



Weimar Triangle Supports Moldova's European Aspirations

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Poland, France, and Germany support Moldova's accession to the European Union. However, it was only with the Weimar Triangle's renewed cooperation in a declaration following the foreign ministers' summit in February that they announced trilateral initiatives for Moldova. Coordination of the existing political and financial support by the Weimar states may strengthen Moldova's resilience to Russian attempts at destabilisation and accelerate its alignment with the accession criteria.

[President Maia Sandu and her ruling Action and Solidarity Party \(PAS\)](#) are setting an ambitious goal of Moldova joining the EU by 2030. In June 2022, together with Ukraine, Moldova was granted candidate status. In December 2023, the European Council announced the opening of accession negotiations. With Moldova facing presidential elections in the autumn and parliamentary elections next year, Russia is [attempting to undermine this pro-EU course with hybrid actions](#). Sandu's re-election is far from certain—according to a CBS election poll, Sandu would get 40% of votes in the second round, and pro-Russian former president Igor Dodon 39%. PAS may not form the future government, as it has around 36% support, the pro-Russian Communist and Socialist Bloc 27%, and Șansa, the new emanation of the outlawed [Sora Party](#), 19%. To mobilise the electorate, Sandu announced a referendum on the day of the presidential elections that will be the basis for including integration with the EU into the constitution. According to iData, 57% of respondents support accession, while 33% are against it.

Weimar Triangle States on Moldova's Aspirations. Of the Weimar states, Poland has been the most consistent supporter of Moldova's EU aspirations. In 2009, it pushed, despite the reluctance of most EU states, for the Eastern Partnership not to be an alternative to membership and did not rule out giving the countries covered, including Moldova, such a prospect in the future. EU enlargement not only to the Western Balkans but also to the East enjoys cross-party consensus in Poland. After the outbreak of the 2022 war,

Polish support for Moldovan accession was reaffirmed by President Andrzej Duda, who visited Chișinău and hosted Sandu in Warsaw.

France and Romania founded the EU's Friends of Moldova Group in 2010, with the original aim of supporting its rapprochement with the EU, but without the prospect of membership. Until the war in Ukraine, President Emmanuel Macron emphasised the need for closer integration and reform of the EU before enlargement, even to include the Western Balkan countries with such a perspective. [In 2019, he blocked the opening of negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia](#). However, in the face of Russian aggression, he considered enlargement to the East necessary for EU security. He is also intensifying France's—so far not very active—relationship with Moldova, as evidenced by March's [defence](#) and economic cooperation agreements.

Germany's position has changed similarly. Before the war, Germany ruled out EU enlargement to the East, but after the outbreak of the war, the country included support for the accession of Moldova and Ukraine into its National Security Strategy. In doing so, Chancellor Olaf Scholz's government indicates that enlargement must be preceded by EU reform, [deepening integration, and limiting the principle of unanimity](#).

Uncoordinated Support. The Weimar countries do not coordinate Moldova reform support and development assistance in a trilateral fashion. The Moldova Support

Platform, established in 2022 by France, Germany, and Romania, can only serve this aim to a limited extent, as it is too broad, involving 45 countries (including Poland) and financial institutions.

Germany provides the most aid to Moldova—€333 million between 1993 and 2023, and an additional €45 million in 2024. In 2020, Germany recognised Moldova as a so-called “partner in transformation”, greatly expanding Germany’s support. German priorities are infrastructure for small towns and rural areas, digitalisation of local administration, renewables, the fight against corruption, and women’s empowerment. The German development bank KfW and the French Development Agency (AFD) will subsidise the thermal modernisation of public buildings.

France is committed to modernising Moldova’s central administration and local government, as well as agricultural and foreign trade management and environmental protection. AFD supports natural resource management, especially sustainable forest management. It plans to invest €200 million by 2027, mainly in modernising railways and the electricity grid. A loan to strengthen Moldova’s energy security is being negotiated.

The main element of Poland’s support is expert advice, especially in building Moldova’s anti-corruption system and energy independence. Polish experts helped organise fuel purchases in the West [during the Russian-induced gas crisis in 2021](#). In 2022, Poland provided Moldova with a €20 million interest-free loan to stabilise its budget. Moldova is one of the primary recipients of Polish development aid—€45 million in the 2013-2022 period. The Polish governmental foundation Solidarity Fund PL (FSM), which has a branch in Chişinău, has supported around 700 projects, mainly rural development.

Strengthening Security. In the face of the war in Ukraine and Russian threats against Moldova, the Weimar states, individually and through EU mechanisms, are supporting its resilience to destabilisation. Poland promotes the exchange of experience between the services of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the FSM co-creates a system of Moldovan volunteer fire brigades modelled on the Polish one. Last year, Poland provided six air transports of weapons and equipment, and also delegated instructors and a helicopter to anti-terrorist training for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Moldova. Poland also offers assistance in the modernisation of the army. In February this year, the Moldovan Ministry of Defence signed a cooperation agreement with Mesko from the state-owned Polish Armament Group (PGZ).

France is mainly involved in strengthening Moldova’s air defences. As part of the [European Instrument for Peace](#), it provided a GM 200 radar worth €14 million last year. France also announced the establishment of a defence attaché in Chişinău. [A bilateral agreement signed in March this year provides for, among other things, training support for](#)

[Moldova and intelligence-sharing](#). Germany, meanwhile, donated 19 used Piranha IIIH armoured personnel carriers without armament between 2022 and 2023. Germany trained operators, bought five drones for the Moldovan Border Police, and seconded 15 police officers to the [EU Partnership Mission in Moldova \(EUPM\)](#). The Weimar Triangle countries also participate in the EU Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (EUBAM), which is headed by Sławomir Pichor.

Conclusions and Recommendations. The Weimar states are unequivocally in favour of Moldova’s EU membership. Their joint diplomatic action at the EU level could contribute to the rapid adoption by the European Council of a negotiating framework that would enable the actual start of accession talks. A smoothly progressing enlargement process could be a significant success for next year’s Polish presidency of the Council of the EU.

In adjusting to membership requirements, Moldova depends on foreign experts and financial support. The Weimar countries, alongside the EU, the U.S., and Romania, are among the most prominent donors. However, they do not coordinate their efforts trilaterally, which reduces their effectiveness. The intensification of support announced in the February declaration could improve this situation. However, this requires the prior establishment of coordination mechanisms. On the Polish side, it could be helpful to reconstitute the position of the Prime Minister’s Plenipotentiary for Supporting Reforms in Moldova and assign it to an apolitical expert or diplomat, who would be the main point of contact for domestic and foreign partners on this issue.

There are limited possibilities for significantly increasing Weimar Triangle joint activities in Moldova. The countries should build on existing bilateral initiatives, which, through coordination, would not duplicate but complement each other. From Poland’s point of view, it is not advisable to replace its support programmes with a unified Weimar project. The FSM and Development Poland Aid, although much smaller than the programmes of Germany and France, have high visibility in Moldova. Instead, a joint Weimar grant and scholarship programme for Moldovan civil society and independent journalism exposing disinformation and corruption could be new tools.

Due to the close bilateral relations of the Triangle countries with Romania and its unique position in dealing with Moldova due to its [cultural and linguistic commonality](#), the Romanian authorities may seek to include this aspect in the Weimar cooperation. However, it is necessary to consider the risk that Romania, by pressing identity issues, may additionally polarise Moldovan society and hinder Sandu and the PAS government. This would be undesirable from Poland’s point of view, also because Romania prefers cooperation with France and Germany and previously blocked Polish efforts to become a co-founder of the Group of Friends of Moldova in the EU.