

THENAPA COUNTRY REPORT

Republic of Moldova

The Republic of Moldova is situated in the South-Eastern part of the Europe. At North, East and South it borders with Ukraine, at West – with Romania. The area of Moldova equals to 33,8 thou. sq. km. From North to South it has 350 km, while from West to East – 150 km. As far as concerns the population of Moldova its number in 2004 equaled to **3 606 800** people. Among them 47.9% are men and 52.1% – women. The natural increase of the population for the year 2003 was 6608, the tendency being negative for 5 years already.

Table 1: The natural increase of the population of the Republic of Moldova over the years 1975-2003

<i>Year</i>	<i>Live-births</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Natural increase</i>
1975	79169	35635	43534
1980	79580	40472	39108
1985	90453	46075	44378
1990	77085	42427	34658
1995	56411	52969	3442
1996	51865	49748	2117
1997	45583	42957	2626
1998	41332	39922	1410
1999	38501	41315	- 2814
2000	36939	41224	- 4285
2001	36448	40075	- 3627
2002	35705	41852	- 6147
2003	36471	43079	- 6608

The resident population by age groups in 2003 was as follows:

Men and women of 0-15 years – 22.7%; men 16-61, women 16-56 – 63.1%; men over 62, women over 57 – 14.2%.

As far as concerns the APA target group, the statistical data are given for 2 groups separately: one for children aged less than 16 and the other for persons aged over 16.

Table 2: Distribution of disable children aged less than 16 years old, by causes of disability

<i>Year</i>	<i>With the disability recognized for the first time</i>			<i>Persons under observation (end-year)</i>			<i>Per 1 000 children</i>		
	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
Total of which:	2170	2120	2030	13287	13480	13167	15.1	16.0	16.4
Neoplasm	70	69	74	280	277	259	0.3	0.3	0.3
Diseases of blood and blood-forming organs and immunity mechanisms	41	41	29	196	221	170	0.2	0.3	0.2
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases; including diabetes mellitus:	77	54	73	374	399	393	0.4	0.5	0.5
Mental and behavior disorders; including mental retardation:	...	29	35	...	178	186	...	0.2	0.2
	541	549	493	2945	3102	3236	3.3	3.7	4.0
	264	388	341	1992	2188	2334	2.3	2.6	2.9

<i>Diseases of nervous system; Including infant cerebral palsy:</i>	377 148	370 175	318 123	3326 1829	3271 1813	2956 1719	3.8 2.1	3.9 2.2	3.7 2.1
<i>Diseases of eye and eye appendages</i>	105	78	77	835	800	595	0.9	0.9	0.7
<i>Diseases of ear and mastoid</i>	40	50	43	652	567	530	0.7	0.7	0.7
<i>Diseases of the circulatory system</i>	...	33	28	...	111	124	...	0.1	0.2
<i>Diseases of the respiratory system; including bronchial asthma:</i>	98 ...	102 76	97 63	452 ...	491 337	493 368	0.5 ...	0.6 0.4	0.6 0.5
<i>Diseases of the digestive apparatus: Including chronic hepatitis and cirrhosis:</i>	69 ...	56 28	46 16	322 ...	358 219	280 137	0.4 ...	0.4 0.3	0.4 0.2
<i>Skin and subcutaneous diseases</i>	11	13	9	50	54	44	0.1	0.1	0.1
<i>Congenital malformations and chromosomal anomalies</i>	387	410	416	2163	2395	2602	2.5	2.8	3.2
<i>Injuries and poisonings</i>	100	91	78	414	381	424	0.5	0.5	0.5
<i>Other diseases</i>	254	204	249	1278	1053	1061	1.5	1.2	1.3

As far as concerns the initial education of these children, there are special schools according to the cause of the disability that some of them may attend. The attendance rate can be seen from the table below:

Table 3: Schools for handicapped (mental or physical) children

<i>Year</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>Number of schools for handicapped children</i>	44	42	43	41	40	39	39	38
<i>Number of children attending the schools (thou.)</i>	5.8	5.7	5.7	5.4	5.1	4.9	4.8	4.8

Table 4: Number of pupils in schools for children with mental or physical handicap

<i>Year</i>	<i>1996/ 1997</i>	<i>1997/ 1998</i>	<i>1998/ 1999</i>	<i>1999/ 2000</i>	<i>2000/ 2001</i>	<i>2001/ 2002</i>	<i>2002/ 2003</i>	<i>2003/ 2004</i>
<i>Number of pupils, among them:</i>	5765	5679	5680	5439	5064	4898	4818	4808
<i>with mental handicap</i>	4733	4603	4386	4367	3889	3838	3750	3880
<i>with weak eyesight</i>	333	321	309	284	252	258	268	267
<i>death</i>	78	84	74	364	62	67	56	47
<i>with disabled hearing</i>	291	290	452	144	438	404	419	273
<i>with after-effects of poliomyelitis and cerebral</i>	330	381	353	-	178	176	165	172

<i>paralysis</i>								
<i>with arrest of mental development</i>	-	-	-	176	138	155	160	169
<i>with deflection in behavior</i>	-	-	106	104	107	-	-	-

As far as concerns the persons aged 16 years old and over the situation is presented as follows:

Table 5: Number of persons aged 16 years old and over, with the disability recognized for the first time

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total	17787	18002	20390	11397	13454	14131	11042	10802
Per 10 000 inhabitants	41	42	47	27	31	39	30	30

Table 6: Distribution of persons aged 16 years old and over, with the disability recognized for the first time, by causes of disability

Year	2001	2002	2003
Total	14131	11042	10802
of which:			
Tuberculosis	681	221	273
Malignant neoplasm	1902	1482	1557
Diabetes mellitus	548	435	472
Mental and behavior disorders	1387	1287	1057
Diseases of nervous system	1576	1234	1003
Diseases of eye and eye appendages	836	667	696
Diseases of the circulatory system	2822	2261	2210
Diseases of the respiratory apparatus	495	327	336
Diseases of the digestive apparatus	1032	768	794
Diseases of bones and joints, muscles and conjunctive tissue	1026	984	892
Traumatic injuries (all locations)	866	650	824
Professional diseases and poisonings	22	20	12
Other diseases	938	706	676

If we go through the tables indicating the numbers of persons receiving pensions due to either age or handicap we see that numbers are much bigger as they show the total number of the disable persons in the country for the specific year, while the previous 2 tables indicate just the persons recognized for the first time as disable in the given year.

According to the data delivered by the National Social Insurance Office for the 1st of October 2004 the number of the disabled in the Republic of Moldova equaled to 159019. Among them: disable children

– 12894, Chernobyl participants – 2118, disable as a result of a general or professional disease – 119076.

All the disable in Moldova are given a certain category of disability according to the seriousness of the disease (in Moldova they are called the invalidity groups I, II and III, I being the most severe). Sometimes the disability degree is given for the whole life, but most often the disable have to follow periodical checks (once a year for the groups II and III and once every 2 years for the group I) in order to confirm their disability. Out of these checks a part of persons get rehabilitated so that they obtain a lower disability degree. Thus for the first 9 months of the year 2004 there were rehabilitated 2286 disabled:

- 262 were moved from the group I to the group II,
- 42 were moved from the group I to the group III,
- 2 were moved from the group I to the group O (completely rehabilitated),
- 1643 were moved from the group II to the group III,
- 86 were moved from the group II to the group O (completely rehabilitated),
- 251 were moved from the group III to the group O (completely rehabilitated).

Table 7: Number of people receiving pensions

<i>Year</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>Receiving pension due to age (thousand persons)</i>	563	560	556	535	518	496	473	466
<i>Receiving pension due to handicap (thousand persons)</i>	112	116	120	120	121	123	121	121

When talking about the pension received by the disabled people, it is rather small (around 13 USD) and barely attains 10% of the consumption basket. Though in recent year the state pensions registered a slight increase it is still not enough to have a decent living.

Table 8: The average pension amount according to the Pensions' Law (lei)

<i>Year</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>
<i>Age pension amount</i>	86.21	87.1	86.8	86.9	140.3
<i>Handicap pension amount)</i>	79.7	84.2	120	91.3	146.4

The state's implication implies mostly the social assistance area presented by the following statistical data:

Table 8: Social security to solitary old people and unable to work

<i>Year</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>Number of homecare offices</i>	207	220	203	193	226	233	108	193
<i>Number of social workers employed)</i>	1971	1958	1937	1808	1825	1923	2013	2105
<i>Number of beneficiaries: elderly and invalids, thou.</i>	17.5	17.9	17.8	18.0	18.3	19.0	20.0	21.4

Table 9: Asylums for the elderly people and disable

<i>Year</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>Number of asylums for the elderly and disabled adults;</i>	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
<i>in them persons:</i>	1722	1786	1775	1870	1874	1987	2030	2105
<i>Number of asylums for the disabled children;</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<i>in them persons:</i>	515	529	530	506	496	517	536	581

As far as concerns the recent steps undertaken to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable groups of Moldovan society it is important to mention the creation of the National program for protection, rehabilitation and social integration of the persons with disabilities, approved by the decision of the Government. The program has been stated for the period of 2000-2005 and this year will be the one when the final reports are made. To monitor and direct the national program implementation a special council called The governmental council for the handicapped persons problems has been gathered and has been holding its sessions quarterly since then. The Council includes official bodies' representatives of the Labor and social protection ministry, Ministry of Education, youth and sports, Ministry of justice as well as representatives of different NGOs tackling the problems of people with disabilities.

The program is mainly aiming to equal the chances of the people with handicap to other members of the society, to minimize the marginalization of people with the handicap and to determine the notion of the social and work rehabilitation. The program is structured according to the 6 main areas:

- the handicap definition – the process of the recognition of the handicap itself;
- medical services and specialized care of the handicapped people;
- rehabilitation: social rehabilitation, social services network development, work rehabilitation;
- handicap prevention;
- education;
- culture, sport and tourism.

As the program approaches its final term of implementation, we have heard the opinion of professionals working in NGO with and for the disabled, as well as of the disabled themselves regarding the efficiency of the Program. To our big regret, the general opinion seems to be that all the measures undertaken so far have more of a sporadic character and no clear strategy has been followed as far as concerns the problems of the disabled. That literally means that the program remained just on paper and was not brought into reality.

Nowadays, the states protection of the handicapped resulted in a series of specific laws such as:

- The Law of the social protection of the handicapped (year 1998);
- The Law of social insurance pensions
- The Law of social subsidies to certain categories of people.

The disabled themselves have many objections regarding these laws starting right with the terms used in the legislation to call the people with disabilities, and namely the word “invalid”, which does not correspond to the generally adopted terminology and creates makes it more difficult for the disabled to be heard by the outer world.

When talking about disabled and education we ought to mention that all educational levels are not adopted for the needs of the disabled. Several attempts have been made to create integrated groups at pre-school level. At present this attempt results in several day-care centers. The school education consists in specialized schools for the specific disability, which of course doesn't solve the problem of their isolation. The policy followed in normal schools so far was that all children with health problems have been exempted from physical training lessons at all. The proposal of the disabled to officials is

that the teachers and coaches should get an extra remuneration to be interested to create individual programs for children with health problems and help them practice sport.

The higher education foresees a number of 15% of all state financed places to be given to the disabled. This is very little though and also it is of no interests for university officials how the disabled get to obtain the place.

Practically none of the existing educational buildings and infrastructure is adopted to meet the special needs of the disabled.

As the Social protection law foresees the right of the disabled to form associations, organizations and funds, it is through the non-governmental sector that their rehabilitation and reintegration takes place most. It is worth mentioning here the role of sport and physical education for their rehabilitation. As existing sport premises and rehabilitation centers are not adopted at all the disabled act mostly through their own sport associations. The National Paralympics committee has been organized in 2002 and since then Moldovan teams are taking part in various competitions.

The president of the Disabled society mentioned that every year a separate budget is foreseen for the disabled sport by the Ministry of education, youth and sports, but no money flow in reality as this proves to be no priority. All the competitions, trainings and other expenses for sport activities are financed by the handicapped themselves, mostly from the income brought by the enterprises organized by the handicapped. For example, there are 7 companies organized by the deaf people and 7 by the blind society.

When being asked about the general attitude of people towards the disabled the same president of the Disabled society mentioned that it is rather negative. As, especially in the villages where people sometimes get their salaries and pensions with a big delay, they get rather envious on the disabled who receive their pensions and subsidies "for nothing". As far as concerns their rehabilitation, it is simply not understood by the majority of population and seen as a "waste of money". The problem has a lot to do about the mentality and the hardship of the transition period that Moldova still finds itself in.

Number of sport schools for children and teenagers

<i>Year</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>Number of schools</i>	87	83	83	79	77	77	80	81
<i>Number of children attending the schools (thou.)</i>	37.5	35.3	34.1	32.7	29.4	31.1	33.3	33.3

Sport premises, gymnastic and health improvement centers

<i>Year</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>1997</i>	<i>1998</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>
<i>Sport premises – total; of which:</i>	6007	5468	6514	4766	4842	4926	4947	4609
<i>Stadiums with stands for over 500 places</i>	53	51	60	46	49	48	46	46
<i>Flat sport premises (grounds and fields)</i>	4009	3650	3730	3150	3186	3250	3341	2840

<i>Gymnasiums</i>	1227	1223	1266	1209	1225	1226	1230	1252
<i>Swimming pools</i>	35	32	40	29	34	26	30	26
<i>Auxiliary premises, equipped rooms for ph.t. and sports</i>	683	512	518	332	348	376	300	445
<i>Physical training and health improvement centers</i>	24	18	22	10	13	16	16	16