



Children's school drop out and school nonattendance in the Republic of Moldova

11 December 2013

The official regulations that state compulsory education of the pupils:

Educational laws.

□Art. 18 (3) says:

The children who reached the age of 6-7 at the beginning of the school year are enrolled in the first form. Schooling becomes compulsory at the age of 7.

□Art. 19 (1)

Secondary school education is compulsory from the 5th to the 9th forms.

□Art. 44 (k)

Education Boards together with the Local Public Authorities assure compulsory education up to the age of 16.

□Art. 45 (b)

Local Public Authorities supervise obligatory school attendance of the children of the corresponding age and assure school attendance up to the age of 16.

Family Code

☐ Art. 60 says:

Parents have the right and are obliged to educate children, are obliged to ensure school attendance of the children up to the age of 16.

Contraventional Code

☐ Art. 63 says:

Children's nonattendance of the school leads to nonfeasance of educating and teaching children and is contraventionally punished.

- According to the legal competences, contravention of the art.63 CC is studied by the prosecutor.



Other national policies of supporting children in school attendance

- The program of development of inclusive education in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2011-2020 (HG nr. 523 from July 11, 2011).
- The plan of actions of the support of Roma ethnic group in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2011-2015 (HG nr.494 from 08.07.2011).

Program of the development of the inclusive education in RM (2011-2020)

Beneficiaries *of the inclusive education* – **all children**, including:

- Orphans, abandoned children, those who have no parental support;
- Children from the disadvantaged families;
- Institutionalized children;
- Children, youth and adults with disabilities;
- Street children;
- Children and youth in conflict with the law;
- Trafficked children and youth;
- Children and youth subjected to violence;
- Children and young people that use drugs, alcohol and other toxic substances;
- Children affected by HIV/AIDS;
- Children with chronic somatic diseases;
- Children and youth with mental, emotional misconduct or other pathological conditions;
- Children who face difficulty in learning and communication;
- Gifted children and youth;
- Children and youth victims of labour exploitation;
- **Children of national minorities, linguistic or religious groups;**
- Children of refugees or children of internally displaced persons.



Plan of actions to support the Roma ethnic group population in the Republic of Moldova for the years 2011-2015

General objectives:

- * To create an efficient educational system based on principles of fairness, equality and diversity, which will contribute the full integration of the Roma ethnic group into society;
- * To increase the number of the people from Roma ethnic group involved in higher education;
- * To prevent discrimination of the Roma in educational system;
- * To create effective cooperation among relevant organizations and institutions for education of Romas.

Actions undertaken by LPA, GDE with the purpose of schooling.

- ❑ The problem of schooling is discussed at the annual meetings of the regional boards, administrative councils of regional/municipal general education of youth and sport, and by professional councils of the educational institutions;
- ❑ The activity of the mixed commissions formed from collaborators of educational departments, educational institutions and police stations continues with:
 - ✓ Home visits
 - ✓ Conversations with pupils and parents
 - ✓ Material aid to children from disadvantaged families
 - ✓ Intensification of the activities to influence the parents who evade schooling.

Measures undertaken by the Ministry of Education to improve basic education of the children from rural districts

The state provides textbooks for the 1st – 4th forms free of charge, at secondary and high school levels the textbooks are leased;

All educational institutions are provided by the sets of textbooks in all the basic subjects for 1 -12 forms;

Children from 1-4 forms and children from 5-9 forms from disadvantaged families are given free food;

37 community centers equipped with furniture were opened in the regions where there were no kindergartens;

35 buses were bought to take pupils to district schools from optimised institutions;

55 community schools were given 307 blackboards;

11 community schools were given information equipment (computers, projectors, screens, accessories) for a classroom;

A new method of funding was implemented based on formula, on the national level there are 33 regions and 2 municipalities in Republic.

The schooling situation on December 1, 2013

- ❑ Total, at the republican level – **305004** children under the age of 16
- ❑ Total uneducated – **251** children (0,082 %)

Primary level (forms I-IV)	Secondary school (forms V-IX)
84	167

- ❑ **88** are Romas from total uneducated children.



Reasons/causes of non-schooling at the compulsory school age.

Reasons of non-schooling of 251 children are different:

117 – went abroad with parents (77 from them are Roma and are absent only periodically),

55- the parents refuse and make them work,

24 – poor material conditions,

30 - vagrancy,

11 – school failure,

3 - other reasons: marriage, etc.

12 – incurable diseases.



Activity Program of the Government „European Integration: Liberty, Democracy, Welfare 2013-2014”

- *Highlights one of the objectives of the governing:
- O1. increasing access to qualitative education for all the children at preschool and school age.
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- * One of the undertaken actions for this objective was: *Development of(October 2013) National Program of Control of early school leaving, which will assure schooling of representatives of certain social categories, national minorities who usually don't attend school and which should be implemented in 2014.*



National Program of Control of Early School Leaving. What is it necessary for?

- The system doesn't have exact data of how many children are at or out of schools (NBS and ME)
- There is no correlation of identification, monitorization and management of the cases for the children out of schools as there is no solution to these cases
- Dropout and absence rate is poorly monitored (problems of definition and practice level)
- A child out of school – is an endangered child/the situation of risk (strong necessity)



Creation of the Program Concept

- Was taken into account:
 - Results of UNICEF and World Bank investigations (was made the analysis of the profile of children out of school and analysis of their situation)
 - Set of recommendations that emerged from these studies
 - Responsibilities of the nomenclature developed by the working group
 - The best international practices
 - Potential initiatives/existing policies (inclusive education, integration of Roma, youth, social protection, referral system in cases of violence, abuse and neglect)



Profile of children out of school/ at risk to drop out is caused by the action:

- Individual factors: Roma, boys, girls, teenagers, children with disabilities, children that are often absent from school, have not attended kindergarten and went to school later
- Family factors: vulnerable and poor families, one parent families, lack of parental support/ lack of discipline, migration/mobile families, large families
- School factors
- System factors

How to make a lasting change?

- Change theory identifies 4 key areas for a lasting change:
 - The level of the individual (changes in behaviour and mentality)
 - The level of relationship (changes in behaviour and mentality)
 - The level of thinking and collective action (collective understanding and behaviour)
 - The level of systems, structures and mechanisms (regulatory framework and procedures)
- National Program must reflect these areas and levels of change



Basic aspects of the program

- Address clear principles and practices which will improve with time
- Propose a structure/mechanism for 2 basic components: (1) system of protection/reference of the child, (2) prevent drop out and absenteeism
- Are based on an inter-school approach only in that way a coordinated response could address the complex causes of the problem
- Identify areas of competence and responsibilities of the Ministries/administrative bodies

Composition of dropout prevention

- Individuals/teams responsible
 - Persons responsible for children outside school, dropout and absenteeism at the regional level (work on cases and activities)
 - Multi-disciplinary teams at district level, including NGOs, services, youth organizations, parents and children (not working on case management, but in planning prevention activities)
 - Responsible persons in schools to prevent absenteeism and dropout
- Process
 - To work out district plans to reduce absenteeism and prevent dropout
 - To work out plans at the level of schools to reduce absenteeism and prevent dropout (or to include in the planning documents of the ordinary school)
 - Interventions
 - monitoring of the results
 - Learning best practices

Conclusions

- **The problem of providing schooling and preventing dropout remains a priority in the activity of the Ministry of Education.**
- Regional/municipal departments of education, youth and sport /administrations of educational institutions, LPA, monitor and take actions for schooling;
- The number of pupils that don't attend school denotes the failure of measures to ensure schooling;
- We propose strategies for Program implementation:
 - Combination of the activities: that do not involve costs, low cost activities and more expensive ones
 - Development of communication Strategy (internal and external)
 - Identify leaders to promote the Program
 - Documenting good practices to build a set of know-how
 - Innovative partnerships (among sectors, different levels, agencies that provide intellectual services, NGOs, youth groups, etc.)
 - Creative solutions involving civil society, volunteers etc.
 - Fundraising activities
 - Reporting mechanisms