

# CASE STUDY

## Prohibiting lead in paints



Republic of Moldova

## DEVELOPMENT OF A REGULATION TO LIMIT LEAD IN PAINTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Implementing institution: National Agency for Public Health (NAPH)

### Overview

The manufacture and sale of lead paints present a risk of lead exposure for workers and the public, including children, in the Republic of Moldova. It is important to accelerate progress towards phasing out lead paints through the adoption and application of a national regulation prohibiting the manufacture, import, export, distribution, sale and use of paints with total lead concentrations higher than 90 parts per million (ppm).

### Objective

The project aimed to develop a sanitary regulation limiting lead in paints and relevant coating materials.

### Activities

- Drafting the sanitary regulation
- Preparing an information note and regulatory impact assessment of the regulation
- Making relevant WHO materials available in the national language
- Organizing an intersectoral workshop to achieve consensus at the national level

### Engagement of partners/stakeholders

This project was implemented in cooperation with WHO headquarters, the WHO Regional Office for Europe (through the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health and the WHO Country Office in the Republic of Moldova), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Moldovan Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, the National Agency for Public Health (NAPH), Nicolae Testemitanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, territorial public health centres, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), specialists responsible for chemical safety, and manufacturers and importers of paints and varnishes.



### Outcomes

- Data on international practice in the regulation of lead content in paints (e.g. in Israel, Georgia, Ukraine), the impact of lead on public health, especially among children and in the environment, were collected, analysed and systematized.
- In accordance with the model law suggested by the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint, national studies of lead in paints on the market were revised to consider the 90 parts per million (ppm) limit rather than lead emissions.
- The sanitary regulation to limit lead in paints and other coating materials, and additional documents such as an information note and regulatory impact assessment, were prepared to support decision-making.
- Two WHO documents were translated for national discussion:
  - *Global elimination of lead paint: why and how countries should take action – Technical brief* (2020)
  - *Global elimination of lead paint: why and how countries should take action – Policy brief* (2020).

### Key achievements

- Two meetings of the project working group and national experts were organized for technical and scientific consultation on the normative act (draft sanitary regulation) for prohibiting lead in paint.
- The intersectoral workshop held by the NAPH gathered 31 specialists and stakeholders from WHO headquarters, the WHO Country Office in the Republic of Moldova, UNEP, the Moldovan Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment, Nicolae Testemitanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, the NGO EcoContact, and manufacturers and importers of paints and varnishes. The workshop provided an opportunity to present and debate the draft sanitary regulation for limiting lead in paint and accompanying documents.
- The NAPH and territorial public health centres also organized events marking the ninth International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week "Lead-free paints – involvement and actions" in the Republic of Moldova on 24–30 October 2021. More than 4607 individual and group discussions were held, 33 seminars were hosted and 976 people were trained, including children and other members of vulnerable population groups. In addition, 228 lectures were given and 95 health bulletins were prepared on the dangers of lead poisoning and measures to protect health.

### Lessons learned

- Building on experience from other countries and international organizations helps to save time and resources in the development of national documents and plans, and to find the most effective way of achieving results.
- Finding a compromise with industry is a challenging task, but is key to ensuring legislation development.

### Acknowledgements

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### Key messages and steps forward

- Strengthening health security is a high priority in the Republic of Moldova, and the development of the normative act is an important step in reducing environmental health risks.
- To monitor the future implementation of the normative act, a national study to determine the content of paints on the market will be necessary.