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Gender Budget Watchdog Network  
for a gender equal region

# GRB CHAMPIONS

ADO LEX XXI ADVOCACY  
CAMPAIGN FOR

GENDER EQUITY IN SPORTS

Prepared by:



Name of the organization: **ADO Lex XXI**  
Name of country: **Republic of Moldova**  
Sector: **Sport**

## GRB tools used:

- gender budget beneficiary assessment;
- gender budget expenditure analysis;

## GENDER INEQUALITY IN SPORTS

Balti municipality is the second largest city in the Republic of Moldova. Female sports are deeply underfunded in Balti municipality and the majority of the sports schools' budgets is directed towards male-preferred sports and teams (Box, Football, Karate, Jiu-Jitsu, etc.). There are chronic low numbers of women coaches and women in leadership positions in the sporting arena. Participation of women in sports is insufficiently encouraged and financially supported; therefore, girls and women benefit much less from sports programs compared to boys and men.

## GRB INITIATIVE

The Association for Human Rights Lex XXI (ADO Lex XXI) started to implement a GRB initiative within the GBWN project for strengthening gender equality in sports through monitoring and rebalancing sport budgets in Balti municipality. During the 2021 year, the organization submitted about 20 requests for access to information to the sport schools from Balti municipality and to the Municipal Directorate of Youth, Education and Sports in order to collect and analyse data related to students, coaches/trainers and expenditures of the sport schools. Only four out of six schools were receptive and responded to the requests.

Analysis of data revealed that boys benefited much more than girls did from resource allocation for sports in 2020 (25% of sport schools beneficiaries were girls and 75% were boys). Percentage of women coaches/trainers employed in the monitored sport schools lags far behind as well: 31% women versus 69% men. Only one out of four sport schools managers is women. There are important differences between schools regarding the proportion of girls and boys enrolled in sports programs and annual cost per enrolled student. For instance, the schools that offer chess classes, ball games (Basketball, Handball, and Volleyball), Tennis and Athletics have a higher proportion of girls enrolled while the school that offers Sambo, Judo, Box, Weightlifting has only few girls enrolled. At the same time, in 2020, the total annual cost (direct and indirect expenses) per enrolled student was 42% higher in the school that offered male-preferred sports (Sambo, Judo, Box, and Weightlifting) compared to the school that offered female preferred sports (Chess, Athletics).

During the data collection process, ADO Lex XXI team was concerned that the Specialized Football Sport School, did not respond to any request of information. At the same time, the project team found out that the Municipal Council was going to vote a decision in order to allocate annually "at least" 5 million MDL (cc. 250.000 Eur) to the Balti Football Sport Club NGO located in the same building of the Specialized Football Sport School. ADO Lex XXI project team participated at the Municipal Council meeting and draw attention of the councillors on the legal requirements of transparency, accountability, citizen consultation and responsibility to ensure that the needs of girls and boys, women and men are equally met through the allocation of money for every public sector.

The organization explained the reasons of inadmissibility of voting such a decision, relying on findings of the GRB initiative, however received a series of rude messages from the audience.

ADO Lex XXI team together with other social activists filed a lawsuit on the Municipal Council requesting the annulment of the decision "that was only in favour of a small group of male football players and neglected the needs of other sport schools that enrolled girls, as well as many other needs of Balti citizens". The case was

widely covered by the local media and more than 2.9 thousand Facebook users viewed the live session made by ADO Lex XXI in front of the court. However, the first's instance judge qualified the action as inadmissible considering that no right of the plaintiffs was violated by the decision of the Municipal Council. The judge decision was challenged by ADO Lex XXI at the Court of Appeals and is pending hearings. It would be the first lawsuit case in the country founded on the results of a GRB initiative in sport.

## THE SUCCESS OF THE GRB INITIATIVE

ADO Lex XXI draw attention of the citizens and of the Municipal Council that the actual distribution of funds for sport programs in Balti municipality is likely to increase the gender inequality. Through this GRB initiative the organization raised awareness of parents, sport schools employees and municipal public authorities' on the importance of gender equity in sports. The initiative has support from the citizens as several civil activists mobilized for a lawsuit on the Municipal Council decision that did not considered the needs of various groups of citizens in the process of distribution of municipal funds. The gender budget analysis was used for providing arguments to local authorities and sport schools and demanding a fairer, more transparent and gender sensitive budgeting for sports programs to increase the participation of girls in sports.

## FACTORS OF SUCCESS:

Keys success factors of the initiative are considered to be the experience of the NGO in advocating for human rights in Balti municipality and monitoring public budgets, the participation of the project team in a GRB training and the support offered by GBWN team for the implementation of the initiative.

## CHALLENGES:

The main challenge of the initiative was the refusal to collaborate and provide data of two out of six sports schools from the municipality. The low awareness of municipal councilors and sports schools on gender equality in sport and GRB created difficulties for ADO Lex XXI in establishing a constructive dialog with them.

