

HopePark will partner with Rolling Hills Church on our upcoming mission trip to Moldova. Rolling Hills has made the trip to serve the orphans of Moldova several times, and the following packet is the information they provide to their mission teams. If you have any questions, please contact Colleen at [cgibson@hopepark.com](mailto:cgibson@hopepark.com).



## Welcome to the Moldova Adventure....7 years and counting!!!

2009 will mark the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Rolling Hills' commitment to the orphaned and destitute children of Moldova. It will be an exciting year to be involved for many reasons!

1. 2009 will mark the year we begin a boys' transitional living program and initiate our first microenterprise opportunity
2. 2009 will be the first year that Rolling Hills will heavily promote JMI's sponsorship program after returning from the camps
3. 2009 will be the year we initiate summer camp programming in another underserved orphanage that will be new to us

Incredibly, the church's passion for Moldova has only grown as the years have progressed. We have moved from an annual mission trip, to two annual mission trips and we'll soon have two established, on-going transitional living ministries there. In addition, we anticipate the participation of two JMI church partners this year.

Your opportunity to go to Moldova is **now**. If you are feeling the tug to go, now is the time to begin freeing up your life—your calendar, your checkbook, and your heart—and to make the decision to join our teams for a life-changing experience in Moldova.

If you have questions concerning Moldova and our involvement there, please contact Colleen Gibson at [cgibson@hopepark.com](mailto:cgibson@hopepark.com) or 662.6136, or Liz Perez at [lperez@hopepark.com](mailto:lperez@hopepark.com).

*Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight, and guard against corruption from the godless world. (The Message)*

*Pure and lasting religion in the sight of God our Father means that we must care for orphans and widows in their troubles, and refuse to let the world corrupt us. (NLT)*

James 1:27

# Where do we serve?

## Moldova



Falesti Camp Team

Straseni Camp Team

Grace House  
Transitional Living  
Program  
Construction Team  
3<sup>rd</sup> Camp Team



## Critical Dates!

**Cost: \$2,490**

### **Financial Due Dates**

March 8  
April 12  
May 10  
June 7  
June 28

### **Financial Obligation**

\$500 non-refundable deposit  
\$750 due  
\$500 due  
\$500 due  
\$240 due

## General Moldova Mission Team Information

**Training Dates: Hope Park** – March 29, April 19, May 3 May 31 and June 28.

Some trainings will be “cross-trainings,” e.g., some teams may decide to have their crafts leaders get together to share ideas. Other trainings may be scheduled for all the groups. These dates and places will be communicated through the RHCC e-blasts, website and JMI newsletter.

### **Participant Requirements**

- Minimum Age-17 years old and up
- Students under the age of 17 will be considered on a case by case basis
- The trip is encouraged among RHCC members, attenders and friends of members. Those wishing to attend with the RHCC teams must be accompanied or endorsed by a responsible RHCC person.

## Travel & Lodging

### **Travel:**

Our travel is booked through Octavian Nacu with Moldova House. Our flights will likely originate in Nashville and travel through Frankfurt, Germany (or other European gateways) into Chisinau. Airfare typically costs \$1,500-\$1,700.

### **Travel Documents:**

Passports are required for international travel to Moldova. It is strongly suggested that you apply for a passport by the beginning of March at the latest, and that **if you currently have a valid passport, ensure that it does not expire for at least six months following your time in Moldova.**

### **Vaccinations and Health Concerns:**

No vaccinations are required for travel to Moldova. However, you may wish to consult your physician regarding any concerns you may have. The construction team must make sure they have had a tetanus booster in the last ten years. All teams would benefit from tetanus shots, however.

Medical Information: Tuberculosis is an increasingly serious health concern in Moldova; the World Health Organization (WHO) has placed it in its “highest risk” category. Travelers planning to stay in Moldova for more than 3 months should have a pre-departure PPD skin

test status documented. Given the way TB is transmitted, travelers should consider limiting their exposure to TB by avoiding crowded public places and public transportation whenever possible. Domestic help should be screened for TB. For further information, please consult the CDC's Travel Notice on TB at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/yellowBookCh4-TB.aspx>.

Other major health concerns include Hepatitis A (food-borne), Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C (blood- and body fluids-borne). The incidence of sexually transmitted diseases is as "high" as it is in most developing countries.

Information on vaccinations and other health precautions, such as safe food and water precautions and insect bite protection, may be obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's hotline for international travelers at 1-877-FYI-TRIP (1-877-394-8747) or via the CDC's web site at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx>. For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad consult the WHO's web site at <http://www.who.int/en>. Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/ith/en>.

**Lodging:**

Teams will be staying in team houses provided by the International Mission Board or comfortable family facilities of Moldovans we have been associated with for years. The houses have bunk beds and hall bathrooms with several showers, as well as a conference room and kitchen.

**Meals and Water:**

Two meals per day are provided for us at our team houses. Only bottled water is safe to drink and it will be provided at the houses.

Lunches will be determined by group leaders according to place of service and schedule. Some groups may decide to fix sandwiches for their teams. Others will dine in Moldovan restaurants.

**Currency Exchange:**

The Moldovan lei was, as of January 2009, trading at an exchange of 10.2 – \$1 U.S. We will allow the teams to exchange money soon after arrival.

Moldovan banks and exchanges will not accept any bills that are written on or watermarked. Please inspect your bills carefully and bring only new, unmarked currency.

## Moldova 2009 Schedule (*Tentative*)

Travel dates for the HopePark team are July 12-18.

### **A Daily Snapshot**

Camp makes for very long days and short nights. Each evening before camp, supplies are organized and gathered. The next morning breakfast is served, vans are loaded, and team is on its way to camp. Below is a general daily schedule as we know it. **EXPECT**

### **REVISIONS AND BE FLEXIBLE!**

Translators will be on hand as you worship, play, and work with children throughout the day. You will grow to love and appreciate them, as well as have the opportunity to minister to them.

8:00	Breakfast
8:45	Leave for Camp
9:30	Arrive at Camp/Set up
10:00	Morning Worship
10:45	Bible Study by Age-groups
11:15	Arts-n-Crafts, Recreation, Music
	Rotation 1= 11:15-12:00
	Rotation 2= 12:05-12:50
	Rotation 3= 12:55-1:30
1:30	Lunch
2:00	Rest Time for Kiddos
4:00	Free Time/Time with Kids—Crocheting, Rec, hanging out, etc
6:00	Evening Worship Time
6:30	Small Group Time
7:00	Return to Team House
8:00	Dinner
9:00	Planning, Prayer, Pack supplies for next day, etc.
	BEDTIME

The schedule for the construction team in Chisinau will largely mirror that of the camp team, except that during camp time, the team will be hard at work on its project. There will be time for the construction team to visit one of the camps and the children as well, attaching faces to the project the team is preparing. The construction team also has alternate housing.

### **Contact Information while in Moldova**

There is internet access at all of the team houses except the one in Balti where the Falesti team will be staying. Arrangements can be made for the Falesti team to use an internet café in Balti on certain evenings (prices are very inexpensive).

Phones are available at the team houses but their use is discouraged (international calls are generally \$3 per minute). International calling cards are available for purchase in Moldova. If you have AT&T cell phone service you should be able to set yourself up on an international plan and then cancel it after you return, lowering your cost. You might also considering setting yourself up with a Skype number. Generally it is best to communicate via the internet.

Here is a list of emergency phone numbers by which a family member could reach one of our staff members.

For team members staying in Falesti, call Alina at 011-069-025-811.

For team members staying in Chisinau at Victor's home, call 011-373-224-62-062, or his cell number 011-373-691-89-898.

An alternate number for team members staying or working in Chisinau or Straseni, call Tatiana at 011-373-069-276-689

## Passport Information

### **To Apply in Person for a U.S. Passport You MUST:**

1. Provide *Application for Passport*, Form DS-11
2. Present Proof of U.S. Citizenship
3. Present Proof of Identity
4. Provide Two Passport Photos
5. Pay the Applicable Fee

*Effective March 8, 2005*

- o **Age 16 and older:** The passport fee is \$75.  
The execution fee is \$25. The total is \$100.
- o **Under Age 16:** The passport fee is \$65.  
The execution fee is \$25. The total is \$90.

### **Apply at the following locations:**

#### **Nashville:**

Broadway Station Post Office  
901 Broadway Street  
(615) 255-3613

USPS Passport Agent- Acklen Station  
2006 Acklen Avenue  
(615) 383-5396

Nashville General Mail Facility  
525 Royal Parkway  
(615) 872-5742

USPS Bell Meade Station  
5421 Hwy. 100  
(615) 352-3442

USPS- Arcade Station  
Arcade Post Office  
16 Arcade Station  
(615) 248-0965

**Franklin:**  
Franklin Main Post Office  
810 Oak Meadow Drive  
(615) 599-4840

For more info, visit: <http://travel.state.gov/passport/>

# Facts about Moldova

(from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5357.htm>)

## Geography

Area: 33,843 sq. km. (13,000 sq. mi.); slightly larger than Maryland.

Cities: *Capital*--Chisinau.

Terrain: Rolling steppe, gradual slope south to Black Sea.

Climate: Moderate winters, warm summers.

Time Zone: GMT+2

## People

Nationality: *Noun*--Moldovan(s). *Adjective*--Moldovan.

Population (January 2006): 3.39 million, excluding the estimated Transnistrian population of 580,000.

Population growth rate (2005): 0.5% (est.).

Ethnic groups (2004 census): Moldovan (83.7%), Ukrainian (6.6%), Russian (1.7%), Gagauz (4.5%), Bulgarian (1.7%), Romanian (1.4%), other (0.4%).

Main religions: Christian Orthodox (93.3%), Baptist (1%), Adventist, Roman Catholic, Jewish.

Languages: Romanian (officially known as Moldovan), Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz.

Education: *Literacy*--96%.

Health: *Infant mortality rate*--12/1,000. *Life expectancy*--68.4 years.

Work force (1.3 million): *Agriculture*--41%; *industry*--12%; *other*--47%.

## Government

Type: Republic.

Constitution: Adopted July 28, 1994.

Independence: August 27, 1991 (from Soviet Union).

Branches: *Executive*--President (head of state), Prime Minister (head of Government), Government (cabinet). *Legislative*--unicameral Parliament. *Judicial*--Supreme Court.

Administrative subdivisions: 32 counties (raions), 4 municipalities, and one autonomous territorial unit.

Political parties: Communist Party, Christian Democratic People's Party, Our Moldova Alliance, Democratic Party, Social Liberal Party, Social-Democratic Party, and the Party for Social Democracy.

Suffrage: Universal at 18.

## Economy

GDP (2005): \$2.9 billion (\$2.6 billion in 2004; \$2.0 billion in 2003).

GDP real growth rate (January-March 2006): 6.2% (7.1% in 2005; 7.4% in 2004; 6.6% in 2003; 7.8% in 2002).

Per capita GDP (2005): \$890 (\$766 in 2004; \$540 in 2003; \$448 in 2002).

Natural resources: Lignite, phosphates, gypsum, arable land, and limestone.

Agriculture: *Products*--vegetables, fruits, wine and spirits, grain, sugar beets, sunflower seeds, meat, milk, eggs, tobacco, walnuts.

Industry: *Types*--processed foods and beverages, including wine and refined sugar; processed fruit and vegetable products, including vegetable oil; dairy and meat products; tobacco items; metal processing and production of machinery; textiles and clothing, shoes; furniture.

Trade (2005): *Exports*--\$1.091 billion (of which 50% go to countries outside the former Soviet Union): foodstuffs, wine, textiles, clothing, footwear and machinery. *Major markets*--Russia, Italy, Romania, Ukraine, Belarus, Germany. *Imports*--\$2.312 billion (of which 60% come from countries outside the former Soviet Union): gas, oil, coal, steel, machinery and equipment, chemical products, textiles, foodstuffs, automobiles, and other consumer durables. *Major suppliers*--Ukraine, Russia, Romania, Germany, Italy.  
Currency: Moldovan Leu (plural Lei).  
Exchange rate: Lei/US\$ (2005): 12.60; 12.83 (end of year); (12.33 average in 2004); (13.94 average in 2003); (13.57 average in 2002).

## **PEOPLE AND HISTORY**

Ethnic groups represented in Moldova include Moldovan/Romanian, Ukrainian, Russian, Gagauz, and Bulgarian. Romanian (officially known as Moldovan) is the official language; Russian, Ukrainian, and Gagauz also are spoken. The great majority of Moldova's population is Christian Orthodox--90% of the population nominally belongs to one of the two main Orthodox denominations. The Moldovan Orthodox Church, an autonomous diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church and loyal to the Patriarch of Moscow, has 1,194 parishes; the Bessarabian Orthodox Church, affiliated with the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate in Bucharest, has 124 parishes. In addition, followers of the Old Rite Russian Orthodox Church (Old Believers) make up approximately 3.6% of the population.

The Republic of Moldova occupies most of what has been known as Bessarabia. Moldova's location has made it a historic passageway between Asia and southern Europe, as well as the victim of frequent warfare. Greeks, Romans, Huns, and Bulgars invaded the area, which in the 13th century became part of the Mongol empire. An independent Moldovan state emerged briefly in the 14th century under celebrated leader Stefan the Great but subsequently fell under Ottoman Turkish rule in the 16th century.

After the Russo-Turkish War of 1806-12, the eastern half of Moldova (Bessarabia) between the Prut and the Dniester Rivers was ceded to Russia, while Romanian Moldavia (west of the Prut) remained with the Turks. Romania, which gained independence in 1878, took control of Russian-ruled Bessarabia in 1918. The Soviet Union never recognized the action and created an autonomous Moldavian republic on the east side of the Dniester River in 1924.

In 1940, Romania was forced to cede Bessarabia to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.), which established the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic by merging the autonomous republic east of the Dniester and the annexed Bessarabian portion. Stalin also stripped the three southern counties along the Black Sea coast from Moldova and incorporated them in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Romania sought to regain Bessarabia by joining with Germany in the 1941 attack on the Soviet Union. However, Moldova was ceded back to Moscow when hostilities between the U.S.S.R. and Romania ceased at the end of World War II. The present boundary between Moldova and Romania was established in 1947.

In September 1990, the Supreme Soviet elected Mircea Snegur as President of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Moldova. A former Communist Party official, he endorsed independence from the Soviet Union and actively sought Western recognition. On May 23, 1991, the Supreme Soviet renamed itself the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, which subsequently declared its independence from the U.S.S.R.

In August 1991, Moldova's transition to democracy initially had been impeded by an ineffective Parliament, the lack of a new constitution, a separatist movement led by the

Gagauz (Christian Turkic) minority in the south, and unrest in the Transnistria region on the left bank of the Nistru/Dniester River, where a separatist movement declared a "Transdniester Moldovan Republic" in September 1990. The Russian 14<sup>th</sup> Army intervened to stem widespread violence and support the Transnistrian regime which is led by supporters of the 1991 coup attempt in Moscow. In 1992, the government negotiated a cease-fire arrangement with Russian and Transnistrian officials, although tensions continue, and negotiations are ongoing. In February 1994, new legislative elections were held, and the ineffective Parliament that had been elected in 1990 to a 5-year term was replaced. A new constitution was adopted in July 1994. The conflict with the Gagauz minority was defused by the granting of local autonomy in 1994.

### **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS**

In 2000, Parliament passed a decree making Moldova a parliamentary republic, with the president elected by Parliament instead of by popular vote. Widespread popular dissatisfaction with previous governments and economic hardship led to a surprise at the polls in February 2001. In elections certified by international observers as free and fair, slightly over half of Moldova's voters cast their ballots for the Communist Party. Under the rules of Moldova's proportional representation system, the Communist faction, which in the previous Parliament consisted of 40 of Parliament's 101 seats, jumped to 71--a clear majority. The Parliament then elected the leader of the Communist faction, Vladimir Voronin, to be President.

President Voronin's first term was marked by up and down relations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Politically, the government was committed to the reduction of poverty by allocating more resources to social safety net items such as health, education, and increasing pensions and salaries. Voronin proceeded with former President Lucinschi's plans to privatize several important state-owned industries and even on occasion broke with his own party over important issues. Under President Voronin, relations with the United States have remained strong. From January to April 2002, large demonstrations took place in opposition to several controversial government proposals, including expanded use of the Russian language in schools and its designation as an official language. While the demonstrations were sometimes tense, the government did not use force and ultimately agreed to Council of Europe (CoE) mediation.

In March 2005 parliamentary elections, the Communist Party received 46.1% of the vote, or 56 seats in the 101-member Parliament--more than enough for the 51-vote minimum required to form a government, but short of the 61 votes necessary to elect a president. However, President Voronin was re-elected with support from the Christian Democratic People's Party and from the Democratic and Social Liberal party factions, after Voronin promised to deliver on needed reforms and Euro-Atlantic integration for the country. These defections broke apart the opposition unity of the pre-election Moldovan Democratic Bloc, led by Our Moldova Alliance (AMN) faction leader and former Chisinau Mayor Serafim Urechean.

Local elections in May and June 2003--the first nationwide contests since the Communists came to power--did not meet the relatively high electoral standards set in previous Moldovan elections, according to international observers. While the voting itself generally met international standards, the government's behavior in the campaign period--including bias in state media, misuse of administrative resources, and the arrests of two opposition mayors--represented a step backward. The Communists won the largest share of votes, but lost in the country's highest-profile race, for mayor of Chisinau. Former Mayor and AMN leader Serafim Urechean decided to give up his mayoral seat to retain his mandate as an

elected parliamentarian in the March 2005 elections, as Moldovan legislation prohibits holding both positions simultaneously. Early mayoral elections for Chisinau were held in July 2005 but were declared invalid due to low turnout. Elections in the semi-autonomous region of Gagauzia will be held in 2006, and local elections across Moldova are scheduled for 2007.

In addition to state-sponsored media, there are several independent newspapers, radio and television stations, and news services. The independent media organizations, along with some that are affiliated with political parties, often criticize government policies. In August 2004, Teleradio Moldova (TRM) was officially transformed from a state-owned company into a public broadcaster. However, journalists and civil society representatives, who claimed the process was nontransparent and meant to stack the new TRM staff with those favorable to the government, met this move with large protests. Peaceful assembly is allowed, though permits for demonstrations must be obtained; private organizations, including political parties, are required to register with the government. Legislation passed in 1992 codified freedom of religion but required that religious groups register with the government.

In February 2005, Brussels and Chisinau agreed on a European Union (EU)-Moldova Action Plan, a "roadmap" of reforms to strengthen the democratic and economic situation of the country and facilitate its Euro-Atlantic integration. Although Moldova has made some progress toward laying the structural and legislative foundation for reform, the EU has emphasized that more implementation is needed.

### **Transnistria**

The population of the Moldovan region of Transnistria is approximately 40% Romanian/Moldovan, 28% Ukrainian, and 23% Russian. Separatist forces maintain control of the Transnistrian region, which lies along the Ukrainian border. Moldova has tried to meet the Russian minority's demands by offering the region rather broad cultural and political autonomy. The dispute has strained Moldova's relations with Russia. The July 1992 cease-fire agreement established a tripartite peacekeeping force comprised of Moldovan, Russian, and Transnistrian units.

Negotiations to resolve the conflict continue, and the cease-fire is still in effect. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is trying to facilitate a negotiated settlement and has had an observer mission in place for several years. In July 2002, OSCE, Russian, and Ukrainian mediators approved a document setting forth a blueprint for reuniting Moldova under a federal system. Over the next year and a half, the settlement talks alternated between periods of forward momentum and periods of no progress. In February 2003, the U.S. and EU imposed visa restrictions against the Transnistrian leadership. In April 2003, the Moldovan Government and the Transnistrian authorities agreed to establish a joint commission to draft a constitution for a reintegrated state. However, fundamental disagreements over the division of powers remained, and a settlement proved elusive.

In a surprise move, President Voronin decided not to sign a Russian-brokered settlement with Transnistria in November 2003; the proposal--seen by many as pro-Transnistrian--sparked opposition protests. During the summer of 2004, the Transnistrian separatists forcibly closed several Romanian language Latin-script schools in the region, for which the regime was subject to international condemnation. In 2005, the Transnistrian regime prevented several farmers on the right bank of the Nistru River from working their fields on the left bank, within Transnistria's "borders." The OSCE Mission to Moldova eventually mediated solutions to these crises.

After a 15-month pause, the sides met for a renewed round of settlement negotiations in October 2005. Mediators from Ukraine, Russia, and the OSCE joined the Moldovan and Transnistrian representatives at the talks. In addition, the U.S. and EU joined the talks as observers. However, subsequent "5+2" negotiations have made little progress on a settlement or on withdrawal of Russian forces from Moldova.

Russia still has weapons and munitions of the Operational Group of Russian Forces (formerly the Russian 14th Army) stationed in Transnistria, although it pledged to remove them under a timetable established at the 1999 OSCE Ministerial--the so-called "Istanbul Accords." However, there has been no progress on Russian withdrawals since early 2004.

In response to Moldova's call for international monitoring of the border, in December 2005 the EU dispatched a Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) to help stem the flow of illegal trade between Ukraine and Moldova. In March 2006, Ukraine and Moldova began implementing a 2003 customs agreement, under which Transnistrian companies seeking to engage in cross-border trade must register in Chisinau. Despite the protests of the Transnistrian regime, most Transnistrian businesses have subsequently registered. In what is seen as a response to the new customs procedures, the Transnistrian regime boycotted the 5+2 talks and declared that a "referendum" on the independence of the regime would be held in September 2006.

### **Principal Government Officials**

President--Vladimir Voronin

Prime Minister--Vasile Tarlev

President of Parliament--Marian Lupu

Foreign Minister--Andrei Stratan

Ambassador to the United States--Nicolae Chirtoaca

Ambassador to the United Nations--Vsevolod Grigore

Moldova's embassy in the United States is at 2101 S Street NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel: 202-667-1130; fax 202-667-1204).

More information about Moldova can be found at the official (Romanian and Russian language) Government of Moldova website at [www.moldova.md](http://www.moldova.md). The [Moldova.org](http://Moldova.org) site is maintained by the Moldova Foundation, a non-governmental organization, and has some useful links.

### **ECONOMY**

Moldova remains the poorest country in Europe. It is landlocked, bounded by Ukraine on the east and Romania to the west. It is the second smallest of the former Soviet republics and the most densely populated. Industry accounts for only 20% of its labor force, while agriculture's share is more than one-third.

Moldova's proximity to the Black Sea gives it a mild and sunny climate. This makes the area ideal for agriculture and food processing, which accounts for about 40% of the country's GDP. The fertile soil supports wheat, corn, barley, tobacco, sugar beets, and soybeans. Beef and dairy cattle are raised, and beekeeping is widespread. Moldova's best-known product comes from its extensive and well-developed vineyards concentrated in the central and southern regions. In addition to world-class wine, Moldova produces liqueurs and champagne. It is also known for its sunflower seeds, walnuts, apples, and other fruits.

Like many other former Soviet republics, Moldova has experienced economic difficulties. Since its economy was highly dependent on the rest of the former Soviet Union for energy and raw materials, the breakdown in trade following the breakup of the Soviet Union had a serious effect, exacerbated at times by drought and civil conflict. The Russian ruble devaluation of 1998 had a deleterious effect on Moldova's economy, but economic growth has been steady since 2000.

Moldova has made progress in economic reform since independence. The government has liberalized most prices and has phased out subsidies on most basic consumer goods. A program begun in March 1993 has privatized 80% of all housing units and nearly 2,000 small, medium, and large enterprises. Other successes include the privatization of nearly all of Moldova's agricultural land from state to private ownership, as a result of an American assistance program, "Pamint" ("land"), completed in 2000. A stock market opened in June 1995.

Following the economic difficulties caused by the Russian currency crisis of 1998, inflation dropped to 5.2% in 2002, the lowest level since Moldova's independence. However, inflation spiked again to 11.6 % in 2003; 12.4% in 2004, and 11.9% in 2005. The local currency continues to be comparatively stable. The annual average exchange rate between 2001 and 2005 fluctuated between Leu 12.50 to 13.50 to the U.S. dollar. However, the National Bank of Moldova has been forced to intervene actively on several occasions to bolster the currency market.

Moldova continues to make progress toward developing a viable free-market economy. The country recorded its sixth consecutive year of positive GDP growth in 2005, with year-end real GDP growth of 7.1%. This growth is impressive considering that prior to 2000, Moldova had recorded only one year of positive GDP growth since independence. Budget execution in 2005 was also positive, as actual state budget revenues exceeded projections by 0.4%. The Moldovan economy continues to depend greatly on remittances sent from Moldovans working abroad. These inflows are estimated at U.S. \$400-500 million dollars annually.

Privatization results in 2005 were not significant; total proceeds amounted to U.S. \$5.1 million. Several smaller companies and one winery (Cojusna) were privatized in 2005, but the government postponed indefinitely the privatization of several large state enterprises, including two power distribution companies. Sporadic and ineffective enforcement of the law, economic and political uncertainty, and government harassment and interference continue to discourage inflows of foreign direct investment.

Imports continued to grow more rapidly than exports during the first half of 2006. Moldova's trade deficit worsened as higher-priced energy imports outpaced the value of Moldovan exports, which have been severely limited by Russia's ban on imports of Moldovan wine and agricultural products. Moldova traditionally exported between 70-80% of its wine production to Russia.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank resumed lending to Moldova in July 2002, and then suspended lending again in July 2003. In early 2006, Moldova reached agreement with the Paris Club on rescheduling of Moldova's foreign debt. In addition, in the spring of 2006, the IMF reached an agreement with the Moldovan Government for a Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility designed to bolster foreign reserves against external shocks with a 3-year, \$117 million program that includes a new IMF loan to the National Bank of Moldova.

Moldova continues to be subject to Russian economic pressure. In 2005, Russia enacted a ban on Moldovan agricultural products, and in 2006 it banned imports of Moldovan wines. The wine ban has been particularly painful because, prior to the ban, Moldovan wine sales approached 15% of GNP, and it exported approximately 80% of its wine to Russia. In January 2006, Russian energy giant Gazprom temporarily cut off natural gas deliveries to Ukraine and Moldova--which is almost completely dependent on its neighbors for energy--and subsequently doubled the price of gas to Moldova. The impact has been substantial: Moldova's exports to Russia declined by 38.9% in the first half of 2006 and total exports dropped 8.5%.

### **U.S.-MOLDOVAN RELATIONS**

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991 brought an end to the Cold War and created the opportunity to build bilateral relations with the 15 new states that had made up the former U.S.S.R., as they began political and economic transformation. The United States recognized the independence of Moldova on December 25, 1991 and opened an Embassy in its capital, Chisinau, in March 1992.

A trade agreement providing reciprocal most-favored-nation tariff treatment became effective in July 1992. An Overseas Private Investment Corporation agreement, which encourages U.S. private investment by providing direct loans and loan guarantees, was signed in June 1992. A bilateral investment treaty was signed in April 1993. Generalized system of preferences status was granted in August 1995, and some Eximbank coverage became available in November 1995.

The past year has seen significant developments in Moldova's relations with the West. In 2005, the European Union appointed a Special Representative for Moldova and the negotiations to resolve the Transnistrian conflict and the Delegation of the European Commission opened an office in Chisinau. In December 2005, Moldova welcomed an EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) along its Ukrainian border to crack down on smuggling, strengthen customs procedures, and facilitate cross-border cooperation. In accordance with a 2005 Action Plan with the EU, Moldova has begun to harmonize Moldova's laws with those of the EU. As part of this, in late 2005, Moldova enacted its "Guillotine" laws, which slashed unnecessary business regulations, established a framework for relations between the private sector and government, and created a mechanism to review the suitability of draft legislation. In addition, Moldova is currently negotiating a Threshold Country Program focused on fighting corruption--still a significant obstacle to development--with the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

[[Fact sheet](#) on FY 2005 U.S. Assistance to Moldova.]

### **U.S. Citizen Services**

The American Citizen Services (ACS) unit at the U.S. Embassy in Chisinau offers a variety of services to American citizens who are living or traveling in Moldova.

Please visit the links on the left menu and at the bottom of page for specific information about the services you may require.

## Emergency Contact Information

In case of a life or death emergency involving a United States citizen please call the duty officer at +373 6 911 0851

## How to contact us

You may write us an email at [Chisinau-CA@state.gov](mailto:Chisinau-CA@state.gov), visit the Consular Section in person during ACS hours, or call the Embassy.

Recorded information is available on (+373-22) 408-300, 24 hours a day.  
The after-hours telephone number is (+373 22) 237-345 or (+373 22)408 445.

The [U.S. Embassy](#) in Moldova is at Strada Alexei Mateevici #103, Chisinau (tel: 373-22-40-83-00/23-37-72; fax: 373-22-23-30-44).

## TRAVEL AND BUSINESS INFORMATION

The U.S. Department of State's Consular Information Program provides Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings, and Public Announcements. **Consular Information Sheets** exist for all countries and include information on entry requirements, currency regulations, health conditions, areas of instability, crime and security, political disturbances, and the addresses of the U.S. posts in the country. **Travel Warnings** are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid travel to a certain country. **Public Announcements** are issued as a means to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term conditions overseas that pose significant risks to the security of American travelers. Free copies of this information are available by calling the Bureau of Consular Affairs at 202-647-5225 or via the fax-on-demand system: 202-647-3000. Consular Information Sheets and Travel Warnings also are available on the Consular Affairs Internet home page: <http://travel.state.gov>. Consular Affairs Tips for Travelers publication series, which contain information on obtaining passports and planning a safe trip abroad, are available on the Internet and hard copies can be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, telephone: 202-512-1800; fax 202-512-2250.

Emergency information concerning Americans traveling abroad may be obtained from the Office of Overseas Citizens Services at (202) 647-5225. For after-hours emergencies, Sundays and holidays, call 202-647-4000.

The National Passport Information Center (NPIC) is the U.S. Department of State's single, centralized public contact center for U.S. passport information. Telephone: 1-877-4USA-PPT (1-877-487-2778). Customer service representatives and operators for TDD/TTY are available Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern Time, excluding federal holidays.

Travelers can check the latest health information with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. A hotline at 877-FYI-TRIP (877-394-8747) and a web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm> give the most recent health advisories, immunization recommendations or requirements, and advice on food and drinking water safety for regions and countries. A booklet entitled Health Information for International Travel (HHS publication number CDC-95-8280) is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402, tel. (202) 512-1800.

Information on travel conditions, visa requirements, currency and customs regulations, legal holidays, and other items of interest to travelers also may be obtained before your departure from a country's embassy and/or consulates in the U.S. (for this country, see "Principal Government Officials" listing in this publication).

**U.S. citizens who are long-term visitors or traveling in dangerous areas are encouraged to [register](https://travelregistration.state.gov) their travel via the State Department's travel registration web site at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> or at the Consular section of the U.S. embassy upon arrival in a country.** This may help family members contact you in case of an emergency.