost estimation stage was not completed, it was agreed that the National Program for development of the media and Action Plan for its implementation was finally transformed into a legislative initiative on April 25 2023. The project was included on the agenda of the Parliament meeting on June 30, but it did not end up being discussed. Hopefully it will happen at the next meeting

The significance (5-8 sentences)

The document we are talking about was developed on the basis of the National concept for the development of mass media in the Republic of Moldova that was voted back in June 2018. More than four years after the voting of this concept, which should be a reference document for policies public in this field, the authorities have not yet approved a program and action plan for implementation. We must draw attention to the fact that in the absence of a media development program and an action plan for its implementation, there is a risk that the media will develop chaotically, which should be avoided.

The contribution (5-8 sentences)

APEL experts worked on this document and presented it to the WG members during 2022. At the WG meeting on 19 January 2023, it was agreed to make the necessary adjustments so that it could be sent to the Parliamentary Committee. Work that was done on January 27, 2023. On May 12, APEL experts came up with the last adjustments after receiving the opinions of the Government and other authorities, so that it was prepared to be submitted to the vote of the deputies in the Parliament.

Outcome 3: Acceptance of the draft law on the Media Subsidy Fund as a legislative initiative

The outcome description (3-5 sentences)

The Media Parliamentary Committee organized on June 25, 2023, public consultations in order to register the draft law on the Subsidy Fund in the field of mass media as a legislative initiative. This is expected to happen in the coming weeks. The WG experts debated this draft Law on the media subvention fund in three meetings during the past year.

The significance (5-8 sentences)

The creation of a Fund to subsidize and support the media and the projects developed by the media is vital for the poor market in Moldova. The project is not an innovation at the European level. The analysis of the practices of other states shows that such funds have been created and have been operating in several countries for many years. That is why it is important to adopt good practices.

The contribution (5-8 sentences)

APEL elaborated and proposed part of the amendments proposed by the authors and, within the WG, participated in the debate and final drafting of the amendments. Also, in support of this initiative, in the informative note, APEL experts reviewed the national regulatory framework in the field and the previous attempts to establish legal provisions to support the mass media, in order to strengthen its economic sustainability. APEL experts also sent on June 29, 2023, new proposals to the document after discussions at the meeting organized by the Committee for Media on June 25, 2023.

Outcome 4: Approval of the Regulation on the contest for the measurement of audience shares and market shares

The outcome description (3-5 sentences)

The Audiovisual Council approved in its meeting of May 26, 2023, the draft Regulation regarding the company selection contest for measuring audience shares and market shares in the period 2024-2029. The approval of the document was made after a long period of debate that involved two public consultations, including the participation of national experts and an international expert. The draft Regulation was submitted for expertise to the Ministry of Justice and for approval by the Competition Council.

The significance (5-8 sentences)

The measurement of audience and market shares in Moldova is an intensively discussed topic recently. The company that currently performs the TV measurements was previously criticized by a part of civil society, but also by some market operators. In this case, the manner in which he won the competition in 2019 (he was the only competitor) was criticized, considering that the competition was rigged. This is why it is important that the regulation is good and excludes the possibility of vice.

The contribution (5-8 sentences)

APEL experts formulated a series of recommendations on the Regulation and participated in the consultations organized by the CA, coming up with suggestions. The importance of the participation of APEL experts is underlined by their recent experience in the field when they conducted a study on the media landscape, the competition on the advertising market and the TV ratings measurement system.

2. PROGRESS ON ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Please list your activities and outputs – as indicated in the project proposal, MoU or contract – in the table below. If targets were set in the project proposals, please insert the targets and results below. Please disaggregating by gender/sex, when relevant. See examples in the annex at the end of the document

Indicator	Target	Result	Comments
Activity 1 Updating the component of the WG (<i>Number of meetings</i>)	Updated WG; 5 meetings of WG	The nominal updated composition of WG; 7 meetings of WG	Two of the 7 meetings took place in the Parliament, the other 5 - in online format
Activity 2 Elaboration of the agenda and organization of the WG meetings (<i>Number of minutes</i>)	One minute per meeting	One minute per meeting	No comments
Activity 3. Systematization of proposals and comments made within the WG. Preparation of the final documents with amendments (<i>Number of sets of proposals</i>)	4 sets of proposals on the draft amendments to the media legislation	5 sets of proposals on the draft amendments on the following draft documents: 1. <i>Draft Law on access to information of public interest</i> 2. <i>The National Program for the development of the media and the Action Plan for its implementation</i> 3. <i>Draft Law on the Media Subsidy Fund.</i> 4. <i>Draft Law on Centre for Informational Defense and Combating Propaganda – Patriot</i> 5. <i>Draft Law amending Audiovisual media services Code</i>	Some documents were worked on during several meetings, but no proposals have been made for now. As for example, the information security component of the National Security Strategy, discussed at two meetings in June
Activity 4 Providing the documents with amendments to the Parliamentary Committee for Media (<i>Number of sets of amendments</i>)	4 sets of draft amendments to the media legislation	5 sets of proposals on the draft amendments on the following draft documents: 1. <i>Draft Law on access to information of public interest</i> 2. <i>The National Program for the development of the media and the Action Plan for its implementation</i> 3. <i>Draft Law on the Media Subsidy Fund.</i> 4. <i>Draft Law on Centre for Informational Defense and Combating Propaganda - Patriot</i> 5. <i>Draft Law amending Audiovisual media services Code</i>	The proposals for the draft law on access to information of public interest were sent to the Parliamentary Media Committee and also to the Legal Committee
Activity 5 Continuing the cooperation with the CA in order to identify the normative acts that need to be revised (<i>Number of acts</i>)	3 normative acts	4 normative acts: 1. <i>The regulation of the competition for the designation of the TV audience measurement company;</i> 2. <i>The Regulation on the classification of media service providers;</i> 3. <i>The regulation on radio and TV election coverage</i> 4. <i>The Regulation on broadcasting license</i>	There are several normative acts in the process of consultation and approval.
Activity 6 The expertise of the CA's normative acts (<i>Number of expertise's</i>)	2 expertise's	3 expertise's: 1) <i>Instruction on the dissemination of information regarding the state of emergency, siege and war;</i> 2) <i>Regulation on broadcasting license;</i> 3) <i>Regulation on the contest for measurement of TV ratings;</i>	No comments
Activity 7	2 expertise's and 2 analytical notes	3 expertise's:	The analytical note is actually an analysis of the CA's

Providing to the CA the expertise of normative acts with proposals and recommendations (<i>Number of expertise's</i>)		<p>1) <i>Instruction on the dissemination of information regarding the state of emergency, siege and war;</i></p> <p>2) <i>Regulation on broadcasting license;</i></p> <p>3) <i>Regulation on the contest for measurement of TV ratings;</i></p> <p>1 analytical note:</p> <p>1) <i>Analytical note on the activity report of the Audiovisual Council for 2022;</i></p> <p>2 concept notes:</p> <p>1) <i>Note on the development of the methodology for evaluating audiovisual pluralism</i></p> <p>2) <i>Note regarding TV audience measurement system</i></p>	annual activity report accompanied by a proposal for a scheme for developing a methodology
Activity 8 Elaboration and presentation the final narrative and financial reports	It is presented	It is presented	No comments
<u>Additional activity</u> Providing to the CA draft methodologies for monitoring pluralism and dominant situation	3 draft methodologies	3 draft methodologies 1) <i>Internal audio-visual pluralism</i> 2) <i>External audio-visual pluralism</i> 3) <i>Dominant situation in the formation of public opinion</i>	No comments
<i>please add more rows if needed</i>			

3. REFLECTIONS ON RESULTS AND ACHEIVEMENTS AND PROPOSED CHANGES AND DEVIATIONS (max 1 page)

Please reflect in brief on the results and achievements described in the boxes above (item 1 and 2). Is the project progressing as planned? Are there any challenges? How were the challenges addressed? Or any need to adjust the strategy or intervention?

The activities carried out under the project during the reporting period were in line with our expectations. During the implementation of the project, several challenges arose that required the adaptation of activities to the created situation.

The biggest challenge was related to the intensification of street protests in Chisinau and concerns about Moscom's plans to initiate such political power-shifting actions in Moldova with the aim of derailing its European course. For this reason, the legislative and executive institutions had other priorities during this complicated period.

However, APEL experts continued their work and addressed other issues, with a focus on the secondary legislation dimension of CA. Also, work was done in the first part on the level of electoral regulations considering the fact that in 2023 there will be local elections in autumn in Moldova. Thus, we came up with suggestions for the Regulation on political and electoral advertising and the Regulation on media coverage of elections. The importance of these elections is that they will take place under the new electoral code.

After some normalization of the political situation, in the months of May-June more and quite productive work was done on the dimension of the primary legislation.

These are the basic challenges that the project had to adapt to.

4. GENDER (max 1/2 page) - – if applicable

Please describe any specific activities or results related to gender and inclusion. This can be media content specifically focusing on gender issues, safety of female journalists, gender audits conducted, gender sensitive editorial guidelines etc.

We would like to point out that in the updated nominal composition of the working group there are 8 experts from media organizations, of which 4 are women and 4 are men.

It is also worth noting that the applicable project assistant position as of March was awarded to a woman.

At the same time, in the process of working on expertized documents, we take gender aspects into account.

5. LEARNING (max 1/2 page) – if applicable

Please describe examples of which intervention strategies/activities/partnerships that were especially successful in contributing to results and why? Looking ahead, how will you use this to increase the chances of achieving results? Are there any best practices or possibilities for scaling up?

Did the project face any challenge, where things didn't work out that well? How was this addressed? What were the learning related to this

The implementation of the project takes place in the complicated regional and local context as a result of the war in Ukraine with an impact on Moldova.

The situation got complicated at the beginning of this year, and Moldovan officials talked about the fact that Moldova would be Russia's next target. These months have seen numerous anti-government protests organized by people associated with the pro-Russian Shor Party led by fugitive oligarch Ilan Shor implicated in the massive 2014 bank fraud.

After one government recently fell amid growing public anger over higher prices, President Maia Sandu and others have accused Moscow of lurking in the shadows, pulling the strings of these protests and seeking to further destabilize Moldova.

The changes conditioned legislative activity and APEL to adjust its activities provided by the project according to Parliament's priorities in order to be able to continue its activity in this context.

Anyway, the changes made could not restrict the activity of APEL in the implementation of the project, they only determined certain adjustments according to the priorities that appeared in the activity of the Parliament and the CA.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ADD ANY OTHER ISSUES YOU FIND RELEVANT AND WHICH WAS NOT MENTIONED ABOVE

At the end of May, President Maia Sandu announced the creation of the Patriot Center for Defense Information and Combating Propaganda. APEL and WG colleagues should continue to watch how events unfold on this topic.

It should also be noted that in June, APEL presented two draft methodologies for monitoring internal and external pluralism, as well as the dominant situation in the formation of public opinion. These acts are very important for the CA and APEL experts will ensure that after discussions with the CA members and other colleagues, acts are approved that meet the requirements of the day.

Vasile State,



Executive Director of APEL