**Embassy of Finland in Bucharest**

*FLC Programme Objectives 2024*

**Objective 1**

**O1: Freedom of expression and media diversity are strengthened and media literacy is increased**

***Description of the objective***

*The objective is to strengthen freedom of expression and media diversity and to increase media literacy. To this end, the following focus areas are supported:*

* *enhancing capacity building of independent media*
* *enhancing critical thinking and media literacy; resisting disinformation*
* *promotion of investigative journalism and transparency*

*Strengthening freedom of expression and media diversity contributes to consolidating a healthy media environment, in which the public can form opinions based on a plurality of credible voices represented in economically sustainable independent media in their own language in the whole area of the Republic of Moldova. Increasing media literacy contributes to an informed public, which forms opinions based on credible information sources, is more resistant to misinformation and disinformation, and is able to demand more transparent information dissemination.*

**Justification for the objective**

*The Embassy has supported the objective for over a decade. The media landscape in Moldova has been characterized by concentrated media ownership, content influenced by interest groups, and lack of resources for the independent media. There have been significant challenges related to freedom of expression, but the situation has improved over the past 3 years. Disinformation is common in the Moldovan information space and media literacy skills among the public are low. The FLC programme provides a flexible tool for supporting local actors working on improvements on the indicated focus areas.*

*The Embassy expects to support between 1-2 projects per year in this priority area. Project proposals that target regional or national level in addition to local level are encouraged. Applicants working outside of the capital area encouraged to apply.*

**Objective 2**

**O2: The rights of women and girls are realized through strengthened participation in the society and the economy**

***Description of the objective***

*The objective is to support the realization of the rights of women and girls through strengthening their role in the society and economy. To this end, the following focus areas are supported:*

* *enhancing capacity building of non-governmental organisations promoting women’s rights and gender equality*
* *promoting women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities in economic life*
* *supporting the end of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls*
* *supporting youth friendly education and awareness raising on sexual and reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections*

*Promotion of equality and the rights of women and girls supports wider utilization of human capital in the Republic of Moldova and contributes to building a more democratic, equal and sustainable society.*

**Justification for the objective**

*The Embassy has supported the objective for over a decade. While the rights of women and girls are taken increasingly into consideration in the society and in policies, and their participation in decision-making has increased, they continue to face discrimination and gender-based violence. Economic participation of women is lower than that of men and traditional attitudes regarding the role of women and girls affect their choices of education and career. Women and girls from minorities and with disabilities are particularly vulnerable.*

*The Embassy expects to support between 1-2 projects per year in this priority area. The Embassy invites project proposals that aim to support women and girls in vulnerable positions and encourages applicants working outside of the capital area to apply.*

**Objective 3**

**O3: The role of youth in society is strengthened through increased and effective civic and economic participation**

***Description of the objective***

*The objective is to support strengthening the role of youth through increased civic and economic participation. To this end, the following focus areas are supported:*

* *enhancing civic participation of youth and promoting youth participation for community development*
* *promoting youth’s full and effective participation and opportunities in economic life*
* *enhancing capacity building of non-governmental organisations promoting youth participation*

*Strengthening civic participation of youth and participation for community development contributes to an inclusive environment in which youth from various backgrounds including from vulnerable groups are empowered to influence relevant issues, policies and processes together, and actively collaborate on local, regional and national level for common causes. Supporting participation of youth in the economic life contributes to an environment in which economically empowered young persons utilize their talent to improve their economic situation while contributing to the economy of the Republic of Moldova.*

**Justification for the objective**

*The situation of youth in Moldova is difficult. Essential challenges have to do with education, employment, health, and participation. The lack of opportunities for youth in the Republic of Moldova maintains high migration numbers, and low civic participation of youth means that their views are not affecting decision-making to the fullest potential. Opportunities are considerably fewer for the youth in the countryside and youth from minorities are particularly vulnerable. Economically most vulnerable are youth not in education, employment or training (NEET).*

*The Embassy expects to support between 1-2 projects per year in this priority area. The Embassy invites project proposals that aim to include and support youth in vulnerable positions and encourages applicants working outside of the capital area to apply.*