



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH OF THE
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

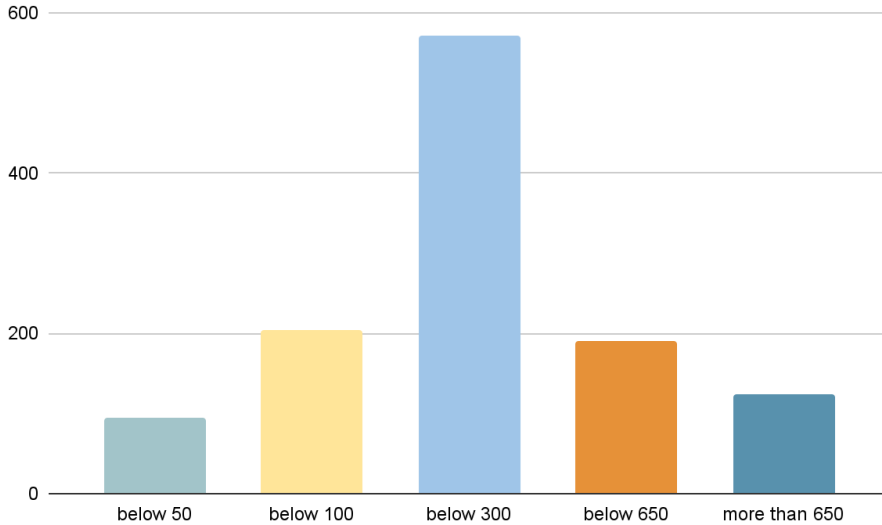
School Network Optimisation in the Republic of Moldova

Peer Learning Event – ETF, May 2025



ETF Working together
Learning for life
European Training Foundation

Quick facts on school network inefficiencies



Small Schools: 46% of schools have fewer than 150 students (546 out of 1,186 schools).

Occupancy Ratio: The average occupancy rate of school buildings nationwide is approximately 53%.

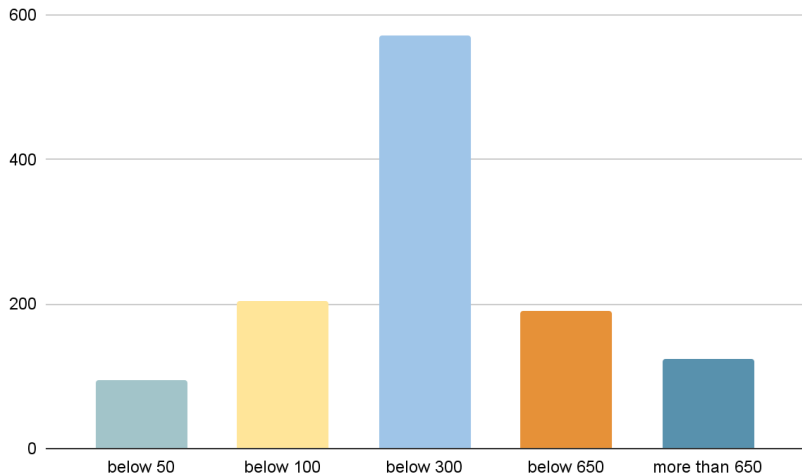
Demographic trends: The school-age population is steadily decreasing, particularly in rural areas, while urbanization continues to deepen regional disparities

High Unit Costs: Maintaining small schools requires a disproportionately high allocation of resources for staff, utilities, and equipment relative to the low number of students, which undermines the sustainability of the educational network.

Limited advanced educational services — such as foreign language instruction, extracurricular activities, high levels of functional illiteracy in both mathematics and reading.



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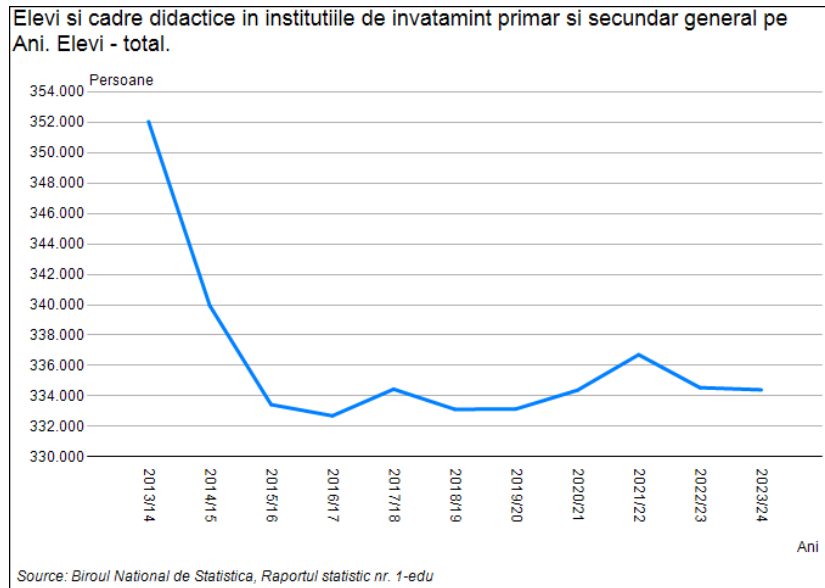
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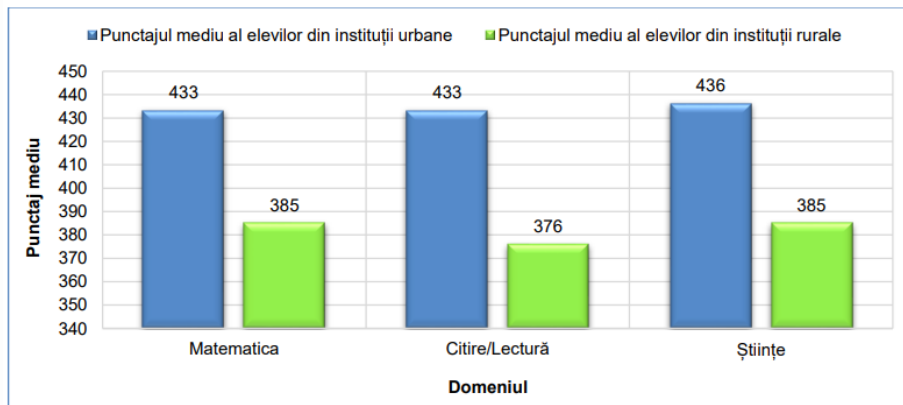
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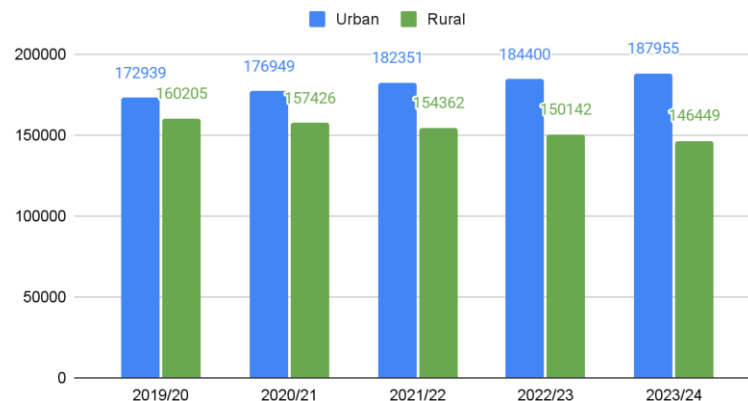
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PISA 2022 - Average scores of students from rural and urban schools in the Republic of Moldova



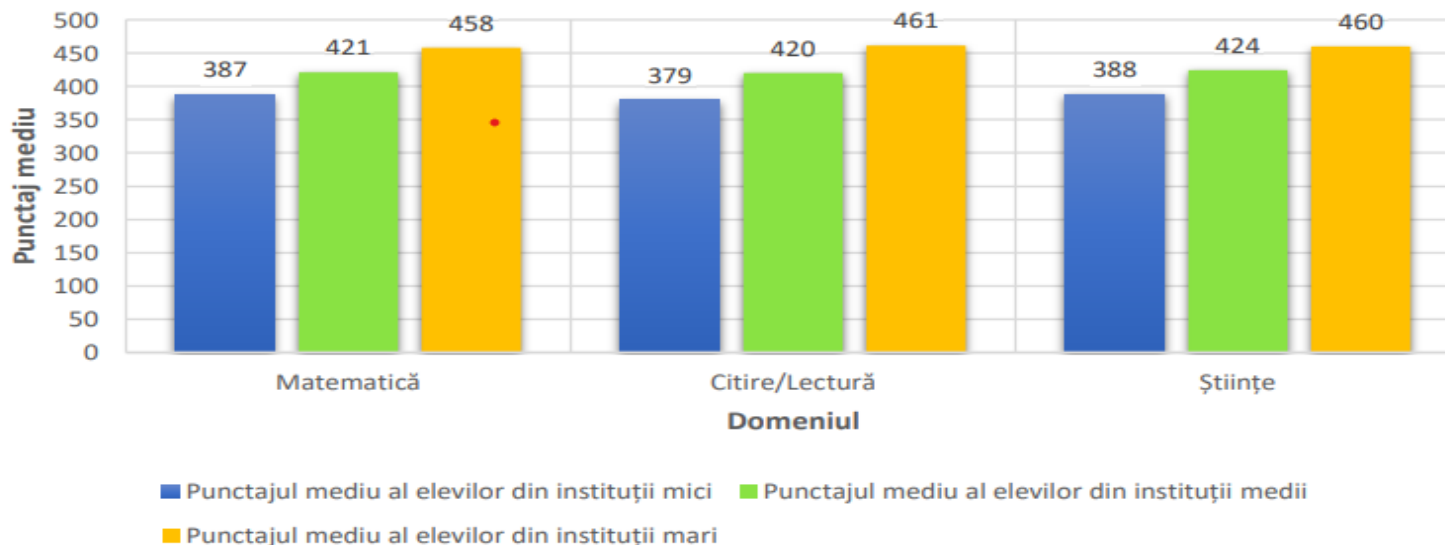
Urban și Rural



Significant difference between the percentages of students from rural and urban schools achieving each PISA proficiency level across all assessment domains. The percentage of students in **urban schools** who reach the **minimum proficiency level** in the PISA assessment is approximately: **54% in mathematics**, **62% in reading**, and **61% in science**.

Among students in **rural schools**, these percentages are nearly **1.8 times lower**, with: **30% in mathematics**, **35% in reading**, and **36% in science**.

PISA 2022 - Average Scores of Students from Small, Medium, and Large Schools in the Republic of Moldova



The analysis reveals that average scores across all subject areas differ significantly among small, medium, and large educational institutions. Specifically, in mathematics, students enrolled in institutions with a total student population of up to 400 scored, on average, 34 points lower than their peers in institutions with 400 to 900 students, and 71 points lower than those in institutions with more than 900 students.



National policies & measures for equal access to quality education for all

MODEL SCHOOL initiative - 90 modern/refurbished schools in each district of the country - until 2030

Creation of the network of regional Model schools aims at:

- resizing the school network
- enhancing the learning environment by renovating schools
- reducing the teacher deficit, and attracting new teachers into the profession
- improving the energy efficiency of the network, thus reducing overall operational costs through enhanced energy efficiency standards
- increasing the educational performance of Moldovan pupils, increase PISA results

DEVELOPING SKILLS & ABILITIES

Curriculum Modernization at all level of study (STEM Emphasis, Life Skills, Transversal skills, Insertion in the national curricula of subjects regarding the energy sector, environmental problems and promoting a sustainable lifestyle)

Digitization in education: management information systems, digital didactic materials, development of digital skills of in students and teachers

HUMAN CAPITAL High-Performing Teachers

Establishment of NIEL - committed to enhancing the quality of teaching and leadership within the education system. Its mission encompasses involvement in all aspects of training, professional integration, and career advancement for education personnel.

Invest in Teacher Program - elevate the skills and expertise of educators across Moldova

-focus on improving teachers' digital performance

-4000 teaching staff to trained in 2024

Target: 1000 mentors for general educational institutions

Strengths

- ✓ Political and institutional support for school network reform
- ✓ Support from the development partners (EU, World Bank, NORAD, CEB, UN Agencies etc.)
- ✓ “Model Schools” initiative with proven positive impact (qualitative evaluations)

Opportunities

- Possibility of attracting European funding for digitalization and infrastructure
- Reconfiguration of schools to ensure equitable access to quality education
- Expansion of public–private partnerships in the field of education

Weaknesses

- ✗ Fragmented school network with many small schools and high per-student costs
- ✗ Unequal access to educational services: lack of foreign languages, ICT, and extracurricular activities
- ✗ Unclear perceptions of the “Model School” concept and community resistance to change

Threats

- ⚠ Limited long-term planning capacity in the education sector, instability in policy continuity due to changes in leadership
- ⚠ Local resistance to reorganization: concerns about bullying, unsafe transportation, and job losses
- ⚠ Ongoing migration and demographic decline