

MOLDOVAN DIASPORA IN THE EUROPEAN UNION: HOW IT HELPS THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA^{1 2}

DIASPORA MOLDOVENĂ ÎN UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ: CUM AJUTĂ EA
LA INTEGRAREA EUROPEANĂ A REPUBLICII MOLDOVA

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Summary

In the recent decades the Moldovan diaspora residing in European union countries has been playing an increasingly active role in supporting the course of European integration, promoted by the Moldovan authorities. Moldovan migrants are embracing democratic values and the EU's demonstration effect contributes to the growing support for the Republic of Moldova's integration into the European Union. The primary indicator of belonging to the diaspora is the migrants' desire to maintain their ties to their home country. Using sociological research as a base, the article analyzes the participation of Moldovan migrants in the political and socio-economic processes from the Republic of Moldova. The diaspora is actively involved in the Moldovan political life, however its economic participation in the development of their

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country of origin is mainly limited to monetary transfers. At the same time there is a category of migrants that are willing to invest in the Moldovan economy. The Moldovan authorities must create a beneficial investment climate in the country, provide for an effective use of the Moldovan diaspora's resources for the sustainable development of Moldova, its progress along the way of European integration.

Keywords: *Moldovan diaspora, European Union, European integration, parliamentary elections, presidential elections, remittances.*

Introduction

The current top priority of the foreign policy of the Republic of Moldova's is European integration. In spite of the difficulties and the controversial actions of the Moldovan authorities, societal division over the geopolitical vector, the country is moving along its course of European integration. In the last decade the Moldovan diaspora that formed in European Union countries has become an active participant in the process. Currently, the EU primary destination for Moldovan labor migrants, and the place where most of them permanently reside.

The complex internal political situation and difficult socio-economic conditions are forcing Moldovan citizens to leave the country. Youth are the most active part of the population that tends to emigrate, and they choose European Union countries in search of decent salaries and better opportunities for self-realization. Thus, at the beginning of 2024 the share of young people aged 14-34 made up 567.7 thousand individuals, or 23,4% of the population of the Republic of Moldova. Compared to the same period of the previous year, the population of this age group decreased by 39.4 thousand, or by 6.5% [28]. Being abroad, the young Moldovan migrants better assimilate democratic values, whereas the EU's demonstration effect contributes to the increase of support for the course of Moldova's European integration.

The dominant indicator of diaspora belonging is the migrants' willing decision to maintain ties to their country of origin, to contribute to its sustainable development. In this regard one can speak of the participation of Moldovan migrants in the electoral processes, as well of their socio-economic input into the development of Moldova as a whole, and of its local communities in particular.

The article uses data from the empirical sociological research conducted in 2016-2017 and 2022-2023 that were conducted with the direct participation of the authors. The 2016-2017 survey has been dedicated to charting the Moldovan diaspora in six countries (Germany, the United Kingdom, Israel, Italy, Portugal, and the Russian Federation), with four of them being of an interest to this research: Germany, the UK, Italy, and Portugal. In order to determine the dynamics of development of Moldovan communities/ diaspora in EU countries, a second sociological study had been conducted in 2022-2023, in which the scope of the research

had been expanded to include all EU member-states, as well as the countries of the European Economic Community.

The participation of the Moldovan diaspora in electoral processes

When analyzing the participation of Moldovan migrants in political and electoral processes, it should be noted that the most common form of political activity among Moldovan communities is participation in elections, which allows migrants to express their political opinion and influence the political agenda of their homeland. As such, many states strive to reach out to their citizens that are staying abroad and appeal to their support in the homeland development.

Furthermore, a number of states (France, Italy, Portugal, Croatia, Moldova, and others) provide for a special representation of their citizens that reside abroad in the national parliament [30]. In France the diaspora has the right to elect 12 senators. Starting with 2012, the French diaspora is also represented at National Assembly level. In Italy the diaspora can vote by mail for 12 members of parliament and 6 senators, who would be representing its interests [6]. In the parliament of the Republic of Moldova, the Moldovan diaspora is represented by 3 deputies.

The political participation of the diaspora depends on a number of factors that can both stimulate and block its activity. Among these we can highlight a country’s electoral legislation and political rights; the structure of political opportunities tied to the accessibility of the electoral system in both the country of origin, and the country of residence.

We should underline that previously the Moldovan communities abroad were viewed primarily as an object of political influence. Today, however, a gradual transformation is taking place, and Moldovan communities are becoming the subject of political life in the Republic of Moldova. The Moldovan diaspora’s activity in the electoral process is on the rise. There is a constantly growing number of Moldovan citizens abroad that partake in parliamentary and presidential elections, in their country of origin (table 1). This allows the diaspora to influence the process of political and state decision-making in Moldova.

Table 1. The dynamics of Moldovan diaspora participation in parliamentary and presidential elections in the Republic of Moldova (1994-2024), people

<i>Parliamentary elections</i>									
<i>1994</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2009.1</i>	<i>2009.2</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2021</i>
1.948	3.193	3.806	10.038	16.805	17.544	64.199	73.311	76.601	212.145

<i>Presidential elections</i>					
<i>2016.1</i>	<i>2016.2</i>	<i>2020.1</i>	<i>2020.2</i>	<i>2024.1</i>	<i>2024.2</i>
67.205	138.720	150.022	263.177	240.548	328.855

Before 2010 there have been 34 polling stations active outside of the Republic of Moldova, which allowed approximately 16.000 voters to partake in the elections (1.09% of the total number of voters). The extraordinary elections 2010 saw, for the first time, an increase in the number of polling stations to 84. More than 64.000 Moldovan citizens participated in the elections (3.7% of the total number of voters), which was approximately three times more than in the previous elections.

The parliamentary elections of 2014 introduced preliminary online-registration for voters at Moldovan diplomatic missions. This was primarily done to find out the number of additional polling stations that were to be opened alongside the already active ones at the diplomatic missions and consulates.

The internal political events in Moldova (the billion dollar theft, political instability, high degree of corruption) have been reflected by the reduced interest on the diaspora's behalf to participate in the presidential elections on the 30th of October, 2016. Following the experience of the 2010 and 2014 elections, there have been opened 100 polling stations in 33 countries, of which 40 were opened at diplomatic missions, and 60 at pre-determined locations. In European Union countries the most polling stations were opened in Italy (25), Romania (11), France (6), Portugal (4), and Spain (4) [20].

In the first round of the elections, the number of voters was of 67.205 people. In the second round, the diaspora's activity has significantly increased and the number of voters grew two-fold. In spite of the fact that the elections were won by I. Dodon, the Moldovan diaspora has shown its absolute support for M. Sandu, who gather 86% of votes in the diaspora, compared to the 13.8% gathered by I. Dodon. In EU countries M. Sandu gathered 94.83% of the votes in France, 94.5% in Germany, 91.33% in Spain, 90.89% in Italy, 86.08% in Portugal, and 78.84% in Greece [9].

To support the Moldovan citizens abroad that resided too far from the voting stations and could not reach them on their own, the diaspora launched an online campaign on social media called "Adotă un vot" ('Adopt a vote') that received a widespread backing and gathered more than 25 thousand members of the Moldovan diaspora, who offered support with travel and lodging arrangements.

In the opinion of the Moldovan researcher N. Putina, the reason for the diaspora's limited participation in the elections can be a shortage of information,

or the disinterest in the events that are unfolding at home, in Moldova. Likewise not interested in the elections are Moldovan citizens that have integrated into the host society and do not make plans for a future in Moldova, as well as those who are skeptical of the Moldovan authorities to improve the situation in the Republic of Moldova [25, p. 135].

The 2016-2017 survey has shown that the number of migrants that do not follow the economic, political, and social situation in Moldova makes up almost a fourth of the respondents. The 2022-2023 survey has shown an increase in the number of Moldovan migrants that do follow the goings-on in Moldova, and accordingly, a decrease in the number of those, who have no interest in the situation (table 2).

Table 2. Following the situation in Moldova

	Italy	Portugal	Germany	The United Kingdom	Total	2022-2023 survey
Yes	81.7%	73.7%	77.5%	72.7%	76.4%	84.2%
No	18.3%	26.3%	22.5%	27.3%	23.6%	15.8%

In the 2020 presidential elections the Moldovan diaspora has manifested a high degree of mobilization. More than 263 thousand representatives of the Moldovan diaspora took part in the second round, and almost 93% of them voted for M. Sandu. This is the first time in the history of presidential elections in Moldova that a candidate received such strong electoral support from the Moldovan diaspora. The diaspora did not simply take an active part in the election, it effectively determined the victor.

For the 2021 parliamentary elections, taking into account the increase of electoral activity of the Moldovan diaspora, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration proposed the opening of 191 voting stations abroad, in 38 countries. The Central Electoral Commission insisted on opening fewer stations, but after the decision of the Supreme Court, 150 stations were opened in 36 countries, which is by 11 more than in the presidential elections of 2020. As an exception Moldovan voters abroad were allowed to vote even if their Moldovan passport was expired [10].

The Moldovan diaspora clearly voted for PAS, which obtained 86,23% of the votes abroad. However it would be a mistake to assume that the “Acțiune și Solidaritate” Party (“Action and Solidarity”) won only because of the diaspora. It won within the country, the diaspora merely reinforced the party’s victorious final results in the election.

The presidential (2024) elections and the constitutional referendum on amending the Constitution in order to facilitate the country's accession to the European Union that took place at the same time as the first round of the presidential elections became a testimony to the significant activity of Moldovan citizens abroad, including in the EU countries. In total, 240.548 Moldovan citizens came to the voting stations (15.39% of the total number of voters).

The diaspora influenced the results of the constitutional referendum, supporting the "Yes" option (76,8%) in favor of amending the Constitution with the goal of allowing the Republic of Moldova to join the European Union. According to the data of the Association for Participatory Democracy (ADEPT), this input of the diaspora played the deciding role in confirming the results of the referendum, which has shown that 50.35% choose European integration [31].

The number of Moldovan citizens residing abroad that participated in the second round of the presidential elections was of 328.855 individuals, which is an absolute record for the Moldovan diaspora. This kind of increased mobility compared to the previous elections confirms the support for Moldova's European integration among the Moldovan diaspora.

M. Sandu has been elected President of the Republic of Moldova for the second time, with 930.139 citizens voting for her (55.33%). Her opponent, the former Prosecutor General, A. Stoianoglo obtained 750.430 votes (44.67%) [14]. What was peculiar about the situation was that the candidate that lost the elections within the country had won the elections abroad. M. Sandu won an absolute victory at the voting stations opened abroad – 82.83% of the voters elected her. A. Stoianoglo accrued 17.17% of the votes of Moldovan citizens residing abroad. It was thanks to the votes of the Moldovan diaspora that the current president won, overcoming her competitor by almost 11%. In our opinion the second round of the presidential elections reflects the actual level of support for European integration among the Moldovan population, and the Moldovan diaspora acts an active proponent of this process.

It should be noted that the continuing migration of the Moldovan population from the country, and, at the same time, its desire to maintain ties to its homeland, including by way of participation in elections, raises the question of the multiple electoral forms. In our opinion, in-person voting is preferable for Moldovan migrants who have access to voting stations, whereas e-voting and mail-in voting will allow those members of the diaspora, who reside too far from the voting stations to realize their right to vote.

Considering the desire of the Moldovan diaspora to partake in the electoral processes of its home-country, in 2024 the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted the Law on the partial implementation of mail-in voting [15]. The presi-

dential elections and the referendum on European integration were the premiere, where voters from the USA, Canada, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Iceland had the possibility of main-in voting. Within the established time-frame 1447 voters had sent in the envelopes with their second round ballot [17]. Further development of this form of electoral participation will allow a larger number of Moldovan migrants to partake in the parliamentary and presidential elections in the Republic of Moldova.

The input of the Moldovan diaspora into the sustainable development of the Republic of Moldova

Unlike the Moldovan migrants' political activity, the economic projects that contribute to the country's socio-economic development have not yet received proper attention from the Moldovan diaspora. Recently, however, the issue of the Moldovan diaspora's input into the Republic of Moldova's sustainable development has become a subject of state policy and has drawn the attention of the scientific community.

The impact of labor migrants' monetary transfers (remittances) on the economic development of the country of origin is explored thoroughly in both national and foreign scientific literature. Monetary transfers are one of the elements of development equation, alongside direct foreign investments, the liberalization of trade, and improved governance [21], and represent a net gain for the recipient country [4]. Furthermore, in the opinion of D. Drbohlav, financial transfers are closely linked to social transfers that include values, behaviors, identity and social capital that flows transnationally from the host country to the country of origin. By embracing these new values, rules, ideas, behavior models, and practices migrants can enrich the society of their country of origin and contribute to the development of social relations [7, p. 528].

For a long time Moldova has been in the world's top ten countries with the highest volumes of incoming remittances. The conducted analysis relies on official data on Moldovan migrants' monetary transfers through banks, as well as on the estimates of the National Bank of Moldova (table 3). In the period between 2005 and 2008 the volume of remittances has been continuously growing and made up, on average, 31% of the country's GDP. It peaked in 2006, when monetary transfers made up 34.67% of the GDP [16, p.5]. In 2009 there has been a noted decline in the influx of foreign currency, which was tied to the influence of the global economic crisis on the labor market and the incomes of labor migrants. In 2010 the influx of foreign currency again manifested a growing trend, the volume of remittances through banks increasing by 5.3% compared to 2009 [23, p. 127].

Table 3. Volume of monetary transfers to Moldova

Year	Flux of remittances to the Republic of Moldova	GDP share (%)
2000	178.600.000	13,8
2001	243.320.000	16,4
2002	323.740.000	19,4
2003	486.630.000	24,5
2004	705.240.000	27,1
2005	920.310.000	30,8
2006	1.181.720.000	34,6
2007	1.498.230.000	34
2008	1.897.300.000	31,2
2009	1.182.020.000	24,9
2010	1.244.140.000	25,1
2011	1.441.930.000	21,5
2012	1.494.230.000	22,8
2013	1.608.980.000	23,1
2014	1.612.960.000	21,8
2015	1.227.370.000	19,9
2016	1.160.560.000	18,2
2017	1.199.870.000	16,9
2018	1.266.840.000	16,05
2019	1.222.890.000	16,05
2020	1.486.740.000	15,8
2021	1.611.000.000	15,5
2022	1.745.000.000	15,4
2023	1.627.000.000	9,5

Source: National Bank of Moldova Database. <https://www.bnm.md/bdi>; The World Bank Data. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?end=2021&locations=MD&start=1995&view=chart>

In 2018 and 2019 Moldovan migrants' remittances made up 16.05% of the GDP [11, p.7; 32]. In the recent years the share of monetary transfers within the GDP continued shrinking, still remaining an important source of income for many Moldovan families. In 2023 the share of monetary transfers of Moldovan labor migrants made up 9.5% of the GDP, which provided grounds for statements that "the "golden age" of monetary transfers is reaching its end, and that "transfers no longer determine the country's growth and development", but at the same time "that they are impossible to replace with investments or economic growth" [8].

Monetary transfers play an important part in decreasing the country's balance of payments deficit, contribute to the development of the service sector and guarantee a basic living standard for thousands of households in the Republic of Moldova [12]. The influx of monetary means from Moldovan citizens that work abroad, on the one hand, contributes to the diminishing of absolute poverty, especially in the rural areas, but on the other hand, leads to the increase of inequality between households, between those that receive remittances and those that do not [24, p. 47-48].

Researchers have developed two contradicting views: the optimistic point of view underlines the positive effect of the investment of migrants' money into sustainable development projects for the country of origin. Researchers such as R. Adams, J. Page, H. Haas, N. Catrinescu note that a significant part of the migrants' monetary transfers is used for funds and investments [1; 5]. Migrants' monetary transfers can be invested into infrastructure development projects (construction of roads, churches, cultural landmarks, etc.), which will increase the positive effect on the economic development of local communities in the long term [27].

From the pessimistic point of view the monetary transfers have a negative impact upon local communities. This manifests among recipients in the decreased motivation to work. Furthermore, in poor countries the majority of monetary transfers from abroad are used primarily for consumption. On the one hand this leads to the improvement of living conditions of households, but on the other, this improvement is attained not through economic activity, but rather through the influx of financial resources from abroad [13].

International experience shows that an important field of investment of the means obtained from migrants' monetary transfers is the establishing of businesses and enterprises in the migrants' country of origin. Working abroad labor migrants gather entrepreneurial skills that can be put to use at home. However, the current unfavorable investment and business climate in Moldova does not contribute to the establishment of businesses or investment into projects on the migrants' or their family members' behalf. Research shows that only a fraction of remittances are used for financing entrepreneurial or investment activities, herewith the migrants

themselves are more active in this regard than their family members, who receive remittances [12, p. 64-65].

In the process of realization of entrepreneurial activity migrants and the members of their households are facing objective and subjective difficulties. As an objective difficulty we can mention the difficult socio-economic situation in Moldova. Among the subjective difficulties we can list corruption, ineffective administration, access to banking services and trust towards financial institutions, and shortage of qualified workforce [3, p. 105]. Issues tied moral risks and initially low profit margins have a negative impact on the financing of entrepreneurial activity, and lead to bankruptcy of many Moldovan migrants' businesses shortly after their establishment [29, p. 20].

In 2022 there has been an absolute record in the volume of monetary transfers from abroad in favor of natural persons, which was of 1 billion, 745.74 million US Dollars, increasing by 8.3% compared to 2021. However in the following years, in spite of the high quantitative indexes, the volumes of monetary transfers from abroad began to dwindle. In 2023 this index declined by 6.7% and made up 1 billion, 627.75 million US Dollars. In January-May 2024 the volume of monetary transfers to Moldova was of \$664.48 million, declining by 2.9% compared to the same period in 2023 [34].

In the opinion of experts, a maximum of 80% of all labor migrant money is being transferred to Moldova through Moldovan banks. The other 20% are being transferred by automobile transports, bank cards issued abroad, through relatives and friends returning home, or personally, by the migrants themselves upon their return to Moldova [35].

Of interest is the opinion of I. Groza, an expert from the Institute for Strategic Initiatives, who considers that although currently monetary transfers remain a source that feeds Moldova's economic growth, the reunification of migrants' families abroad can lead to a decline of monetary arrivals into the country's GDP. Based on the assumption of a downward trend in the field of monetary transfers in the coming years, he considers that the authorities should focus on attracting the funds of Moldovan citizens that are being kept abroad. Based on the results of an analysis following UN sources, he notes that in 2019 the total sum of funds accrued by the Moldovan diaspora in 13 most populated countries of the world made up approximately 1.8 billion US Dollars. Of these, 1.06 billion were transferred to Moldova, and approximately 800 million Dollars were saved yearly [33]. Among the European Union countries, the Moldovan migrants in France, Italy, and Germany have the largest amount of funds.

In the expert's opinion, these means should be attracted into the Moldovan economy, which could contribute to the migrants' return home. One the national

programs for the attraction of migrants' funds is PARE 1+1. 2787 people joined the program since its launch in 2010, with 2186 of them receiving training the business establishment and development. 1453 entrepreneurs received non-reimbursable funding for a total sum of 293.12 million Leis and they have invested more than 893 million Leis into the national economy [19].

“Migration and local development” is another program through which migrants' funds are attracted into the development of local communities. At the first stage there have been established more than 40 locals' associations that, between 2015 and 2020 attracted investments amounting to 1.35 million dollars. This sum was supplemented by the 3 million Dollars coming from development partners and the 3.95 million Dollars coming from local authorities [33]. This program, under the auspices of the Bureau for Diaspora Relations, served as base for the 2019-2025 program ‘Diaspora Acasă Reușește (‘DAR’) 1+3’, directed towards the employment of the diaspora’s human and financial capital at the socio-economic development of the Republic of Moldova, and at stimulating the development of localities [2, p. 30].

Despite the realization of different state diaspora programs, the sociological surveys conducted by the authors show that Moldovan migrants are not adequately informed of the Moldovan authorities’ initiatives aimed at Moldovan citizens abroad (table 4). Only 11% of the respondents in European Union countries stated that they are aware of these programs, and this index did not change over the five year period.

Table 4. Awareness of the initiatives of the Moldovan government concerning Moldovan citizens abroad

	Italy	Portugal	Germany	The United Kingdom	Total	2022-2023 survey
Yes	12%	2,6%	11,2%	18,2%	11%	12,2%
No	85,6%	97,4%	88,8%	81,8%	88,4%	87,8%
No answer	2,4%	0%	0%	0%	0,6%	0%

However, the answers to the question about which specific initiatives of the Moldovan government they were aware of show that even those who responded affirmatively cannot name any concrete initiatives. In the opinion of V. Moșneaga this is tied to several factors. Firstly, the primary goal of the labor migrant is to make money, as such, they are primarily interested in the situation in the host

country. Secondly, there's the lack and frequent unavailability of information on the actions of the Moldovan authorities. Thirdly, there's the distribution of migrants in the country of residence and their deliberate undesire to communicate with their co-nationals [18, p. 142].

Another aspect pointing towards the unwillingness of Moldovan migrants and their relatives, who stay in Moldova, to invest in the development of entrepreneurship in the country of origin is the structure of distribution of funds, remitted by migrants. The results of sociological surveys show that in 2016-2017 every tenth respondent stated that their remittances were invested into land or agricultural equipment. In 2022-2023 only every fifteenth respondent stated this. Even less money is being spent on production. Despite the fact that in 2022-2023 there has been registered a doubling in the number of respondents, who stated their investment into production, this index is still very low.

The presence of investments in the country of origin shows that migrants' desire to maintain ties to their homeland, and likewise acts as a stimulus to return home, to Moldova. Unlike monetary transfers, entrepreneurial investments grant diaspora members a direct control over their own funds. Considering their ties to the country of origin, diaspora members are often more willing than foreign investors to partake in riskier economic ventures, or to get involved in developing markets. Furthermore their familiarity with the local political, economic, and cultural environment, as well as their personal ties and language skills can give them the advantage over competitors, when "pioneering" the investment of resources or establishment of enterprises in their homeland [22, p. 115].

The 2016-2017 survey has shown that only 14% of Moldovan diaspora members have investments in Moldova (table 5). The largest number of investors reside in Portugal and the United Kingdom (18%, each), whereas the smallest number – in Germany (8%). The overwhelming majority of Moldovan migrants have no investments in Moldova. At the same time, the 2022-2023 survey has registered an increase in the number of Moldovan citizens residing in EU countries that have such investments. When asked about investments in the home country, every sixth respondent gave a positive reply.

Table 5. Presence of investments into the Republic of Moldova

	Italy	Portugal	Germany	The United Kingdom	Total	2022-2023 survey
Yes	12,7%	18,4%	8%	18,2%	14,3%	18,2%
No	87,3%	81,6%	92%	81,8%	85,7%	81,8%

Our surveys show that there is a category of Moldovan migrants that should like to invest in businesses in the country of origin. In 2016-2017 this index was of 44%. After five years the number of respondents desiring to invest in the Moldovan economy declined to 36%. This decline can be explained by the instability of the political and economic situation in Moldova, distrust of the Moldovan authorities, the high level of corruption, high taxes, and the lack of perspectives. These are the motives explaining the high number of respondents who have no desire to invest in entrepreneurship in Moldova.

Over the course of conducted surveys we strove to identify what determines the desire of Moldovan labor migrants to invest in business in Moldova. Their replies can be divided into three groups: firstly, the presence of one's own enterprise, which is a source of income; secondly, the ability to live at home, with one's family; thirdly, homeland development. Economic growth as well as political and legal security in Moldova could contribute to the increase of investments. In general we can note that the presence of a migrant's business in Moldova acts as a stimulus for their return home, their desire to introduce European standards and values.

Conclusions

The conducted analysis of the Moldovan migrants' participation in the political and socio-economic processes shows that the Moldovan diaspora plays an important role in the economic and political life of the country of origin. The number of Moldovan citizens abroad partaking in parliamentary and presidential elections in Moldova is increasing yearly. The Moldovan diaspora's active inclusion into the country's political life speaks of its support for Moldova's European integration, its willingness to become an active subject in the process of democratization of the republic of Moldova.

The economic participation of the Moldovan diaspora in the development of the country of origin is primarily reduced to monetary transfers that significantly influenced, and continue to influence the country's economy. Investments in development projects could become a higher level of Moldovan migrants' participation in the sustainable development of the Republic of Moldova, however they did not yet receive appropriate attention from the Moldovan diaspora. Considering that a third of Moldovan migrants are willing to invest into the Moldovan economy, the authorities must create a favorable investment climate, and develop financial tools for attracting investments.

The diaspora's participation in political and economic processes of the country of origin on the national and local levels should mean much more than just financial capital. Moldovan migrants are familiar with European values and practi-

ces, possess rich experience, knowledge, and skill that they have accumulated abroad that can contribute to the development of the country of origin. The measures taken by the state and civil society must become important tools for the attraction and effective use of the resources of the Moldovan diaspora for the country's sustainable development, its advancement along the path of European integration. By participating in the political and economic life of its home country, the diaspora brings the Republic of Moldova closer to European standards.

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