

## **Chess Unites Project Summary**

### **Project Goals**

The main goal of this project was to increase opportunities for youth and teachers from both banks of the Nistru to study and play chess together as a means to encourage open communication and friendship between the banks. The project concentrates on:

- Developing and approving normative regulations in chess education institutions in both regions.
- Raising methodological assistance and training in chess centers in both regions.
- Creating a new/experimental chess training in Cricova city.
- Conducting several chess-related activities (tournaments, camps, etc.) to achieve bring people from both regions together for open communication and networking.

### **Success Stories**

Some of the success stories are:

- During a training camp held in Rîbnița city (22 to 29 March 2014), International Grandmaster Viorel Iordachescu discovered a gifted 11-year-old child from Rîbnița, Ilia Martinovic, who was hired to guide chess players.
- Another child from Tiraspol, Ilia Turcan, played in a tournament and obtained sports category I after attending the training camp.
- In Cricova city, where Viorica Railean prepared and certified teachers, the school administration of the "A. Mateevici" lyceum decided to introduce chess as a subject of study in all 4 primary classes in the 2013-2014 academic year. All 70 children in first class are currently studying chess. In addition, extra funding sources were created for teacher wages to support chess extracurricular sessions.
- At the "Stefan cel Mare" lyceum in Chisinau, the school administration organized internal training courses for chess instructional methods conducted by Vyacheslav Zabolotnic and introduced chess as an optional subject.

### **Project Achievements**

During the project, the National Chess Academy of Moldova, in cooperation with State University of Physical Education and Sport:

- Developed the first chess instructors' training program approved by the Ministry of Education.
- Designed the first methodical guide for teachers.
- Prepared and certified the first 20 chess instructors, 10 from each bank of the Nistru.
- Provided 20 schools/ clubs with chess inventory for instruction.
- Over 600 children from 14 villages on both banks benefitted from quality chess instruction in Tiraspol, Bender, Dubosari, Ribnita Mihailovca, Chisinau, Ungheni, Leova, Cricova, Glodeni, Cahul, Șoldănești, Drochia, and Petrești.
- Hosted a week-long chess training camp in Rîbnița March 22-29, 2014 for 40 children on both sides of the Nistru under the guidance of 10 teachers trained in the project. The camp included lessons, simultaneous games, and chess tournaments.
- On April 18, 2014 in Chisinau, the project ended with a team chess tournament attended by 40 children and youth from both banks of the Nistru. They participated in teams of four, each team with three boys and one girl.

### **National Chess Curriculum**

The most important achievement of the project is the development of the national chess curriculum.

- The national chess curriculum's structure, content, and complexity is unique because it

- regulates the teaching of chess for all levels, from kindergarten to the professional level.
- The system includes children from all social strata and methodology to continually select and promote talented children.
  - Several experts contributed in developing the system: PhDs in psycho-pedagogy, coaches and chess players, including world chess elite.
  - On April 4, 2014, the National Chess curriculum was approved by the National Council for Curriculum of the Ministry of Education, which also has the status of law for all educational institutions in Moldova.
  - With the curriculum's approval, the chess educational system was formalize and its implementation will bring unprecedented benefits not only within the Republic of Moldova but also will set a great example for other countries to follow.

### **International Recognition**

The achievements of the project attracted the attention of the international community of chess players.

- On October 18, 2013, Moldova was visited by the ex-President of the European Chess Union, Mr. Silvio Danailov. During his visit, he had an official meeting with President of Moldova, Mr. Nicolae Timofti.
- A trilateral agreement of collaboration was signed between the Ministry of Education, European Chess Union, and National Chess Academy of Moldova about creation of the educational system of chess.
- Mr. Danailov attended the opening of the chess specialization at the State University of Physical Education and Sport and participated in a press conference with Moldovan chess players.
- At that time, our mission was joined by world chess champion Garry Kasparov, who expressed enthusiasm for the project's achievements.
- Mr. Kasparov pointed out that on March 13, 2012, when Parliament approved nr.0050 Written Declaration on the introduction of the program 'Chess in School' in the educational systems of the European Union, each EU country began to independently implement this program. He added, that the "Chess Unites!" project has pioneering status in the EU: developing a complex curriculum for beginners through masters and a program approved by the Ministry of Education to prepare teachers and create a chess specialization within a university.