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2021 Annual Forum on Budgetary Participation “Inform, Empower and Act!”

*Venue: Hybrid format
Online via Zoom
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Date: 8 October 2021*

The project is co-funded by the European Union and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung e.V.

ABOUT THE FORUM – GENERAL REMARKS

The annual forum on budgetary participation is the main public event of the project “Inform, Empower, Act. Civil Society for good budgetary governance in Moldova” funded by the European Union and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and implemented by the Independent Analytical Center “Expert-Grup” as lead applicant, the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE) and the Eastern European Studies Centre (EESC) from Vilnius, Lithuania.

The event provides a national platform for high-level discussions about the opportunities and challenges of the implementation of budgetary participation principles at the central and local levels. The forum is organized on an annual basis and gathers policy makers, local public authorities (LPAs), civil society organizations (CSOs), donor community, opinion leaders and academia in order to engage in strategic dialogue on fostering the budgetary transparency, participation and inclusiveness in Moldova. The event also welcomes stakeholders from other countries, mainly from Central and Eastern Europe, in order to share their practical experience and lessons learned after the implementation of various tools and approaches of budgetary participation – insights that could inspire the relevant stakeholders in Moldova in this regard as well as anchor them towards the right directions in terms of implementation of budgetary participation mechanism.

The event also aims to raise awareness among the policy makers, local public authorities, civil society, donor community and media about the importance of budgetary transparency and participation as key conditions for ensuring the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the budgetary process. In this regard, the event will share the results of the project “Inform, Empower, Act. Civil Society for good budgetary governance in Moldova”, namely communication materials (infographics and videographics), key findings of the policy studies and assessments conducted so far, as well as lessons learned and specific case studies during the project implementation. In this regard, the event will be attended by the project regional partners and beneficiary LPAs.

Last, but not least, the event will facilitate the formulation of policy recommendations, based on the panel discussions, on promoting various tools and approaches of budgetary participation. It will also serve as a platform for policy advocacy aimed at promoting the necessary policies and reforms in this regard, taking into account the project results and experience of the project partners and stakeholders from other countries.

ABOUT THIS SPECIFIC EDITION OF THE FORUM

This edition of the forum will discuss the challenges related to ensuring the budgetary participation at the local level, especially during the pandemics, and will discuss practical approaches and ideas for overcoming them and increasing the intensity and quality of civic engagement in the budgetary process at the local level.

In this regard, there will be presented an innovative online platform that can facilitate the budgetary participation via online tools. The second panel of the event will be dedicated to a specific case where budgetary participation can help the LPAs explore in an effective way an innovative financial instrument for financing local capital investments – local government bonds.

II TARGET AUDIENCE

STATE INSTITUTIONS

- Parliament of the Republic of Moldova and, in particular, the Parliamentary committees „Economy, Budget and Finances” and „Control Commission of Public Finances”
- Government of the Republic of Moldova
- Ministry of Finances
- Ministry of Economy
- Local Public Authorities that were selected as beneficiary of the project (20 LPAs from North, Center, South and Gagauzia regions of Moldova (i.e. Bălți, Soroca, Drochia, Sîngerei, Florești, Strășeni, Călărași, Rezina, Telenești, Șoldănești, Cahul, Cimișlia, Leova, Cantemir, Sălcuța commune, Ceadr Lunga, Vulcănești, Baurci commune, Tomai commune, Gaidar commune)).

CIVIL SOCIETY

- Regional partners of the project (CSOs “AZI”, “Caroma Nord”, “Contact”, “Habitat”, “Institute for Rural Initiatives”)
- CSOs that are active in the area of participatory budgeting (e.g. IDIS Viitorul, Transparency International)
- Members of the National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
- CALM

DONORS' COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

- EU Delegation
- KAS
- World Bank
- International Monetary Fund
- UN Country Team
- UNDP
- USAID
- Embassy of Netherlands
- GIZ
- Embassy of Germany
- US Embassy
- Embassy of Romania
- Embassy of Sweden
- Swiss Cooperation Office in Moldova

OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

- Academia representatives (e.g. Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Institute of Economic Research of Moldova).
- Representatives of EU and other development partners funded projects implemented the regional and local levels
- Mass media (e.g. Logos Press, Moldstreet, ProTV, Agora, TVR Moldova, Moldova 1, Canal Regional, etc.).

III. PROGRAMME

Working Language:	<i>Romanian. Translation is provided to Russian and English.</i>
Venue:	<i>Zoom online platform</i>
9:00 – 09.30	Welcome remarks <i>Tatiana Ivanicichina</i>, State Secretary, Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Moldova <i>Martin Sieg</i>, Director of the KAS office in Romania and Moldova <i>Gintautas Baranauskas</i>, Deputy Head of Cooperation at the EU Delegation to Moldova <i>Adrian Lupușor</i>, Executive Director of Expert-Grup and Team leader of the project “Inform, Empower, Act. Civil Society for good budgetary governance in Moldova”. <u>Moderator:</u> <i>Iulian Groza</i>, Executive Director, IPRE
9.30 – 9.40	Presenting an innovative online platform for budgetary participation
9.40 – 11.00	Panel 1. Inclusive and meaningful budgetary participation at the local level – mission possible?
	<i>Viorel Furdui</i>, Executive director, Congress of Local Public Authorities <i>Anatolii Topal</i>, Mayor of Ceadir-Lunga municipality <i>Ion Cărpineanu</i>, Mayor of Cărpineni, Hâncești; <i>Lusina Șestacov</i>, the leader of the initiative group, participatory budgeting project, Soroca municipality; <i>Giovanni Allegretti</i>, International expert on budgetary participation <i>José Manuel Ribeiro</i>, Mayor of Valongo (Portugal) and President of RAP (Portuguese Network of Participatory Local Authorities) <u>Moderator:</u> Tatiana Savva, Program director, Expert-Grup <u>Key questions/issues for discussion:</u> • What are the key challenges for promoting budgetary participation at the local level, and how to overcome them? • Is there enough political leadership for promoting budgetary participation at the local level? • How to inspire the policy makers, LPAs and communities for a more transparent, open and inclusive budgetary process?

	How can budgetary participation contribute to local development? What are the positive experiences and lessons learned so far?
11.00 – 12.45	Panel 2. How budgetary participation can extend the LPAs' access to local capital investments: the case of local government bonds <i>Dumitru Pintea</i>, Program director, Expert-Grup <i>Dumitru Alaiba</i>, Depute, Chairman of Committee on Economy, Budget and Finance, Parliament of the Republic of Moldova <i>Ion Ceban</i>, General Mayor mun. Chișinău <i>Valeriu Popa</i>, Mayor of Singera <u>Moderator:</u> <i>Stanislav Ghilețchi</i>, Deputy Executive Director, IPRE <u>Key questions/issues for discussion:</u> - What are the local bonds and how they can contribute to the local development? - Why budgetary participation should be an indispensable part of the local government bonds' issuance? - What are the best practices in issuing local government bonds and what are the main lessons learned? - What are the main challenges in issuing local government bonds and how budgetary participation can help overcoming them?
12.45 – 13.00	Key conclusions and the ways forward <i>Adrian Lupușor</i>, Executive Director of Expert-Grup and Team leader of the project "Inform, Empower, Act. Civil Society for good budgetary governance in Moldova"