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POLICY ANALYSIS

European Standardization in Moldova

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This analysis has been conducted to be included in the comparative study *"EU standards velocity within EaP countries. Evaluation of the progress and challenges in Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia"*.

INTRO NOTES

This paper should be treated as a final draft that will be included in the comparative study **“EU standards velocity within EaP countries. Evaluation of the progress and challenges in Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia”** prepared within the project “Enhancing the role of Civil Society and SME from Eastern Partnership Countries in the implementation of European standards”.

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Key areas of support are democracy and human rights, economic integration, environment and energy, contacts between people, social and labour policies.

Standardisation Process in Moldova

1. Introduction

As result of the signing and ratification of the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement, the Republic of Moldova has started to accelerate the processes of European standardization, benefiting from significant EU financial and technical assistance. The key objective of the European standardization system is to achieve an advanced degree of harmonization at European and national level. This harmonization is considered to be achieved when a product or service, conforming to a national standard of an EU Member State, complies also with the national standards of other EU Member States. The most effective way to achieve this goal is to develop European standards and the mandatory adoption of these standards by each member of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN) by adopting them as national standards and by withdrawing any conflicting national standard. However, the European standardization process in the Republic of Moldova is a difficult challenge mainly because of the adopted and implemented soviet standards (GOSTs) that are conflictual with the European ones. More than that, the European standards aim at higher quality and require more efforts and financial resources than GOST standards.

Thus, this analysis approaches the challenges and opportunities of the standardization process in the R. Moldova and outlines the basic trends and dynamics. It focuses on the transition from Soviet (GOSTs) to European/International standards and analyses the obstacles associated with this process.

2. Methodology

The paper was prepared in collaboration with the representatives of Institute for Standardization of Moldova. This study applies both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis: carrying out analysis of the legislation and institutional framework of the Republic of Moldova in the area of standardization in the context of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements signed by the Moldovan Government with the EU. Besides, desk research and expert and in-depth interviews have been carried with both standardization bodies and civil society representatives.

3. National standardisation framework

3.1 Institutional framework

In the Republic of Moldova, the development of a national standardization system, independent of the former Soviet system, began in 1995, with the adoption of Law no. 590/1995 "On Standardization", which introduced the notion of "national standardization body", these functions being assigned to the Department of Standards, Metrology and Technical Surveillance (Moldovastandard).

Subsequently, the Law no. 590/1995 has been amended several times, and the national standardization system has had a series of reforms. The final stage of reforming the national standardization system took place in 2012, when by the Government Decision no. 996/2012 "On some measures for reforming the quality infrastructure", was created the public institution "National Institute for Standardization" as a distinct entity, separated from the other entities responsible for the quality infrastructure, subordinated to the Ministry of Economy, the public authority responsible for quality infrastructure.

With the support of international experts, as a result of the Twinning project "Strengthening institutional capacities in the field of standardization and metrology", has been developed the Law no. 20/2016 "On national standardization", through which have been transposed the relevant provisions of Regulation (EU) No. 1025/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 on "European standardization". By Law no. 20/2016, the National Institute for Standardization was renamed in to Institute for Standardization of Moldova. Its legal status was not changed – public institution. The activity of the Institute for Standardization of Moldova is regulated by the Regulation "For the organization and functioning of the Institute for Standardization of Moldova", approved by the Government Decision no. 969/2016. The main functions in the field of standardization are: development, adoption, review, modification, withdrawing of Moldovan standards, establishment of national standardization rules, management of the National Found of Standards, creation and management of the activity of the technical committees and the Standardization Council, participation in the European, international and intersatal standardization activity.

The Institute for Standardization of Moldova performs some activities related to standardization work as: stakeholder trainings and consultations in the field of standardization.

The Law no. 20/2016 provides the Institute for Standardization of Moldova with a relatively high degree of autonomy in the conduct of its activity. Moreover, considering the status of a public institution of the Institute for Standardization of Moldova, it regularly presents information on the implementation of the National Standardization Program, the realization of the budget, the performance of membership functions at European, international and interstatal standardization organizations. The activity of the Institute for Standardization of Moldova is financed mainly from the state budget (approximately USD 270,000 annually, or 87% of ISM's annual budget) and incoims from the saling of standards (about 40,000 USD annually or 13% of ISM's annual budget). In the average, 4,500 copies of standards are sold annually.

Besides the Institute for Standardization of Moldova there are two structures with attributions in the field of standardization:

**Institute for
Standardization of
Moldova**

Standardization Council,
advisory body on strategy and
development issues in the field
of national standardization,
made up of representatives of
all stakeholders

Main attributions: participating in the
development of national standardization policy;
approving the documents regarding the activity
strategy of the national standardization body and
standardization program

Advisory Committee, an ISM
consultative structure, without
legal personality, made up of
ISM employees with extensive
experience in the field of
standardization

Main attributions: assisting the ISM management
in the processes of withdrawing of conflicting or
obsolete standards in areas where there are not
standardization committees and examination of
draft standards if these projects do not comply
with the standardization rules

Besides the Institute for Standardization of Moldova there are also 26 technical committees:

**Institute for
Standardization of
Moldova**

18 technical committees in
the following areas:
tobacco, fruit, bakery
products, meat, beer,
biofuel, combustible
gases, medical devices,
conformity assessment,
power engineering,
information technology,
building products, energy
efficiency of buildings etc.

3 of technical committees are declared mirror with the
European technical committees:

- a) TC 33 "Medical devices" mirror with CEN/TC 204 "Sterilization of medical devices" și cu CEN/TC 205 "Non-active medical devices";
- b) TC 49 "Energy efficiency of buildings" mirror with CEN/TC 89 "Thermal performance of buildings and building components", with CEN/TC 169 "Light and lighting", with CEN/TC 228 "Heating systems and water based cooling systems in buildings";
- c) TC 50 "Products processing plant raw material" mirror with CEN/TC 275 "Food analysis - Horizontal methods".

**8 project technical
committees** (ad hoc
committees) in the
following areas: special
vehicles, mileage
indicators, assessment of
the competence of testing
laboratories, carpets etc.

4 of technical committees are declared mirror with
international technical committees:

- a) TC 1 "Library. Information. Documentation" morror with ISO/TC 46 "Information and documentation";
- b) TC 32 "Solid biofuels" mirror with ISO/TC 238 "Solid biofuels";
- c) TC 43 " Conformity assessment" mirror with ISO/CASCO Committee on conformity assessment;
- d) TC 48 "Information technology and electronic communications" mirror with ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 6 "Telecommunications and information exchange between systems".

3.2 Legal and methodological framework

For the first time, the national standardization system of the Republic of Moldova, as an independent state, was regulated by Law no. 590/1995 "On standardization". Until 2007, this law has maintained the old approach to the mandatory character of standards. In 2006 was adopted the Law no. 420/2016 "On technical regulation activity". This law it first established the voluntary nature of the standards and implemented the modern technical regulation mechanism (New Approach), creating a clear link between mandatory technical regulations and voluntary standards.

At the moment, the standardization activity in the Republic of Moldova is regulated by Law no. 20/2016 "On national standardization". The Law no. 20/2016 provides the elements of the national standardization system, the attributions of the national standardization body, its relations with regulatory authorities, including the regulatory authority responsible for quality infrastructure (Ministry of Economy), the attributions of the Standardization Council, the objectives and principles of national standardization.

In accordance with the provisions of the Law no. 20/2016, the national standardization rules establish how to develop, approve, adopt, periodically review, amend, withdraw standards, and how to create and management the national technical committees. The national standardization rules are based on the European and international standardization rules (CEN, CENELEC, ISO și IEC), are developed and approved by the Institute for Standardization of Moldova. In 2017 ISM has developed and approved 8 national standardization rules:

- a) RS 1:2017 "Developement of Moldovan standards";
- b) RS 2:2017 "Adoption of European standards as Moldovan standards";
- c) RS 3:2017 "Adoption of international standards as Moldovan standards";
- d) RS 4:2017 "Adoption of interstate standards as Moldovan standards";
- e) RS 5:2017 "Adoption of standards of other states as Moldovan standards";
- f) RS 6:2017 "Presentation of Moldovan standards";
- g) RS 7:2017 "Structure, draw up and content of Moldovan standards";
- h) RS 8:2017 "Requirements for the establishment and for the operation of the technical committees".

3.3 Evolution of the national fund of standards

The Republic of Moldova, as well as other former Soviet republics, has inherited the entire GOST standards fund, approved until 1992. The application of about 19,000 GOST standards on the territory of the country was ratified in 1992, after the proclamation of the independence of the Republic of Moldova.

Since 1992 until 2004 the National fund of standards has grown insignificantly, the main concern of the national standardization body was to maintain the current versions of the GOST standards (replacement of the old versions with the new ones approved by the EASC), as well as the development of the original Moldovan standards (SM) in areas for which there were no GOST standards.

In 2004-2005, Moldova's approximation to the European Union was supported by the Moldova - EU Action Plan developed under the European Neighborhood Policy and adopted in February 2005 by the Cooperation Council. This approximation determined the intensification of the process of transposing European legislation into national legislation and, implicitly, the adoption of the relevant European and international standards as Moldovan standards.

By 2012, 3693 European standards and 772 international standards have already been adopted in the Republic of Moldova (see Table 1).

The negotiation and subsequent signing of the Association Agreement Republic of Moldova - the European Union imposed an increase of the rhythms of adopting the European and international standards and, accordingly, the withdrawing of conflicting and contradictory GOST standards. In the period 2012-2017, approximately 2500-3500 European standards and approximately 300-500 international standards were adopted annually in the Republic of Moldova (see Table 2 and Table 3). Simultaneously with the adoption of European and international standards, the Institute for Standardization of Moldova initiated an extensive process of identifying and withdrawing the GOST standards and original Moldovan standards (SM) that were conflicting with European and international standards or were technologically outdated and did not correspond to current technical progress. In the period 2012-2017, approximately 14,300 GOST standards were withdrawn (see Table 4).

Table 1 – Total number of standards valid for 2012-2017 (on January 1st) by category of standards

Category of standard	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
GOST ¹⁾	18 996	18 699	13 670	12 202	7 629	4 580
EN ²⁾	3 693	5 585	7 915	10 556	14 544	16 591
ISO/IEC ³⁾	772	2 075	2 421	2 682	2 884	2 918
Original national ⁴⁾	218	221	223	225	129	132
Other standards ⁵⁾	399	449	432	443	378	390
TOTAL	24 078	27 029	24 661	26 108	25 564	24 611
NOTES: 1) GOST - Interstate standards, developed by former U.R.S.S. until 1992 and ratified as national, as well as GOST standards developed by the EASC after 1992 and adopted as national standards; 2) EN standards also include EN ISO, ETSI and other standards and technical specifications approved by European standardization organizations (CEN, CENELEC, ETSI) and adopted as national standards, including interstate or other states standards eg. GOST EN, STB EN, GOST R EN ISO etc.); 3) At the category ISO/IEC refers also all international standards approved by international ISO and IEC standardization organizations and adopted as national standards, including interstate or other states standards (eg. GOST ISO, GOST IEC, GOST R ISO, STB IEC, etc.), except for European standards that adopt international standards (see note 2); 4) At the original national standards category refers also the standards developed and approved at national level, including those based on other standards but not taking them identically. For example, an original national standard may be based (harmonized) on international standard (ISO) or other states (ASTM) but is not identical with it; 5) Other states standards (eg. STB, GOST R, ASTM etc.), adopted as national standards, are attributed to the "other standards" category, except for the standards of other states that take international and European standards (see notes 2) and 3))						

Table 2 – Number of European standards (EN) adopted as national standards in 2012-2017

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
2 190	2 166	2 558	2 762	4 744	2 074
NOTE – EN standards also include standards EN ISO, ETSI and other standards and technical specifications approved by European standardization organizations (CEN, CENELEC, ETSI) and adopted as national standards, including interstate or other states standards: GOST EN, STB EN, GOST R EN ISO, etc.)					

Table 3 – Number of international standards (ISO, IEC) adopted as national standards in 2012-2017

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
907	652	540	209	368	194
NOTE – At the category of ISO/IEC refers also all international standards approved by international ISO and IEC standardization organizations and adopted as national standards including interstate or other states standards (eg GOST ISO, GOST IEC, GOST R ISO, STB IEC, etc.), except for the European standards that take international standards (see note 2) in Table 1)					

Table 4 – Number of GOST standards and original national standards withdrawn in 2012-2017

Number of withdrawn standards, including	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
GOST standards	103	766	4 821	1 152	4 686	2 827
National original standards	12	4	20	17	47	35

In order to ensure the effective implementation of European legislation transposed into national law, the Institute for Standardization of Moldova adopted the entire body (3 491) of harmonized European standards by 2016, cited in the Official Journal of the European Union. According to national policy documents¹, the Institute for Standardization of Moldova has planned to adopt the entire body of European standards (about 24 800² standards) by the end of 2019.

4. European aspirations of the Republic of Moldova

4.1 Association Agreement and DCFTA with European Union

The year 2014 has been of historical importance for the Republic of Moldova, as the country has signed with the European Union the Association Agreement. The Agreement enacts a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). The free trade agreement is "deep and comprehensive" since is including a far-reaching regulatory approximation and market access liberalization, in line with the rights and obligations arising out of WTO membership of Moldova and EU.

¹ The Moldova-EU Association Agreement establishes the obligation of the Republic of Moldova to integrate its standardization system into the European standardization system, including by obtaining by Institute for Standardization of Moldova of the status of full member in European standardization organizations. According to the CEN-CENELEC Guide 20, the national standardization body applying to become a national member must ensure that at least of 80% of the European standards have been adopted at the time the application is submitted and for the remaining of 20 % of European standards set a reasonable deadline for adopting as national.

² 15985 standards approved by CEN (<https://www.cen.eu/about/CENinFigures/Pages/default.aspx>) and 6 857 standards approved by CENELEC (<https://www.cenelec.eu/aboutcenelec/whatwedo/factsandfigures/>). This figure does not include standards approved by ETSI, for the reason that not all ETSI standards need to be adopted as national standards.

The creation of the free trade area between Moldova and the EU directly involves standardization sector which is covered by Chapter 3 of Title V on Trade and Trade-Related Aspects (ALSAC) of the Association Agreement. This compartment largely reflects the provisions of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. This implies the integration of the Moldovan standardization system into the European one. In this context, Moldova must: (1) progressively transpose the corpus of European Standards (EN) as national standards, including the harmonised European standards, the voluntary use of which shall give a presumption of conformity with Union legislation transposed into the legislation of the Republic of Moldova;³ (2) at the same time simultaneously with such transposition, withdraw conflicting national standards;⁴ (3) progressively fulfil the conditions for full membership of the European Standards Organisations (CEN, CENELEC, and in the case of ETSI - optional).

Taking into account the signing of the Association Agreement with the European Union, the Republic of Moldova has undertaken the responsibility to transpose an extensive number of directives and regulations and to make changes to the administrative procedures, which also have implications for the standardization system. Thus, the Institute of Standardization from Moldova (ISM), as a national standardization body of the Republic of Moldova, collaborates with European standardization organizations, being a member of CEN (since 2007) and of CENELEC (since 2014) and as well, an observing member of ETSI (since 2014).

In the framework of DCFTA, the Standardization bodies from Moldova should adopt by the end of 2018, 80% of European standards as national standards which means 24 5405 standards. Up to 2016 10.610 European standards have been adopted as national. At the same time, Moldova has committed to transpose 17 European Directives based on the principles of the New Approach and their associated harmonized EN standards in number of 3479. Moldova succeeded to transpose 3371 of harmonized EN standards.

Moreover, the Association Agreement provides the cooperation in the field of industrial standards and the possibility of concluding mutual recognition agreements. Therefore, an Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA) is envisaged to be added as a protocol to the Association Agreement and is going to cover sectors that have been aligned and agreed upon, following verification by the Union, that the relevant sectoral and horizontal legislation, institutions and standards of the Republic of Moldova have been fully aligned with those of the Union. ACCA would offer the possibility to Moldovan producers to certify their products either in the Republic of Moldova or in the EU common territory. In more concrete terms, the trade between the Republic of Moldova and the EU with products in the sectors that ACCA covers will take place under the same conditions that are applied to EU member states. In this respect, the Ministry of Economy has adopted a Roadmap on 18th November 2016 for initiation negotiations on the ACCA. According to the adopted Roadmap, the signing of the ACCA between the Republic of Moldova and the EU and inclusion it as Protocol to the Association Agreement would happen in the 4th semester of 2022⁶.

³ Association agreement EU-RM Art. 173, par. (5) let. (a).

⁴ Association agreement EU-RM Art. 173, par. (5) let. (b).

⁵ The number of European standards published on 01.01.2016.

⁶ http://www.mec.gov.md/sites/default/files/ordin_me_acaa_221_din_18.11.2016.pdf

4.2 Towards European standards: benefits and challenges

European standards have numerous benefits for the sustainable growth of the Moldovan economy. Resulting from voluntary cooperation between business environment, public authorities, civil society and other interested parties, European standards are designed to respond to a large array of society needs. In fact, the European standards includes all the best areas in a specific area mainly because they enclose the collective expertise of the participating stakeholders.

Moreover, the European standards facilitated the creation of the internal market for goods and therefore enabled the productivity growth, trade and overall economic growth at the level of all the EU member states. The Moldovan Government admits that the European standardization is an extremely important opportunity for modernizing and developing the national economy but also for a proper functioning of education sector, a high level of consumer safety, and more innovation and social inclusion.

To put it simply, the European standardization in Moldova will bring only benefits for the Moldovan society. A sum of these benefits would be:

- ✓ Access to the EU Single Market for Moldovan products and services;
- ✓ Access to the most innovative solutions;
- ✓ Improvement of the performance and quality for the final consumers;
- ✓ Facilitation of the technological transfer and its cost-decreasing effect.

Eventually, the European standardization will facilitate the European integration of the Republic of Moldova by aligning with the EU regulations, standards, practices and, accreditation, conformity assessment procedures etc.

At the same time, the European standardization process is rough for the Republic of Moldova. Although, the level of transposing and adoption of the European standards is quite high, their implementation by the business sector is very low. This undesirable situation is caused by poor understanding of the importance of the European standards to the detriment of the GOST standards wherewith the Moldovan enterprises are already accustomed. Also, the implementation of the EN standards require huge efforts, financial resources and constant research and interest mainly because this domain is in a fast changing and adapting landscape. Moldovan producers are not prepared for implementation of the voluntary European standards and are reluctant in giving up to the GOST standards.

To overcome these challenges and to support Moldovan small and medium enterprises in implementing the standards and in accessing the EU Single Market, the European Commission provides substantial financial and technical assistance. Due to this, the EU has become the most important trading partner of the Moldova given that 63% of Moldovan exports go to the EU and around of 50% of Moldovan imports comes from the EU⁷.

⁷ Association Implementation Report on the Republic of Moldova, European Commission, Brussels, 10.03.2017 can be accessed at https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/association_implementation_report_on_the_republic_of_moldova_2017_03_10_final.pdf;

4.3 Implementation of European standards in industrial and agro-food sectors: Where do we stand?

Construction sector

The Republic of Moldova, as well as the other CIS countries, after the declaration of independence in 1992, has inherited the entire complex of Soviet norms and standards (normative in construction SNiP - over 200 documents, standards in construction GOST - over 1300 standards).

In the period 1992-2008, this system of norms and standards evolved insignificantly, with only the periodical updating of Soviet norms and standards by the Russian Federation and their subsequent adopting by the CIS countries (including the Republic of Moldova), within the interstate cooperation between CIS countries⁸.

In 2008, the Republic of Moldova took the first step for transposing the Council Directive no. 89/106/EEC of 21 December 1988 on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to construction products. Thus, has been approved the Government Decision no. 226/2008 "For the approval of the Technical Regulation on construction products", which tried to implement the concept of "New Approach" in the field of construction in the Republic of Moldova. Through this Government Decision, the ministry responsible for construction was empowered to draw up a list of "related"⁹ standards to this technical regulation.

The first list of "related" standards to this technical regulation was approved in 2008 and contained 604 standards (mainly GOST) of which only 31 European and international standards. In 2010, the list was completed with another 242 GOST standards, and in 2014 with other 453 standards, of which 434 European and international standards. As a result, by 2014 the list of "related" standards for the technical regulation on construction products already contained 1399¹⁰ standards, of which 465 European and international standards.

In 2016, the European Union's Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 "laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products" was partially transposed into the legislation of the Republic of Moldova by Government Decision no. 913/2016 "On the approval of the Technical Regulation on minimum requirements for the marketing of construction products" (with its entry into force in 2018). Later, in order to implement the corresponding harmonized European standards, the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction approved by Order no. 39/2017 the List of Harmonized Standards to this technical regulation, which contains 442 harmonized European standards and fully corresponds to the list

⁸ The cooperation agreement between the governments of the CIS countries was signed on 9 September 1994. More information can be obtained here: <http://www.e-cis.info/page.php?id=25737>;

⁹ Until 2016, the Moldovan standards included in the standard lists of technical regulations were called "related standards". In 2017, by amending Law no. 420/2006 "On technical regulation activity", the term "related standard" has been replaced by "harmonized standard";

¹⁰ There are only 442 harmonized standards for construction products in the European Union, the list of which has been published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

published by the European Commission in the Official Journal of the European Union. Considering that the Government Decision no. 913/2016 will enter into force in 2018 and to establish a transition mechanism from the application of GOST standards to the application of harmonized European standards, the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction approved by Order no. 38/2017 the List of related standards for construction products for use in the transition to harmonized standards, which contains 250 GOST standards.

At the same time, the Ministry of Regional Development and Construction annually revises over 50 normative documents in construction, promoting their harmonization with European and international standards in the field of construction.

Agro-food sector

The implementation of European standards in the agro-food sector has a number of particularities:

- There are not European standards at European level that would set requirements for agro-food products, the quality of which is regulated by legislation (as a rule, by European Commission Regulations);
- All European standards relate to test methods for different characteristics of agro-food products;
- Traditionally, in the Republic of Moldova (and in all CIS countries) the quality of agro-food products was regulated by GOST standards. At present, this product quality assurance system no longer complies with European practices.

Implementation of European legislation in the field of agro-food products started in the Republic of Moldova in 2006-2008, when the first technical regulations were approved for different categories of agro-food products, being partially harmonized with the relevant European legislation.

Simultaneously with this transposition, the authorities in the field maintained the application of GOST standards by approving lists of standards related to technical regulations in the field of agro-food products. This mix of European regulations and GOST standards has created a confusion and misleading by local producers with regard to product quality requirements. Practice has shown that although normative acts with quality requirements for different agro-food products were implemented, manufacturers, certification bodies and test laboratories preferred to apply GOST standards as clearer and more familiar. Practically, two systems of quality requirements for agro-food products - mandatory technical regulations (based on European legislation) and GOST standards - are applied in the Republic of Moldova in parallel until 2014-2016.

This has conditioned the Institute for Standardization of Moldova in 2014-2017 to withdraw GOST standards contradictory to legislation on agro-food products. In cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, repeated consultations of the producers in the sector, were identified and withdrawn over 570 of GOST standards. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry in his turn canceled a series of orders approving lists of related standards that contained references to GOST standards and facilitated their application in parallel with legislation.

Several testing laboratories for agro-food products have been able to implement European and international standards for product testing methods. With the support of the development partners,

the main testing laboratories in the field of agro-food products were equipped with modern equipment, which allows analyzes and tests based on European and international standards.

Has been changed the Law no. 420/2006 "On technical regulation activity" by excluding from the scope of agro-food products, and by eliminating the "related/harmonized standards" in the agro-food sector¹¹. This amendment clarified the status of agro-food standards and strengthened the role of normative acts establishing quality requirements for these products. Currently, the process of withdrawal of GOST standards contradicting the legislation continues.

Energy efficiency sector

The Republic of Moldova imports about 94% of the resources needed to cover the country's energy consumption. In the absence of its own energy resources, promoting energy efficiency and capitalizing on the available renewable energy sources in the country are the best ways to reduce the dependency and a key condition for the sustainable development of the economy.

In addition to import dependence, increased energy intensity is an essential impediment to the development of the economy and greatly reduces the competitiveness of national industry.

In recent years, demand for electricity in the Republic of Moldova has shown an upward trend. If in the past electricity was mainly used for lighting, consumers are currently using electricity to operate household appliances (washing, cleaning, air conditioning, communication etc.) as well as for other purposes. In this situation, promoting the use of household appliances and more energy-efficient products is imperative.

Another sector with the highest energy consumption is the buildings. Buildings are estimated to consume up to 40% of all national energy consumption. Under these circumstances, the promotion of modern, energy-efficient construction solutions, technologies and products is one of the national priorities. Improving energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy sources is a strategic objective that is set in the Energy Strategy of the Republic of Moldova until 2030, approved by the Government Decision no. 102/2013.

In order to approach complex and sustainable the issue of increasing energy efficiency, the Government of the Republic of Moldova, by Decision no. 833/2011, approved the National Energy Efficiency Program 2011-2020. The aim of this Program is to increase energy efficiency by implementing energy efficiency measures in all sectors of the national economy. A special place for this program is to promote the use of household appliances and energy-efficient products that meet European energy efficiency standards, as well as to promote the increase of energy performance of new and existing buildings.

By Law no. 151/2014 "On ecodesign requirements for energy –related products" and Government Decision no. 1003/2014 "For the approval of regulations on the energy labeling requirements of energy-related products", the Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 "Establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products". In order to facilitate the implementation of this Directive, a number of European standards¹² have been approved at European Union level covering the energy efficiency of different types of appliances.

¹¹ This concept applies to industrial products (for more details, to be seen the "New Approach" concept).

¹² https://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/european-standards/harmonised-standards/ecodesign_en

Situația privind domeniul eficienței energetice sub aspectul standardelor europene existente, precum și numărul acestora preluate ca naționale este prezentată mai jos:

Energy product	Number of European standards	Number of adopted European standards as Moldovan standards
Air conditioners	6	5
Circulators	3	3
Computers	8	8
Dishwashers	1	1
Domestic ovens, hobs and range hoods	5	3
Electric motors	2	2
Power supplies	1	1
Refrigerating appliances	1	1
Standby and off mode	4	3
Transformers	2	2
Tumble driers	1	1
Vacuum cleaners	6	4
Washer-driers (combined)	1	1
Washing machines	3	2
TOTAL	44	35

Promoting the increase of energy performance in buildings started in the Republic of Moldova in 2014, with the adoption of Law no. 128/2014 "On the energy performance of buildings", which transposes into national legislation Directive no. 2010/31/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 "On the energy performance of buildings".

At the level of the European Union, the implementation of Directive no. 2010/31/EU is supported by a package of 52 European standards¹³, describing the methodological framework for establishing minimum energy performance requirements for buildings, calculating the energy performance of buildings, certifying their energy performance and systems inspection heating and air conditioning in buildings.

The implementation of these European standards in the Republic of Moldova took place through the Government Decision no. 896/2016 "On the approval of the Regulation on the procedure for the certification of the energy performance of buildings and of building units", Government Decision no. 1325/2016 "For the approval of the Regulation on the periodic inspection of heating systems in buildings" and by 2 normative documents in construction: NCM M.01.01:2016 "Energy Performance of Buildings. Minimum Requirements for Energy Performance of Buildings" and NCM M.01.02:2016 "Energy Performance of Buildings. Methodology for calculating the energy performance of buildings".

5. Multi-Stakeholders partnerships in standardisation process

5.1 The role of Civil Society, Academia, Public Administration and Private sector

¹³ To be seen CEN/TR 15615:2008 Explanation of the general relationship between various CEN standards and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). Umbrella document

The added-value of the European standards is the fact that they are co-created voluntarily by industry, public authorities, civil society and other interested parties collaborating within a system founded on openness, transparency and consensus. A unique and innovative aspect of this cooperation among all interested parties in creating standards is the increasing number of European standards that most of them encloses the collective expertise of the participants and therefore they respond to the needs and expectations of their beneficiaries. One of the main challenge of Standardization body from Moldova was how to involve a wide number of stakeholders in the standardization process. The most important working platforms and communication channels between stakeholders and standardization body are the technical committees.

The technical standardization committees are working entities established at the request of stakeholders (manufacturers, sellers, small and medium-sized enterprises, research and development institutions, design institutions, educational institutions, testing laboratories etc.) in various areas of the national economy, in the support and for the benefit of the users of standards, to carry out standardization work at national level. By the end of 2016, 18 technical standardization comities were framed, 43 working meetings were held that involved 112 experts from different sectors¹⁴. Standardization body from Moldova is deeply engaged in involving in the standardization process the Universities and vocational education institutions. In this regard, at the institutional level there are partnership agreements with 9 education institutions.

Also, in order to facilitate the communication with different stakeholders, Institute for Standardization of Moldova managed to develop friendly support guides for Academia, private sector, consumers. Also, the institution has a communication plan which is a strategic document that guides the activities of the institution in channeling the information about the benefits of standards and standardization activities and procedures. For newly, the institution launched an innovative project, called the Academy of Standardization, with the aim of ensuring effective communication, information and training of the stakeholders interested in standardization process, as well as promoting the standardization work in the academic environment. Thus, the objective is to reach as many as possible actors from different economic sectors.

Up to date the biggest challenge of ISM was to involve the NGOs in the standardization processes and also to have their critical and constructive involvement as “watch- dogs of standardization process”. The explanation resides in the technical content of the sector and as well in the lack of technical expertise related to DCFTA, harmonization of EU legislation and standards.

5.2 Communication and participation tools

Since signing the Association Agreement and DCFTA, to be responsive towards current and new stakeholders needs and to maintain itself as the driver in the standardization process, the ISM has to take significant steps in improving its capacity about communicating on the advantages of European standards and thus, launch a variety of tools to enhance the role of national stakeholders in standardization process.

In order to get closer to stakeholders, the SIM launched a FB page, which is daily updated with most important information and which with is followed by about 1000 followers. In 2016, the Standardization institution managed to draft and translate 19 information materials to a wide number

¹⁴ <http://www.standard.md/libview.php?l=ro&idc=272&id=2493&t=/Biblioteca-on-line/ISM-in-cifre/Succesele-anului-2016-in-cifre>

of stakeholders (academia, SME, experts, consumers, NGOs etc). Also, there were launched 141 news and releases, which were distributed to a number of 2710 recipients.

The communication and communications tools situation is presented below:

	Number of events, including the trainings	Number of participants	Number of information materials distributed	Communication tools used for distribution
2014	13	74	170	Facebook, www.standard.md
2015	16	276	720	Facebook, www.standard.md , MailChimp, Google+, issuu.com, Twiter.com, LinkedIn.com
2016	27	540	1700	
2017	15	230	650	

5.3 Benefits and challenges

Benefits:

The main benefits of different stakeholders in the standardization process are following:

- A more transparent and accountable process of developing standards.
- Getting involved in standards development brings different stakeholders' concerns and needs to bear on a process that will affect that can affect them in the future.
- The possibility of implementing the standards requirements from the drafting phase of its developing.
- Getting involved in this process can bring significant advantages to the business sector by giving them early access to information that could shape the market in the future, a voice in the development of standards, by helping to keep market access open.
- New know-how that complements stakeholders' knowledge.

Challenges:

The challenges that exists are twofold - targeting the Moldovan National Standardization Body on one side, and the national stakeholders on the other side:

Moldovan standardization body:

- To communicate in a fair and transparent manner to interested parties when work on new standards is initiated and subsequently on the progress of their development;
- The ISM has the responsibility of ensuring that their technical standpoint is established taking into account all interests concerned at national level;
- To ensure integrity of national standardization body for stakeholder engagement and consensus decision making. The credibility of these national processes is vital to ensure the credibility of the resulting standards and, ultimately, of the standard brand in the marketplace;

- To reach as many stakeholders as possible. In this regard, all relevant national stakeholders should be given equal access to information and equal opportunity to provide input;
- Identification of potential stakeholders – In addition to any internal processes, advertisements and general meetings, ISM needs to seek input on potentially relevant stakeholder, other organizations, governmental agencies, user/consumer groups that can complement the ISM knowledge. This is especially the case in a new field for standardization;
- Engage consumers (through their associations, entities responsible for protecting their rights) in the process.

National stakeholders of standardization process:

- The insufficiency of English knowledge of TCs members or potential TCs members, which hinders the examination of drafts of European and international standards, as well as participation in meetings of European and international technical committees;
- Limited interest of local actors in engaging in the standardization process, due to the fact that the participation in the activity of the technical committees is free, unlike the practice existing in the former Union.
- Reticence towards European and international standards due to fear of changes, challenges and the need to invest in equipment etc. as a result of the implementation of the requirements of European and international standards.

