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**Moldova** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) or sometimes [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en)[Template:RefnTemplate:RefnTemplate:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn); [Template:IPA-ro](/wiki/Template:IPA-ro); [Template:Lang-ru](/wiki/Template:Lang-ru)), officially the **Republic of Moldova** ([Template:Lang-ro](/wiki/Template:Lang-ro), [Template:Audio](/wiki/Template:Audio)), is a [landlocked](/wiki/Landlocked) country in [Eastern Europe](/wiki/Eastern_Europe), bordered by [Romania](/wiki/Romania) to the west and [Ukraine](/wiki/Ukraine) to the north, east, and south.[[1]](#cite_note-1) The capital city is [Chișinău](/wiki/Chișinău).

Moldova [declared independence](/wiki/Moldovan_Declaration_of_Independence) on August 27, 1991, as part of the [dissolution of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_Soviet_Union). The current [Constitution of Moldova](/wiki/Constitution_of_Moldova) was adopted in 1994. A strip of Moldovan territory on the east bank of the river [Dniester](/wiki/Dniester) has been under the [*de facto*](/wiki/De_facto) control of the breakaway government of [Transnistria](/wiki/Transnistria) since 1990.

Due to a decrease in industrial and agricultural output following the dissolution of the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union), the [service sector](/wiki/Service_sector) has grown to dominate [Moldova's economy](/wiki/Economy_of_Moldova) and currently composes over 60% of the nation's [GDP](/wiki/Gross_domestic_product). However, Moldova remains the poorest country in Europe.[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) Moldova is a [parliamentary republic](/wiki/Parliamentary_republic) with a [president](/wiki/President_of_Moldova) as [head of state](/wiki/Head_of_state) and a [prime minister](/wiki/List_of_Prime_Ministers_of_Moldova) as [head of government](/wiki/Head_of_government). It is a member state of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations), the [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe), the [World Trade Organization (WTO)](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization), the [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Cooperation_in_Europe), the [GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development](/wiki/GUAM_Organization_for_Democracy_and_Economic_Development), the [Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) and the [Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)](/wiki/Organization_of_the_Black_Sea_Economic_Cooperation) and aspires to join the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union).[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[4]](#cite_note-4)

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

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The name "Moldova" derives from the [Moldova River](/wiki/Moldova_River); the valley of this river served as a political centre at the time of the [foundation](/wiki/Foundation_of_Moldavia) of the [Principality of Moldavia](/wiki/Moldavia) in 1359.[[5]](#cite_note-5) The origin of the name of the river remains unclear. According to a legend recounted by Moldavian chroniclers [Dimitrie Cantemir](/wiki/Dimitrie_Cantemir) and [Grigore Ureche](/wiki/Grigore_Ureche), prince [Dragoș](/wiki/Dragoș) named the river after hunting an [aurochs](/wiki/Aurochs): following the chase, the prince's exhausted hound *Molda* drowned in the river. The dog's name, given to the river, extended to the Principality.[[6]](#cite_note-6)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

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### Prehistory[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

In 2010, [Oldowan](/wiki/Oldowan) flint tools were discovered at Bayraki that are 800,000-1.2 million years old. This demonstrates that early humans were present in Moldova during the early [Paleolithic](/wiki/Paleolithic) era.[[7]](#cite_note-7) During the [Neolithic stone age](/wiki/Neolithic) era, Moldova's territory was the centre of the large [Cucuteni-Trypillian culture](/wiki/Cucuteni-Trypillian_culture) that stretched east beyond the [Dniester River](/wiki/Dniester_River) in Ukraine, and west up to and beyond the [Carpathian Mountains](/wiki/Carpathian_Mountains) in Romania. The inhabitants of this civilization, which lasted roughly from 5500 to 2750 BC, practiced agriculture, raised livestock, hunted, and made intricately designed pottery.[[8]](#cite_note-8)

### Antiquity and Middle Ages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[thumb|x200px|left|](/wiki/File:Stefan_cel_Mare.jpg)[Stephen the Great](/wiki/Stephen_III_of_Moldavia), Prince of Moldavia between 1457 and 1504. [thumb|x200px|](/wiki/File:Cetatea_Soroca.jpg)[Soroca Fort](/wiki/Soroca_Fort) was built on the site of the former [Genoese](/wiki/Republic_of_Genoa) fortress *Polihromia*.[[9]](#cite_note-9) In [antiquity](/wiki/Classical_antiquity), Moldova's territory was inhabited by [Dacian](/wiki/Dacians) tribes. Between the 1st and 7th centuries AD, the south was intermittently under the [Roman](/wiki/Roman_Empire), then [Byzantine Empires](/wiki/Byzantine_Empire). Due to its strategic location on a route between Asia and Europe, the territory of modern Moldova was invaded many times in late antiquity and [early Middle Ages](/wiki/Early_Middle_Ages), including by [Goths](/wiki/Goths), [Huns](/wiki/Huns), [Avars](/wiki/Pannonian_Avars), [Bulgarians](/wiki/Bulgarians), [Magyars](/wiki/Magyars), [Pechenegs](/wiki/Pechenegs), [Cumans](/wiki/Cumans), [Mongols](/wiki/Mongol_invasion_of_Europe) and [Tatars](/wiki/Mongol_and_Tatar_states_in_Europe).

The Principality of [Moldavia](/wiki/Moldavia), established in 1359, was bounded by the [Carpathian Mountains](/wiki/Carpathian_Mountains) in the west, [Dniester](/wiki/Dniester) river in the east, and Danube River and [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea) to the south. Its territory comprised the present-day territory of the Republic of Moldova, the eastern eight [counties of Romania](/wiki/Counties_of_Romania), and the [Chernivtsi Oblast](/wiki/Chernivtsi_Oblast) and [Budjak](/wiki/Budjak) region of Ukraine. Like the present-day republic and Romania's north-eastern region, it was known to the locals as *Moldova.* Moldavia was invaded repeatedly by Crimean [Tatars](/wiki/Tatars) and, since the 15th century, by the Turks. In 1538, the principality became a [tributary](/wiki/Tribute) to the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire), but it retained internal and partial external autonomy.[[10]](#cite_note-10) In May 1600, [Michael the Brave](/wiki/Michael_the_Brave) removed [Ieremia Movilă](/wiki/Ieremia_Movilă) from Moldavia's throne, by winning the battle of [Bacău](/wiki/Bacău), and that way realized the first union of the three Romanian principalities: [Moldavia](/wiki/Moldavia), [Wallachia](/wiki/Wallachia), and [Transylvania](/wiki/Transylvania). The title used in the document of July 6, 1600 was: "The King of the country of Romania, Ardeal and of all of Moldavia".[[11]](#cite_note-11) Michael kept the control of all three provinces for less than a year before the nobles of Transylvania and certain boyars in Moldavia and Wallachia rose against him in a series of revolts. A Polish army led by [Jan Zamoyski](/wiki/Jan_Zamoyski) drove the Wallachians from Moldavia and defeated Michael at Năieni, Ceptura, and Bucov. Ieremia Movilă returned to Moldavia's throne under vassalage of [Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth](/wiki/Polish-Lithuanian_Commonwealth). Moldavia finally returned to Ottoman vassalage in 1621.

### Modern history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

#### Russian Empire[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

In accordance with the [Treaty of Bucharest of 1812](/wiki/Treaty_of_Bucharest,_1812), and despite numerous protests by Moldavian nobles on behalf of the sovereignty of their principality, the [Ottoman Empire](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) (of which Moldavia was a [vassal](/wiki/Vassal_state)) ceded to the [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire) the eastern half of the territory of the Principality of Moldavia along with [Khotyn](/wiki/Khotyn) and old Bessarabia (modern [Budjak](/wiki/Budjak)), which Russia had already conquered and annexed.

The new Russian province was called "Oblast of Moldavia and Bessarabia", and initially enjoyed a large degree of autonomy. After 1828 this autonomy was progressively restricted and in 1871 the Oblast was transformed into the [Bessarabia Governorate](/wiki/Bessarabia_Governorate), in a process of [state-imposed assimilation](/wiki/Forced_assimilation), "[Russification](/wiki/Russification)". As part of this process, the [Tsarist](/wiki/Tsarist) administration in Bessarabia gradually removed the [Romanian language](/wiki/Romanian_language) from official and religious use.[[12]](#cite_note-12) The western part of Moldavia (which is a part of present-day Romania) remained an autonomous principality, and in 1859, [united](/wiki/Moldavia_and_Wallachia) with [Wallachia](/wiki/Wallachia) to form the [Kingdom of Romania](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Romania).

The [Treaty of Paris (1856)](/wiki/Treaty_of_Paris_(1856)) returned three counties of Bessarabia—[Cahul](/wiki/Cahul_County), Bolgrad and Ismail—to Moldavia, but in the [Treaty of Berlin (1878)](/wiki/Treaty_of_Berlin_(1878)), the Kingdom of Romania was forced, by the Great Powers (United Kingdom, Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the Ottoman Empire), to cede them to the Russian Empire. Over the 19th century, the Russian authorities encouraged [colonization](/wiki/Colonization) of the southern part of the region by Romanians,[[13]](#cite_note-13) Ukrainians, [Lipovans](/wiki/Lipovans), [Cossacks](/wiki/Cossacks), [Bulgarians](/wiki/Bessarabian_Bulgarians),[[14]](#cite_note-14) [Germans](/wiki/Bessarabian_Germans),[[15]](#cite_note-15) Gagauzes, and allowed the settlement of more [Jews](/wiki/Bessarabian_Jews),[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) to replace the large [Nogai](/wiki/Nogais) [Tatar](/wiki/Tatars) population expelled in the 1770s and 1780s, during [Russo-Turkish Wars](/wiki/Russo-Turkish_Wars);[[16]](#cite_note-16) the Moldovan proportion of the population decreased from an estimated 86% in 1816,[[17]](#cite_note-17) in the aftermath of the Muslim expulsion, to around 52% in 1905.[[18]](#cite_note-18) During this time there were anti-Semitic riots, leading to an exodus of thousands of Jews to the United States.[[19]](#cite_note-19)

#### Russian Revolution and Greater Romania[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|A map of](/wiki/File:Greater_Romania.svg) [Greater Romania](/wiki/Greater_Romania) between 1920 and 1940. [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I) brought in a rise in political and cultural (ethnic) awareness among the inhabitants of the region, as 300,000 Bessarabians were drafted into the [Russian Army](/wiki/Red_Army) formed in 1917; within bigger units several "Moldavian Soldiers' Committees" were formed. Following the [Russian Revolution of 1917](/wiki/Russian_Revolution_(1917)), a Bessarabian parliament, [Sfatul Țării](/wiki/Sfatul_Țării) (a National Council), was [elected in October–November 1917](/wiki/Sfatul_Țării_election,_1917) and opened on [Template:OldStyleDate](/wiki/Template:OldStyleDate). The Sfatul Țării proclaimed the [Moldavian Democratic Republic](/wiki/Moldavian_Democratic_Republic) ([Template:OldStyleDate](/wiki/Template:OldStyleDate)) within a federal Russian state, and formed a [government](/wiki/Pantelimon_Erhan_Cabinet) ([Template:OldStyleDate](/wiki/Template:OldStyleDate)).

Bessarabia proclaimed independence from Russia on [Template:OldStyleDate](/wiki/Template:OldStyleDate) and requested the assistance of the French army present in Romania (general [Henri Berthelot](/wiki/Henri_Mathias_Berthelot)) and of the [Romanian army](/wiki/Romanian_army), which had occupied the region in early January at the request of the National Council.[[20]](#cite_note-20) On [Template:OldStyleDate](/wiki/Template:OldStyleDate), the Sfatul Țării decided with 86 votes for, 3 against and 36 abstaining, to [unite with the Kingdom of Romania](/wiki/Union_of_Bessarabia_with_Romania). The union was conditional upon fulfillment of the [agrarian reform](/wiki/Land_reform_in_Romania,_1921), autonomy, and respect for universal human rights.[[21]](#cite_note-21) A part of the interim Parliament agreed to drop these conditions after [Bukovina](/wiki/Bukovina) and [Transylvania](/wiki/Transylvania) also joined the [Kingdom of Romania](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Romania), although historians note that they lacked the [quorum](/wiki/Quorum) to do so.[[22]](#cite_note-22)[[23]](#cite_note-23)[[24]](#cite_note-24)[[25]](#cite_note-25)[[26]](#cite_note-26) This union was recognized by the principal [Allied Powers](/wiki/Allies_of_World_War_I) in the [1920 Treaty of Paris](/wiki/Treaty_of_Paris_(1920)), which however was not ratified by all of its signatories.[[27]](#cite_note-27)[[28]](#cite_note-28) The [newly communist Russia](/wiki/RSFSR), did not recognize Romanian rule over Bessarabia, the latter considering it an occupation of Russian territory.[[29]](#cite_note-29) In May 1919, the [Bessarabian Soviet Socialist Republic](/wiki/Bessarabian_Soviet_Socialist_Republic) was proclaimed as a government in exile. After the failure of the [Tatarbunary Uprising](/wiki/Tatarbunary_Uprising) in 1924, the [Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic](/wiki/Moldavian_Autonomous_Soviet_Socialist_Republic) (Moldavian ASSR) was formed by Soviet Russia from territory of the Ukrainian SSR, the present-day [Transnistria](/wiki/Transnistria).

#### World War II and Soviet era[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Monument to the villagers who died in](/wiki/File:%22Monument_to_the_villagers_who_died_in_World_War_II,_the_village_Cojusna,_Straseni_District%22_(80-ies_famous)._(6177439670).jpg) [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II), the village [Cojușna](/wiki/Cojușna), [Strășeni District](/wiki/Strășeni_District)

In August 1939, the [Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact](/wiki/Molotov–Ribbentrop_Pact) and its secret additional protocol were signed, by which [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) recognized Bessarabia as being within the [Soviet sphere of influence](/wiki/Soviet_sphere_of_influence), which led the latter to actively revive its claim to the region.[[30]](#cite_note-30) On 28 June 1940, the Soviet Union, with the acknowledgement of Nazi Germany, issued an ultimatum to Romania requesting the cession of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, [with which Romania complied the following day](/wiki/Soviet_occupation_of_Bessarabia_and_Northern_Bukovina). Soon after, the [Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic](/wiki/Moldavian_Soviet_Socialist_Republic) (Moldavian SSR, MSSR) was established,[[30]](#cite_note-30) comprising about 70% of Bessarabia, and 50% of the now-disbanded Moldavian ASSR.

As part of the 1941 [Axis invasion of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Operation_Barbarossa), Romania seized the territories of Bessarabia, northern Bukovina and [Transnistria](/wiki/Transnistria_Governorate). Romanian forces, working with the Germans, deported or exterminated about 300,000 Jews, including 147,000 from Bessarabia and Bukovina. Of the latter, approximately 90,000 died.[[31]](#cite_note-31) The Soviet Army re-captured the region in February–August 1944, and re-established the Moldavian SSR. Between the end of the [Jassy–Kishinev Offensive](/wiki/Jassy–Kishinev_Offensive) in August 1944 and the end of the war in May 1945, 256,800 inhabitants of the Moldavian SSR were drafted into the Soviet Army. 40,592 of them perished.[[32]](#cite_note-32) [thumb|Ethnic Germans](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_137-065360,_Bessarabien,_Abtransport_von_Umsiedlern.jpg) [resettling](/wiki/Heim_ins_Reich) after the Soviet occupation of [Bessarabia](/wiki/Bessarabia) in 1940. During the [Stalinist](/wiki/Stalinist) periods 1940–1941 and 1944–1953, [deportations of locals](/wiki/Soviet_deportations_from_Bessarabia_and_Northern_Bukovina) to the northern [Urals](/wiki/Ural_Mountains), to [Siberia](/wiki/Siberia), and northern [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan) occurred regularly, with the largest ones on 12–13 June 1941, and 5–6 July 1949, accounting from MSSR alone for 18,392[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) and 35,796 deportees respectively.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Other forms of Soviet persecution of the population included political arrests or, in 8,360 cases, execution.

In 1946, as a result of a severe drought and excessive delivery quota obligations and requisitions imposed by the Soviet government, the southwestern part of the USSR suffered from a major [famine](/wiki/Droughts_and_famines_in_Russia_and_the_Soviet_Union).[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35) In 1946–1947, at least 216,000 deaths and about 350,000 cases of dystrophy were accounted by historians in the Moldavian SSR alone.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Similar events occurred in the 1930s in the Moldavian ASSR.[[33]](#cite_note-33) In 1944–53, there were several anti-Soviet resistance groups in Moldova; however the [NKVD](/wiki/NKVD) and later [MGB](/wiki/Ministry_for_State_Security_(USSR)) managed to eventually arrest, execute or deport their members.[[33]](#cite_note-33) In the postwar period, the Soviet government organized the immigration of working age Russian speakers (mostly Russians, [Belarusians](/wiki/Belarusians), and Ukrainians), into the new Soviet republic, especially into urbanized areas, partly to compensate for the demographic loss caused by the war and the emigration of 1940 and 1944.[[36]](#cite_note-36) In the 1970s and 1980s, the Moldavian SSR received substantial allocations from the budget of the USSR to develop industrial and scientific facilities and housing. In 1971, the [Council of Ministers of the USSR](/wiki/Council_of_Ministers_(Soviet_Union)) adopted a decision "About the measures for further development of the city of [Kishinev](/wiki/Chișinău)" (modern Chișinău), that allotted more than one billion [Soviet rubles](/wiki/Soviet_ruble) from the USSR budget for building projects.[[37]](#cite_note-37) Subsequent decisions also directed substantial funding and brought qualified specialists from other parts of the USSR to develop Moldova's industry.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The Soviet government conducted a campaign to promote a Moldovan ethnic identity distinct from that of the Romanians, based on a theory developed during the existence of the [Moldavian ASSR](/wiki/Moldavian_ASSR). Official Soviet policy asserted that the language spoken by [Moldovans](/wiki/Moldovans) was distinct from the [Romanian language](/wiki/Romanian_language) (see [Moldovenism](/wiki/Moldovenism)). To distinguish the two, during the Soviet period, Moldovan was written in the [Cyrillic alphabet](/wiki/Moldovan_Cyrillic_alphabet), in contrast [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) with Romanian, which since 1860 had been written in the [Latin alphabet](/wiki/Latin_alphabet).

All independent organizations were severely reprimanded, with the [National Patriotic Front](/wiki/National_Patriotic_Front) leaders being sentenced in 1972 to long prison terms.[[38]](#cite_note-38) The [Commission for the Study of the Communist Dictatorship in Moldova](/wiki/Commission_for_the_Study_of_the_Communist_Dictatorship_in_Moldova) is assessing the activity of the communist totalitarian regime.

In the 1980s, amid political conditions created by the [glasnost](/wiki/Glasnost) and [perestroika](/wiki/Perestroika), a [Democratic Movement of Moldova](/wiki/Democratic_Movement_of_Moldova) was formed, which in 1989 became known as the nationalist [Popular Front of Moldova](/wiki/Popular_Front_of_Moldova) (FPM).[[39]](#cite_note-39)[[40]](#cite_note-40) Along with several other Soviet republics, from 1988 onwards, Moldova started to move towards [independence](/wiki/Independence_of_Moldova). On 27 August 1989, the FPM organized a mass demonstration in Chișinău that became known as the [Grand National Assembly](/wiki/Grand_National_Assembly,_Chișinău_1989). The assembly pressured the authorities of the Moldavian SSR to adopt a language law on 31 August 1989 that proclaimed the Moldovan language written in the [Latin script](/wiki/Latin_script) to be the state language of the MSSR. Its identity with the Romanian language was also established.[[39]](#cite_note-39)[[41]](#cite_note-41) In 1989, as opposition to the [Communist Party](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Moldova) grew, there were [major riots in November](/wiki/1989_Moldova_civil_unrest).

#### Independence[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[thumb|upright|left|Deputy](/wiki/File:Gheorghe_Ghimpu_arboreaza_Tricolorul.jpg) [Gheorghe Ghimpu](/wiki/Gheorghe_Ghimpu) replaces the [Soviet flag](/wiki/Soviet_flag) on the [Parliament](/wiki/Parliament_of_the_Republic_of_Moldova) with the [Romanian flag](/wiki/Romanian_flag) on 27 April 1990.

The [first democratic elections](/wiki/Moldovan_parliamentary_election,_1990) for the local [parliament](/wiki/Moldovan_Parliament) were held in February and March 1990. [Mircea Snegur](/wiki/Mircea_Snegur) was elected as [Speaker of the Parliament](/wiki/Speaker_of_the_Moldovan_Parliament), and [Mircea Druc](/wiki/Mircea_Druc) as Prime Minister. On June 23, 1990, the Parliament adopted the Declaration of Sovereignty of the "Soviet Socialist Republic Moldova", which, among other things, stipulated the supremacy of Moldovan laws over those of the Soviet Union.[[39]](#cite_note-39) After the failure of the [1991 Soviet coup d'état attempt](/wiki/1991_Soviet_coup_d'état_attempt), [Moldova declared its independence](/wiki/Declaration_of_Independence_of_Moldova) on 27 August 1991, [Romania](/wiki/Romania) being the first state to recognize its independence.

On 21 December of the same year, Moldova, along with most of the other Soviet republics, signed the constitutive act that formed the post-Soviet [Commonwealth of Independent States](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) (CIS). Moldova received official recognition on 25 December. On 26 December 1991 the Soviet Union ceased to exist. Declaring itself a [neutral state](/wiki/Neutral_state), Moldova did not join the military branch of the CIS. Three months later, on 2 March 1992, the country gained formal recognition as an independent state at the United Nations. In 1994, Moldova became a member of [NATO's](/wiki/NATO) [Partnership for Peace](/wiki/Partnership_for_Peace) program, and a member of the Council of Europe on 29 June 1995.[[39]](#cite_note-39) In the region east of the [Dniester](/wiki/Dniester) river, [Transnistria](/wiki/Transnistria), which includes a large proportion of predominantly [russophone](/wiki/Russophone) [East Slavs](/wiki/East_Slavs) of Ukrainian (28%) and Russian (26%) descent (altogether 54% as of 1989), while [Moldovans](/wiki/Moldovans) (40%) have been the largest ethnic group, and where the headquarters and many units of the [Soviet 14th Guards Army](/wiki/Soviet_14th_Guards_Army) were stationed, an independent [Pridnestrovian Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic](/wiki/Pridnestrovian_Moldavian_Soviet_Socialist_Republic) was proclaimed on August 16, 1990, with its capital in [Tiraspol](/wiki/Tiraspol).[[39]](#cite_note-39) The motives behind this move were fear of the rise of nationalism in Moldova and the country's expected reunification with Romania upon secession from the USSR. In the winter of 1991–1992 clashes occurred between Transnistrian forces, [supported by elements of the 14th Army](/wiki/14th_Army_involvement_in_Transnistria), and the [Moldovan police](/wiki/Law_enforcement_in_Moldova). Between March 2 and July 26, 1992, the conflict escalated into a [military engagement](/wiki/War_of_Transnistria).

On 2 January 1992, Moldova introduced a [market economy](/wiki/Market_economy), liberalizing prices, which resulted in rapid inflation. From 1992 to 2001, the country suffered a serious economic crisis, leaving most of the population below the poverty line. In 1993, the government introduced a new national currency, the [Moldovan leu](/wiki/Moldovan_leu), to replace the [temporary cupon](/wiki/Moldovan_cupon). The [economy of Moldova](/wiki/Economy_of_Moldova) began to change in 2001; and until 2008 the country saw a steady annual growth between 5% and 10%. The early 2000s also saw a considerable growth of emigration of Moldovans looking for work (mostly illegally) in Russia (especially the Moscow region), Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Turkey, and other countries; [remittances](/wiki/Remittance) from Moldovans abroad account for almost 38% of Moldova's [GDP](/wiki/GDP), the second-highest percentage in the world, after [Tajikistan](/wiki/Tajikistan) (45%).[[42]](#cite_note-42)[[43]](#cite_note-43) In the [1994 parliamentary elections](/wiki/Moldovan_parliamentary_election,_1994), the [Democratic Agrarian Party](/wiki/Democratic_Agrarian_Party_of_Moldova) gained a majority of the seats, setting a turning point in Moldovan politics. With the nationalist Popular Front now in a parliamentary minority, new measures aiming to moderate the ethnic tensions in the country could be adopted. Plans for a [union with Romania](/wiki/Movement_for_the_unification_of_Romania_and_Moldova) were abandoned,[[39]](#cite_note-39) and the new [Constitution](/wiki/Constitution_of_Moldova_(1994)) gave autonomy to the breakaway Transnistria and Gagauzia. On 23 December 1994, the Parliament of Moldova adopted a "Law on the Special Legal Status of Gagauzia", and in 1995 the latter was constituted.

After winning the [1996 presidential elections](/wiki/Moldovan_presidential_election,_1996), on 15 January 1997, [Petru Lucinschi](/wiki/Petru_Lucinschi), the former First Secretary of the [Moldavian Communist Party](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Moldova) in 1989–91, became the country's second president (1997–2001), succeeding Mircea Snegur (1991–1996). In 2000, the Constitution was amended, transforming Moldova into a [parliamentary republic](/wiki/Parliamentary_republic), with the president being chosen through [indirect election](/wiki/Indirect_election) rather than direct popular vote.

[Winning 49.9% of the vote](/wiki/Moldovan_parliamentary_election,_2001), the [Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova](/wiki/Party_of_Communists_of_the_Republic_of_Moldova) (reinstituted in 1993 after being outlawed in 1991), gained 71 of the 101 MPs, and on 4 April 2001, elected [Vladimir Voronin](/wiki/Vladimir_Voronin) as the country's third president (re-elected in 2005). The country became the first post-Soviet state where a non-reformed Communist Party returned to power.[[39]](#cite_note-39) New governments were formed by [Vasile Tarlev](/wiki/Vasile_Tarlev) (19 April 2001 – 31 March 2008), and [Zinaida Greceanîi](/wiki/Zinaida_Greceanîi) (31 March 2008 – 14 September 2009). In 2001–2003 [relations between Moldova and Russia](/wiki/Moldova–Russia_relations) improved, but then temporarily deteriorated in 2003–2006, in the wake of the failure of the [Kozak memorandum](/wiki/Kozak_memorandum), culminating in the [2006 wine exports crisis](/wiki/2006_Russian_ban_of_Moldovan_and_Georgian_wines). The Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova managed to stay in power for eight years. The fragmentation of the liberal bloc (aka the democrats) helped consolidate its power. The decline of the Communist Party started in 2009 after Marian Lupu joined the Democratic Party and thus attracted many of the Moldovans supporting the Communists.[[44]](#cite_note-44) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Chisinau_riot_2009-04-07_02.jpg)[Civil unrest](/wiki/2009_Moldova_civil_unrest) outside the [Parliament](/wiki/Moldovan_Parliament) building in 2009. In the [April 2009 parliamentary elections](/wiki/Moldovan_parliamentary_election,_April_2009), the Communist Party won 49.48% of the votes, followed by the [Liberal Party](/wiki/Liberal_Party_(Moldova)) with 13.14% of the votes, the [Liberal Democratic Party](/wiki/Liberal_Democratic_Party_of_Moldova) with 12.43%, and the [Alliance "Moldova Noastră"](/wiki/Party_Alliance_Our_Moldova) with 9.77%. The controversial results of this election sparked [civil unrest](/wiki/2009_Moldova_civil_unrest)[[45]](#cite_note-45)[[46]](#cite_note-46)[[47]](#cite_note-47) In August 2009, four Moldovan parties – Liberal Democratic Party, Liberal Party, [Democratic Party](/wiki/Democratic_Party_of_Moldova), and Our Moldova Alliance – agreed to create a [governing coalition](/wiki/Alliance_For_European_Integration) that pushed the [Communist party](/wiki/Party_of_Communists_of_the_Republic_of_Moldova) into opposition. On 28 August 2009, this coalition chose a new [parliament speaker](/wiki/Speaker_of_the_Moldovan_Parliament) ([Mihai Ghimpu](/wiki/Mihai_Ghimpu)) in a vote that was boycotted by Communist legislators. [Vladimir Voronin](/wiki/Vladimir_Voronin), who had been [President of Moldova](/wiki/President_of_Moldova) since 2001, eventually resigned on 11 September 2009, but the [Parliament failed to elect a new president](/wiki/Moldovan_presidential_election,_November–December_2009). The acting president Mihai Ghimpu instituted the [Commission for constitutional reform in Moldova](/wiki/Commission_for_constitutional_reform_in_Moldova) to adopt a new version of the Constitution of Moldova. After the [constitutional referendum](/wiki/Moldovan_constitutional_referendum,_2010) aimed to approve the reform failed in September 2010,[[48]](#cite_note-48) the parliament was dissolved again and a [new parliamentary election](/wiki/Moldovan_parliamentary_election,_2010) was scheduled for 28 November 2010.[[49]](#cite_note-49) On 30 December 2010, Marian Lupu was elected as the Speaker of the Parliament.[[50]](#cite_note-50) In accordance with the Constitution, he will be serving as the Acting President of Republic of Moldova. After the [Alliance for European Integration](/wiki/Alliance_for_European_Integration) lost a no confidence vote, the [Pro-European Coalition](/wiki/Pro-European_Coalition) was formed on 30 May 2013.

In November, 2014, Moldova's central bank took control of Banca de Economii, the country's largest lender, and two smaller institutions, Banca Sociala and Unibank. Investigations into activities at these three banks uncovered a large-scale theft by means of fraudulent loans to business entities controlled by a Moldovan/Israeli oligarch, [Ilan Shor](/wiki/Ilan_Shor), of funds worth about 1 billion U.S. dollars.[[51]](#cite_note-51) The large scale of the theft relative to the size of the Moldovan economy and despair that the money, now believed to be in offshore bank accounts, will be recovered, are thought to be affecting the country's politics to favour the pro-Russian [Socialist Party](/wiki/Party_of_Socialists_of_the_Republic_of_Moldova).[[52]](#cite_note-52) In 2015, Shor was still at large, after a period of house arrest.

Following a period of political instability and massive public protests, a new Government led by [Pavel Filip](/wiki/Pavel_Filip) was invested in January 2016.[[53]](#cite_note-53) In a subsequent E.U. visit, [Petras Auštrevičius](/wiki/Petras_Auštrevičius), [MEP](/wiki/Member_of_the_European_Parliament), commented on the confidence crisis affecting Moldova: "To steal a billion dollars! ... You need plenty of bags to move that money around ... I hope that the name of the persons involved will be made public. ... Corruption in Moldova is a political disease, a disease that became systemic and that affects all levels of power ... it is eroding the country from the inside".[[54]](#cite_note-54) Similar concerns over statewide corruption, the independence of the judiciary system, and the intransparency of the banking system, were expressed during the visit; Germany's broadcaster [Deutsche Welle](/wiki/Deutsche_Welle) also raised concerns over the alleged influence of Moldovan oligarch [Vladimir Plahotniuc](/wiki/Vladimir_Plahotniuc) over the Pavel government.[[54]](#cite_note-54)[Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

## Government[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The](/wiki/File:Parliament_RM_front.jpg) [Moldovan Parliament](/wiki/Moldovan_Parliament)

Moldova is a [unitary](/wiki/Unitary_state) [parliamentary](/wiki/Parliamentary_system) [representative](/wiki/Representative_democracy) democratic [republic](/wiki/Republic). The 1994 Constitution of Moldova sets the framework for the government of the country. A parliamentary majority of at least two-thirds is required to amend the [Constitution of Moldova](/wiki/Constitution_of_Moldova), which cannot be revised in time of war or national emergency. Amendments to the Constitution affecting the state's sovereignty, independence, or unity can only be made after a majority of voters support the proposal in a referendum. Furthermore, no revision can be made to limit the fundamental rights of people enumerated in the Constitution.[[55]](#cite_note-55) The country's central legislative body is the [unicameral](/wiki/Unicameral) [Moldovan Parliament](/wiki/Moldovan_Parliament) ([*Template:Lang*](/wiki/Template:Lang)), which has 101 seats, and whose members are elected by popular vote on [party lists](/wiki/Proportional_representation) every four years.

The head of state is the President of Moldova, who between 2001 and 2015 was elected by the Moldovan Parliament, requiring the support of three-fifths of the deputies (at least 61 votes). The president of Moldova has been elected by the parliament since 2001, a change designed to decrease executive authority in favour of the legislature. Nevertheless, the [Constitutional Court](/wiki/Constitutional_Court_of_Moldova) ruled on March 4, 2016, that this constitutional change adopted in 2000 regarding the presidential election was unconstitutional,[[56]](#cite_note-56) thus reverting the election method of the President to a [two-round system](/wiki/Two-round_system) [direct election](/wiki/Direct_election).

The president appoints a [prime minister](/wiki/List_of_Prime_Ministers_of_Moldova) who functions as the [head of government](/wiki/Head_of_government), and who in turn assembles a [cabinet](/wiki/Cabinet_of_Moldova), both subject to parliamentary approval.

The 1994 constitution also establishes an [independent](/wiki/Judicial_independence) [Constitutional Court](/wiki/Constitutional_Court_of_Moldova), composed of six judges (two appointed by the President, two by Parliament, and two by the Supreme Council of [Magistrature](/wiki/Magistrate)), serving six-year terms, during which they are irremovable and not subordinate to any power. The Court is invested with the power of [judicial review](/wiki/Judicial_review) over all acts of the parliament, over presidential decrees, and over international treaties, signed by the country.[[55]](#cite_note-55)

### Foreign relations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Moldova has made](/wiki/File:European_Union_Moldova_Locator.svg) [EU](/wiki/European_Union) integration a priority

After achieving independence from the Soviet Union, Moldova's foreign policy was designed with a view to establishing relations with other European countries, neutrality, and European Union integration. In 1995 the country was admitted to the [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe).

In addition to its participation in [NATO's](/wiki/NATO) [Partnership for Peace](/wiki/Partnership_for_Peace) programme, Moldova is also a member state of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations), the [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe) (OSCE), the [North Atlantic Cooperation Council](/wiki/North_Atlantic_Cooperation_Council), the [World Trade Organization](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization), the [International Monetary Fund](/wiki/International_Monetary_Fund), the [World Bank](/wiki/World_Bank), the [Francophonie](/wiki/Francophonie) and the [European Bank for Reconstruction and Development](/wiki/European_Bank_for_Reconstruction_and_Development).

In 2005, [Moldova and the EU](/wiki/Moldova_and_the_EU) established an action plan that sought to improve collaboration between its two neighbouring countries, Romania and Ukraine. At the end of 2005 EUBAM, the [European Union Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine](/wiki/European_Union_Border_Assistance_Mission_to_Moldova_and_Ukraine), was established at the joint request of the presidents of Moldova and Ukraine. EUBAM assists the Moldovan and Ukrainian governments in approximating their border and customs procedures to EU standards, and offers support in both countries' fight against cross-border crime.

After the 1990–1992 [War of Transnistria](/wiki/War_of_Transnistria), Moldova sought a peaceful resolution to the conflict in the Transnistria region by working with Romania, Ukraine, and Russia, calling for international mediation, and co-operating with the OSCE and UN fact-finding and observer missions. The [foreign minister of Moldova](/wiki/Foreign_minister_of_Moldova), [Andrei Stratan](/wiki/Andrei_Stratan), repeatedly stated that the Russian troops stationed in the breakaway region were there against the will of the Moldovan government and called on them to leave "completely and unconditionally."[[57]](#cite_note-57) In 2012, a [security zone incident](/wiki/2012_Moldova_security_zone_incident) resulted in the death of a civilian, raising tensions with [Russia](/wiki/Russia).[[58]](#cite_note-58) In September 2010, the [European Parliament](/wiki/European_Parliament) approved a grant of €90 million to Moldova.[[59]](#cite_note-59) The money was to supplement $570 million in International Monetary Fund loans,[[60]](#cite_note-60) World Bank and other bilateral support already granted to Moldova. In April 2010, Romania offered Moldova development aid worth of €100 million while the number of scholarships for Moldovan students doubled to 5,000.[[61]](#cite_note-61) According to a lending agreement signed in February 2010, Poland provided US$15 million as a component of its support for Moldova in its European integration efforts.[[62]](#cite_note-62) The first joint meeting of the Governments of Romania and Moldova, held in March 2012, concluded with several bilateral agreements in various fields.[[63]](#cite_note-63)[[64]](#cite_note-64) The European orientation "has been the policy of Moldova in recent years and this is the policy that must continue," [Nicolae Timofti](/wiki/Nicolae_Timofti) told lawmakers before [his election](/wiki/Moldovan_presidential_election,_2011–2012).[[65]](#cite_note-65) On 29 November 2013, at a summit in Vilnius, Moldova signed an association agreement with the European Union dedicated to the European Union's '[Eastern Partnership'](/wiki/Eastern_Partnership) with ex-Soviet countries.[[66]](#cite_note-66) The ex-Romanian President [Traian Băsescu](/wiki/Traian_Băsescu) stated that [Romania](/wiki/Romania) will make all efforts for Moldova to join the EU as soon as possible. Likewise, Traian Băsescu declared that the [unification of Moldova with Romania](/wiki/Unification_of_Moldova_with_Romania) is the next national project for Romania, as more than 75% of the population speaks Romanian.[[67]](#cite_note-67) Moldova has signed the Association Agreement with the European Union in Brussels on 27 June 2014. The signing comes after the accord has been initialed in Vilnius in November 2013.[[68]](#cite_note-68)[[69]](#cite_note-69)

### Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|A soldier of the](/wiki/File:Moldovan_army_Capt._Deli_Ianec,_left,_role-playing_as_an_Afghan_National_Army_officer,_and_U.S._Army_Capt._Trey_Marsh,_with_Iron_Troop,_3rd_Squadron,_2nd_Cavalry_Regiment,_review_pictures_taken_after_a_search_130311-A-PU716-004.jpg) [Moldovan Army](/wiki/Military_of_Moldova) at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in [Hohenfels](/wiki/Hohenfels,_Bavaria), [Germany](/wiki/Germany)

The Moldovan armed forces consist of the [Ground Forces](/wiki/Moldovan_Ground_Forces) and [Air Force](/wiki/Moldovan_Air_Force). Moldova has accepted all relevant arms control obligations of the former Soviet Union. On 30 October 1992, Moldova ratified the [Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe](/wiki/Treaty_on_Conventional_Armed_Forces_in_Europe), which establishes comprehensive limits on key categories of conventional military equipment and provides for the destruction of weapons in excess of those limits. The country acceded to the provisions of the nuclear [Non-Proliferation Treaty](/wiki/Non-Proliferation_Treaty) in October 1994 in [Washington, D.C.](/wiki/Washington,_D.C.) It does not have nuclear, biological, chemical or radiological weapons. Moldova joined the [North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's](/wiki/North_Atlantic_Treaty_Organisation) [Partnership for Peace](/wiki/Partnership_for_Peace) on 16 March 1994.

Moldova is committed to a number of international and regional control of arms regulations such as the UN Firearms Protocol, Stability Pact Regional Implementation Plan, the UN Programme of Action (PoA) and the OSCE Documents on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition.

Since declaring independence in 1991, Moldova has participated in UN peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Sudan and Georgia.

Moldova signed with Romania a military agreement to strengthen regional security. The agreement is part of Moldova's strategy to reform its military and cooperate with its neighbours.[[70]](#cite_note-70) On 12 November 2014, the US donated to Moldovan Armed Forces 39 [Humvees](/wiki/Humvees) and 10 trailers, with a value of US$700,000, to the 22nd Peacekeeping Battalion of the Moldovan National Army to "increase the capability of Moldovan peacekeeping contingents."[*[71]*](#cite_note-71)

### Human rights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) According to [Amnesty International](/wiki/Amnesty_International), "Torture and other ill-treatment in police detention remained widespread; the state failed to carry out prompt and impartial investigations and police officers sometimes evaded penalties. Political dissidents from [Ilașcu Group](/wiki/Ilașcu_Group) were released from arbitrary detention only after an order of the [European Court of Human Rights](/wiki/European_Court_of_Human_Rights).[[72]](#cite_note-72) In 2009, when Moldova experienced its most [serious civil unrest](/wiki/2009_Moldova_civil_unrest) in a decade, several civilians, including [Valeriu Boboc](/wiki/Valeriu_Boboc), were killed by police and many more injured.[[73]](#cite_note-73) According to [Human Rights Report](/wiki/United_States'_Country_Reports_on_Human_Rights_Practices) of the [United States Department of State](/wiki/United_States_Department_of_State), released in April 2011, "In contrast to the previous year, there were no reports of killings by security forces. During the year reports of government exercising undue influence over the media substantially decreased." But "Transnistrian authorities continued to harass independent media and opposition lawmakers; restrict freedom of association, movement, and religion; and discriminate against Romanian speakers."[[74]](#cite_note-74) Moldova "has made "noteworthy progress" on religious freedom since the era of the Soviet Union, but it can still take further steps to foster diversity," said the [UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief](/wiki/United_Nations_Special_Rapporteur_on_Freedom_of_Religion_or_Belief) [Heiner Bielefeldt](/wiki/Heiner_Bielefeldt), in Chișinău, in September 2011.[[75]](#cite_note-75) Moldova improved its legislation by enacting the *Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence*, in 2008.[[76]](#cite_note-76)

### Administrative divisions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Map of administrative divisions of Moldova](/wiki/Template:Map_of_administrative_divisions_of_Moldova) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

Moldova is divided into thirty-two districts (*raioane*, singular [*raion*](/wiki/Raion)), three municipalities and two autonomous regions ([Gagauzia](/wiki/Gagauzia) and Transnistria).[[77]](#cite_note-77) The final status of Transnistria is [disputed](/wiki/Disputed_status_of_Transnistria), as the central government does not control that territory. The cities of [Comrat](/wiki/Comrat) and [Tiraspol](/wiki/Tiraspol), the administrative seats of the two autonomous territories also have municipality status.

Moldova has 66 cities (towns), including five with municipality status, and 916 communes. Another 699 villages are too small to have a separate administration, and are administratively part of either cities (40 of them) or communes (659). This makes for a total of 1,681 localities in Moldova, all but two of which are inhabited.

[Template:Largest cities of Moldova](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Moldova)

[Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Scenery in Moldova, with](/wiki/File:Moldova.jpg) [Dniester River](/wiki/Dniester_River) [thumb|Cave churches at](/wiki/File:Orhei_Vechi,_Moldova_-_Flickr_-_Dave_Proffer_(13).jpg) [Old Orhei](/wiki/Old_Orhei) [thumb|right|Toltrele Prutului near](/wiki/File:Toltre_FTȘT-52.JPG) [Fetești](/wiki/Fetești,_Edineț), [Edineț District](/wiki/Edineț_District) [thumb|Beach on the shore of](/wiki/File:Dniester_near_Vadul_lui_Vodă.jpg) [Dniester River](/wiki/Dniester_River) near Vadul lui Vodă

Moldova lies between latitudes [45°](/wiki/45th_parallel_north) and [49° N](/wiki/49th_parallel_north), and mostly between meridians [26°](/wiki/26th_meridian_east) and [30° E](/wiki/30th_meridian_east) (a small area lies east of 30°). The total land area is 33,851 km2

The largest part of the nation lies between two rivers, the [Dniester](/wiki/Dniester) and the [Prut](/wiki/Prut). The western border of Moldova is formed by the Prut river, which joins the [Danube](/wiki/Danube) before flowing into the [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea). Moldova has access to the Danube for only about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), and [Giurgiulești](/wiki/Giurgiulești) is the only Moldovan port on the Danube. In the east, the Dniester is the main river, flowing through the country from north to south, receiving the waters of [Răut](/wiki/Răut), [Bâc](/wiki/Bâc), [Ichel](/wiki/Ichel), [Botna](/wiki/Botna). [Ialpug](/wiki/Ialpug) flows into one of the Danube [limans](/wiki/Liman_(landform)), while [Cogâlnic](/wiki/Cogâlnic) into the Black Sea chain of limans.

The country is landlocked, even though it is very close to the Black Sea. While most of the country is hilly, elevations never exceed [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) – the highest point being the [Bălănești Hill](/wiki/Dealul_Bălănești). Moldova's hills are part of the Moldavian Plateau, which geologically originate from the [Carpathian Mountains](/wiki/Carpathian_Mountains). Its subdivisions in Moldova include the Dniester Hills (Northern Moldavian Hills and [Dniester Ridge](/wiki/Dniester-Rāut_Ridge)), the Moldavian Plain (Middle Prut Valley and [Bălți Steppe](/wiki/Bălți_Steppe)), and the Central Moldavian Plateau ([Ciuluc-Soloneț Hills](/wiki/Ciuluc-Soloneț_Hills), [Cornești Hills](/wiki/Cornești_Hills)—[Codri](/wiki/Codri) Massive, "Codri" meaning "forests"—[Lower Dniester Hills](/wiki/Lower_Dniester_Hills), [Lower Prut Valley](/wiki/Lower_Prut_Valley), and [Tigheci Hills](/wiki/Tigheci_Hills)). In the south, the country has a small flatland, the [Bugeac Plain](/wiki/Bugeac_Plain). The territory of Moldova east of the river Dniester is split between parts of the [Podolian Plateau](/wiki/Podolian_Plateau), and parts of the [Eurasian Steppe](/wiki/Eurasian_Steppe).

The country's main cities are the capital Chișinău, in the centre of the country, Tiraspol (in the eastern region of Transnistria), Bălți (in the north) and Bender (in the south-east). [Comrat](/wiki/Comrat) is the administrative centre of Gagauzia.

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

Moldova has a climate which is moderately continental; its proximity to the [Black Sea](/wiki/Black_Sea) leads to the climate being mild and sunny.[[78]](#cite_note-78) The summers are warm and long, with temperatures averaging about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), and the winters are relatively mild and dry, with January temperatures averaging [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). Annual rainfall, which ranges from around [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in the north to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in the south, can vary greatly; long dry spells are not unusual. The heaviest rainfall occurs in early summer and again in October; heavy showers and thunderstorms are common. Because of the irregular terrain, heavy summer rains often cause erosion and river silting.

The highest temperature ever recorded in Moldova was [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) on July 21, 2007 in Camenca.[[79]](#cite_note-79) The lowest temperature ever recorded was [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) on January 20, 1963 in Brătușeni, Edineț county.[[80]](#cite_note-80)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Average daily maximum and minimum temperatures for the three largest cities in Moldova[[81]](#cite_note-81) | | | | |
| **Location** | **July (°C)** | **July (°F)** | **January (°C)** | **January (°F)** |
| [Chișinău](/wiki/Chișinău) | 27/17 | 81/63 | 1/−4 | 33/24 |
| [Tiraspol](/wiki/Tiraspol) | 27/15 | 81/60 | 1/−6 | 33/21 |
| [Bălți](/wiki/Bălți) | 26/14 | 79/58 | –0/−7 | 31/18 |

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|Moldova GDP by sector](/wiki/File:MoldovanGDPBySector.svg) [thumb|left|A chart of Moldova's export products. (2013)](/wiki/File:Moldova_Export_Treemap.png)

After the breakup from the USSR in 1991, energy shortages, political uncertainty, trade obstacles and weak administrative capacity contributed to the decline of economy. As a part of an ambitious economic liberalization effort, Moldova introduced a convertible currency, liberalized all prices, stopped issuing preferential credits to state enterprises, backed steady land privatization, removed export controls, and liberalized interest rates. The government entered into agreements with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to promote growth. The economy reversed from decline in late 90's. Since 1999 the GDP (PPP) had a steady growth as follows:[[82]](#cite_note-82)<[[1]](#cite_note-1)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1999** | **2000** | **2001** | **2002** | **2003** | **2004** | **2005** | **2006** | **2007** | **2008** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** |
| 9.70% | 11.30% | 10.30% | 11.00% | 7.79% | 8.58% | 8.41% | 9.07% | 9.76% | 10.67% | 10.13% | 10.99% | 6.80% | -0.70% | 8.90% | 1.80% | -1.10% |

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Mileştii_Mici_(3944427747).jpg)[Mileștii Mici](/wiki/Milestii_Mici_(winery)) contains the world's largest [wine cellars](/wiki/Wine_cellar). The Moldovan economy has strongly recovered from the drought-related contraction in 2012. Following a decline of 0.7 percent in 2012, the economy expanded by 8.9 percent in 2013, led by strong rebound in agriculture and related industries, private consumption and exports. Inflation remained within the NBM's (National Bank of Moldova) target range of 5 percent ± 1.5 percentage points. The overall budget deficit narrowed to 1.8 percent of GDP in 2013 from 2.2 percent of GDP in 2012, partly reflecting the under execution of investment projects. The external accounts continued to improve with the current account deficit narrowing to about 5½ percent of GDP, reflecting strong export performance, contained import growth, and still strong inflow of remittances. International reserves increased to US$2.8 billion (5 months of imports or 105 percent of short-term debt). The real effective exchange rate (REER) depreciated by 3½ percent. Although estimates point to possible modest overvaluation of the real exchange rate, external competitiveness appears broadly adequate as reflected in strong sustained export performance.[[83]](#cite_note-83) However, the near-term economic outlook is weak. Main risks to the near-term outlook relate to serious vulnerabilities and governance issues in the banking sector, policy slippages in the run up to the elections, intensification of geopolitical tensions in the region, and a further slowdown in activity in main trading partners. Moldova remains highly vulnerable to fluctuations in remittances from workers abroad (24 percent of GDP), exports to the [Commonwealth of Independent States](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Independent_States) (CIS) and European Union (EU) (88 percent of total exports), and donor support (about 10 percent of government spending). The main transmission channels through which adverse exogenous shocks could impact the Moldovan economy are: remittances (also due to potentially returning migrants), external trade, and capital flows. Staff's spillover analysis suggests that further strengthening of fiscal and external buffers would be critical for mitigating the impact of external shocks, particularly in light of the Moldova's strong links and synchronized business cycle with trading partners.[[83]](#cite_note-83) Moldova largely achieved the main objectives of the combined ECF/EFF (IMF financial credit) supported program that expired on April 30, 2013. The economy has strongly recovered from the drought-related contraction in 2012 but will slow down in 2014. Key risks to the near-term outlook relate to financial stability, fiscal policy slippages in the run up to the 2014 parliamentary elections, a further slowdown in activity in main trading partners, and intensification of geopolitical tensions.[[83]](#cite_note-83) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Moldova-chisineu-Mall-Dova.jpg)[MallDova](/wiki/Malldova) shopping center in Chișinău Corporate governance in the banking sector is a major concern. In line with FSAP recommendations, significant weaknesses in the legal and regulatory frameworks must be urgently addressed to ensure stability and soundness of the financial sector. Moldova has achieved a substantial degree of fiscal consolidation in recent years, but this trend is now reversing. Resisting pre-election pressures for selective spending increases and returning to the path of fiscal consolidation would reduce reliance on exceptionally-high donor support. Structural fiscal reforms would help safeguard sustainability.[[83]](#cite_note-83) Monetary policy has been successful in maintaining inflation within the NBM’s target range. Going forward, the NBM needs to remain ready to adopt a tightening bias if inflationary pressures start emerging. There is room to strengthen the inflation targeting regime. The implementation of structural reforms outlined in the National Development Strategy (NDS) Moldova 2020—especially in the business environment, physical infrastructure, and human resources development areas—would help boost potential growth and reduce poverty.[[83]](#cite_note-83) Moldova's remarkable recovery from the severe recession of 2009 was largely the result of sound macroeconomic and financial policies and structural reforms. Despite a small contraction in 2012, Moldova’s economic performance was among the strongest in the region during 2010–13. Economic activity grew cumulatively by about 24 percent; consumer price inflation was brought under control; and real wages increased cumulatively by about 13 percent. This expansion was made possible by adequate macroeconomic stabilization measures and ambitious structural reforms implemented in the wake of the crisis under a Fund-supported program. In November 2013, Moldova initialed an Association Agreement with the EU which includes provisions establishing a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA).

A political crisis in early 2013 led to policy slippages in the fiscal and financial areas. The political crisis that broke out in early 2013 was resolved with the appointment of a government supported by a pro-European center-right/center coalition in May 2013. However, delays in policy implementation prevented completion of the final reviews under the ECF/EFF arrangements.

Despite a sharp decline in poverty in recent years, Moldova remains one of the poorest countries in Europe and structural reforms are needed to promote sustainable growth. Based on the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) regional poverty line of US$5/day (PPP), 55 percent of the population was poor in 2011. While this was significantly lower than 94 percent in 2002, Moldova's poverty rate is still more than double the ECA average of 25 percent. The NDS—Moldova (National Development System) 2020, which was published in November 2012, focuses on several critical areas to boost economic development and reduce poverty. These include education, infrastructure, financial sector, business climate, energy consumption, pension system, and judicial framework. Following the [regional financial crisis in 1998](/wiki/1998_Russian_financial_crisis), Moldova has made significant progress towards achieving and retaining macroeconomic and financial stabilization. It has, furthermore, implemented many structural and institutional reforms that are indispensable for the efficient functioning of a market economy. These efforts have helped maintain macroeconomic and financial stability under difficult external circumstances, enabled the resumption of economic growth and contributed to establishing an environment conducive to the economy's further growth and development in the medium term.

The government's goal of EU integration has resulted in some market-oriented progress. Moldova experienced better than expected economic growth in 2013 due to increased agriculture production, to economic policies adopted by the Moldovan government since 2009, and to the receipt of EU trade preferences connecting Moldovan products to the world's largest market. Moldova has signed the Association Agreement and a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU during summer 2014.[[84]](#cite_note-84) Moldova has also achieved a Free Visa Regime[[85]](#cite_note-85) with the EU which represents the biggest achievement of Moldovan diplomacy since independence.[[86]](#cite_note-86) Still, growth has been hampered by high prices for Russian natural gas, a Russian import ban on Moldovan wine, increased foreign scrutiny of Moldovan agricultural products, and by Moldova's large external debt. Over the longer term, Moldova's economy remains vulnerable to political uncertainty, weak administrative capacity, vested bureaucratic interests, corruption, higher fuel prices, Russian pressure, and the separatist regime in Moldova's Transnistria region.[[87]](#cite_note-87)According to IMF World Economic Outlook April 2014, the Moldovan GDP (PPP) per capita is 3,927 International Dollars,[[88]](#cite_note-88)[[89]](#cite_note-89) excluding grey economy and tax evasion.

### Energy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

With few natural energy resources, Moldova imports almost all of its energy supplies from Russia and Ukraine. Moldova's dependence on Russian energy is underscored by a growing US$5 billion debt to Russian natural gas supplier Gazprom, largely the result of unreimbursed natural gas consumption in the separatist Transnistria region. In August 2013, work began on a new pipeline between Moldova and Romania that may eventually break Russia's monopoly on Moldova's gas supplies.[[87]](#cite_note-87) Moldova is a partner country of the EU [INOGATE](/wiki/INOGATE) energy programme, which has four key topics: enhancing [energy security](/wiki/Energy_security), [convergence](/wiki/Technological_convergence) of member state [energy markets](/wiki/Energy_market) on the basis of [EU internal energy market](/wiki/Internal_energy_market) principles, supporting [sustainable energy](/wiki/Sustainable_energy) development, and attracting investment for energy projects of common and regional interest.[[90]](#cite_note-90)

### Wine industry[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Moldova is known for its wines. For many years [viticulture](/wiki/Viticulture) and [winemaking](/wiki/Winemaking) in Moldova were the general occupation of the population. Evidence of this is present in historical memorials and documents, folklore, and the spoken language of Moldova, which is Romanian.

The country has a well established [wine](/wiki/Wine) industry. It has a vineyard area of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), of which [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) are used for commercial production. Most of the country's wine production is made for export. Many families have their own recipes and strands of [grapes](/wiki/Grape) that have been passed down through the generations.

Cricova is one of the largest wine cellars in the world, with [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of tunnel-like storage galleries.

### Agriculture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Moldova's [rich soil](/wiki/Chernozem) and [temperate](/wiki/Temperate) [continental climate](/wiki/Continental_climate) (with warm summers and mild winters) have made the country one of the most productive agricultural regions since ancient times, and a major supplier of agricultural products in southeastern Europe. In agriculture, the economic reform started with the land cadastre reform.

### Tourism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Old Orhei Museum-Archaeological Complex](/wiki/File:Orhei_Vechi,_Moldova_-_Flickr_-_Dave_Proffer_(6).jpg) Tourism focuses on the [country's natural landscapes](/wiki/Geography_of_Moldova) and its [history](/wiki/History_of_Moldova). [Wine](/wiki/Moldovan_wine) tours are offered to tourists across the country. Vineyards/cellars include [Cricova](/wiki/Cricova_(winery)), [Purcari](/wiki/Purcari_(winery)), [Ciumai](/wiki/Ciumai), [Romanești](/wiki/Romanesti_(winery)), [Cojușna](/wiki/Cojușna), [Mileștii Mici](/wiki/Milestii_Mici_(winery)).

### Transport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Кишиневский_аэропорт-2011.jpg)[Chișinău International Airport](/wiki/Chișinău_International_Airport). [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The main means of transportation in Moldova are railroads [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) and a highway system ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) overall, including [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of paved surfaces). The sole international air gateway of Moldova is the [Chișinău International Airport](/wiki/Chișinău_International_Airport). The [Giurgiulești](/wiki/Giurgiulești) terminal on the [Danube](/wiki/Danube) is compatible with small seagoing vessels. Shipping on the lower [Prut](/wiki/Prut) and [Nistru](/wiki/Nistru) rivers plays only a modest role in the country's transportation system.

## Telecommunications[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The first million mobile telephone users were registered in September 2005. The number of mobile telephone users in Moldova increased by 47.3% in the first quarter of 2008 against the last year and exceeded 2.89 million.[[91]](#cite_note-91) In September 2009, Moldova was the first country in the world to launch high-definition voice services ([HD voice](/wiki/HD_voice)) for mobile phones, and the first country in Europe to launch 14.4 Mbit/s mobile broadband at a national scale, with over 40% population coverage.[[92]](#cite_note-92) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), there are around 1,295,000 [Internet users in Moldova](/wiki/Internet_in_Moldova) with overall Internet penetration of 35.9%.[[93]](#cite_note-93) On 6 June 2012, the Government approved the licensing of 4G / LTE for mobile operators.[[94]](#cite_note-94)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The ethno-linguistic composition of Moldova in 2004](/wiki/File:Harta_etnica_a_Rep._Moldova_-_2004.jpg) As per [2014 census](/wiki/Moldovan_Census_(2014)) preliminary data, 2,913,281 inhabitants live in Moldova (within the areas controlled by the central government),[[95]](#cite_note-95) a decrease from the figure recorded at the 2004 census. The [urbanization](/wiki/Urbanization) rate is 45% of the total population living in urban areas ([Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of)).[[96]](#cite_note-96)

### Cultural and ethnic composition[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

The term "Moldavian" had initially described the inhabitants of the Moldavian Principality. In 1775, Austria annexed the northern part of the principality, thenceforth known as Bukovina; a second partition in 1812 resulted in Russia's annexation of the eastern part of Moldavia, thenceforth known as [Bessarabia](/wiki/Bessarabia). The partitioned Moldavians did not undergo the same nation-building processes as did their ethnic counterparts in the Danubian Principalities, which identified as the new Romania. Thus, Romanian-language speakers in Bessarabia clung to a "Moldavian" identity.

A Moldavian identity prevailed in Bessarabia into the interwar period, whereas a Romanian one had developed among ethnic Romanians in Bukovina even before the Great Union. Peasants in all three parts: Romanian, Austrian, and Russian, of historic Moldavia were more likely to identify as Moldavians than were educated city dwellers.[[97]](#cite_note-97) According to the [2004 Moldovan Census](/wiki/2004_Moldovan_Census)[[98]](#cite_note-98) (areas controlled by the central government), and the [2004 Census in Transnistria](/wiki/2004_Census_in_Transnistria) (areas controlled by the breakaway authorities, including Transnistria, [Bender/Tighina](/wiki/Bender,_Moldova), and four neighbouring communes):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Self-identification** | **Moldovan census** | **% Core Moldova** | **Transnistrian census** | **% Transnistria + Bender** | **Total** | **%** |
| [Moldovans](/wiki/Moldovans)[Template:Smallsup](/wiki/Template:Smallsup) | 2,564,849 | 75.81% | 177,382 | 31.94% | 2,742,231 | 69.62% |
| [Ukrainians](/wiki/Ukrainians) | 282,406 | 8.35% | 160,069 | 28.82% | 442,475 | 11.23% |
| [Russians](/wiki/Russians) | 201,218 | 5.95% | 168,678 | 30.37% | 369,896 | 9.39% |
| [Gagauz](/wiki/Gagauz_people) | 147,500 | 4.36% | 4,096 | 0.74% | 151,596 | 3.85% |
| [Romanians](/wiki/Romanians)[Template:Smallsup](/wiki/Template:Smallsup) | 73,276 | 2.17% | 253 | 0.05% | 73,529 | 2.16% |
| [Bulgarians](/wiki/Bulgarians) | 65,662 | 1.94% | 13,858 | 2.50% | 79,520 | 2.02% |
| [Romani](/wiki/Romani_people) | 12,271 | 0.36% | 507 | 0.09% | 12,778 | 0.32% |
| [Poles](/wiki/Poles) | 2,383 | 0.07% | 1,791 | 0.32% | 4,174 | 0.11% |
| Others / undeclared | 30,159 | 0.89% | 27,454 | 4.94% | 57,613 | 1.46% |
| **TOTAL** | [Template:Nbsp](/wiki/Template:Nbsp)**3,383,332** | [Template:Nbsp](/wiki/Template:Nbsp)**100%** | [Template:Nbsp](/wiki/Template:Nbsp)**555,347** | [Template:Nbsp](/wiki/Template:Nbsp)**100%** | [Template:Nbsp](/wiki/Template:Nbsp)**3,938,679** | [Template:Nbsp](/wiki/Template:Nbsp)**100%** |

[Template:Smallsup](/wiki/Template:Smallsup) There is an [ongoing controversy](/wiki/Controversy_over_linguistic_and_ethnic_identity_in_Moldova) whether Romanians and Moldovans are the same ethnic group, namely whether Moldovans' self-identification constitutes an ethnic group distinct and apart from Romanians or a subset. There were also numerous allegations that the ethnic affiliation numbers were rigged: 7 out of 10 observer groups of the Council of Europe reported a significant number of cases where census-takers recommended respondents declare themselves Moldovans rather than Romanians. Complicating the interpretation of the results, 18.8% of respondents that identified themselves as Moldovans declared Romanian to be their native language.[[99]](#cite_note-99)<gallery> File:Ponderea românilor în Republica Moldova la nivel de comune.jpg|The share of [Romanians](/wiki/Romanians) in Moldova at commune level File:Ponderea ucrainenilor în Republica Moldova la nivel de comune.jpg|[Ukrainians](/wiki/Ukrainians) File:Ponderea rusilor în Republica Moldova la nivel de comune.jpg|[Russians](/wiki/Russians) File:Ponderea gagauzilor în Republica Moldova la nivel de comune.jpg|[Gagauz](/wiki/Gagauz_people) File:Ponderea bulgarilor în Republica Moldova la nivel de comune.jpg|[Bulgarians](/wiki/Bulgarians) </gallery>

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

[thumb|right|300px|**Left.** A](/wiki/File:Grafitti_politice_în_Republica_Moldova.png) [Limba noastră](/wiki/Limba_noastră) (Our language) social ad in Chișinău, to which the handwritten word "Română" (Romanian) was added.  
**Right.** An inscription on a building in Chișinău: "I am Moldovan! I speak Moldovan!"  
(*both messages use the same language*) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The official language of Moldova is [Romanian](/wiki/Romanian_language), a [Romance language](/wiki/Romance_languages) related to Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese.

The 1991 [Declaration of Independence](/wiki/Moldovan_Declaration_of_Independence) names the official language Romanian.[[100]](#cite_note-100)[[101]](#cite_note-101) The [Constitution of 1994](/wiki/Constitution_of_Moldova_(1994)) states that the national language of the Republic of Moldova is [Moldovan](/wiki/Moldovan_language), and its writing is based on the [Latin alphabet](/wiki/Latin_alphabet).[[102]](#cite_note-102) In 2003, the [Communist government](/wiki/Vasile_Tarlev_Cabinet_(1)) adopted a political document which states that one of the priorities of the national politics of the Republic of Moldova is preservation of the Moldovan language.[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn)[[103]](#cite_note-103) In December 2013, a decision of the [Constitutional Court of Moldova](/wiki/Constitutional_Court_of_Moldova) ruled that the Declaration of Independence takes precedence over the Constitution, and the state language is "Romanian".[[104]](#cite_note-104)[[105]](#cite_note-105) As of the [2004 census](/wiki/2004_Moldovan_Census), the country has ethnic Russian (6%) and Ukrainian (8.4%) populations. 50% of ethnic Ukrainians, 27% of Gagauz, 35% of Bulgarians, and 54% of smaller ethnic groups speak [Russian](/wiki/Russian_language) as their first language. In total, there are 541,000 people (or 16% of the population) in Moldova who declared Russian as their first language, including 130,000 ethnic Moldovans. [Gagauz](/wiki/Gagauz_language) and [Ukrainian](/wiki/Ukrainian_language) languages have significant numbers of speakers in regional populations.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Population of Moldova** | [Romanian (Moldovan)](/wiki/Romanian_language) | [Russian](/wiki/Russian_language) | [Ukrainian](/wiki/Ukrainian_language) | [Gagauz](/wiki/Gagauz_language) | [Bulgarian](/wiki/Bulgarian_language) | Other languages or undeclared |
| by native language | 2,588,355 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 380,796 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 186,394 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 137,774 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 54,401  [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 35,612 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) |
| by language of first use | 2,543,354 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 540,990 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 130,114 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 104,890 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 38,565 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) | 25,419 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small) |

Historically Russian was taught in schools as the first foreign language, because of the relationship with the Russian Empire and Soviet Union. In the 21st century, the primary foreign language taught in the schools is [English](/wiki/English_language). In 2013 more than 60% of schoolchildren took it as their first foreign language. This was followed by [French](/wiki/French_language), taken by less than 50% of students. (Since 1996, the Republic of Moldova has been a full member of [La Francophonie](/wiki/Organisation_internationale_de_la_Francophonie).) [German](/wiki/German_language) was the third-ranked choice.[[106]](#cite_note-106)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

[Template:Bar box](/wiki/Template:Bar_box) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

For the 2004 census, [Orthodox Christians](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church), who make up 93.3% of Moldova's population, were not required to declare the particular of the two main churches they belong to. The [Moldovan Orthodox Church](/wiki/Moldovan_Orthodox_Church), autonomous and subordinated to the [Russian Orthodox Church](/wiki/Russian_Orthodox_Church), and the [Orthodox Church of Bessarabia](/wiki/Orthodox_Church_of_Bessarabia), autonomous and subordinated to the [Romanian Orthodox Church](/wiki/Romanian_Orthodox_Church), both claim to be the national church of the country. 1.9% of the population is Protestant, 0.9% belongs to other religions, 1.0% is non-religious, 0.4% is atheist, and 2.2% did not answer the religion question at the census.

### Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|200px|The](/wiki/File:National_Library_of_the_Republic_of_Moldova_(7992652868).jpg) [National Library of Moldova](/wiki/National_Library_of_Moldova)

There are 16 state and 15[[107]](#cite_note-107) private institutions of [higher education](/wiki/Higher_education) in Moldova, with a total of 126,100 students, including 104,300 in the state institutions and 21,700 in the private ones. The number of students per 10,000 inhabitants in Moldova has been constantly growing since the collapse of the Soviet Union, reaching 217 in 2000–2001, and 351 in 2005–2006.

The [National Library of Moldova](/wiki/National_Library_of_Moldova) was founded in 1832. The [Moldova State University](/wiki/Moldova_State_University) and the [Academy of Sciences of Moldova](/wiki/Academy_of_Sciences_of_Moldova), the main scientific organizations of Moldova, were established in 1946.

[Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), Romania allocates 5,000 scholarships in high schools and universities for Moldovan students.[[108]](#cite_note-108) Likewise, more than half of preschool children in Moldova benefit from Romania funded program to renovate and equip [kindergartens](/wiki/Kindergarten).[[109]](#cite_note-109) Almost all the population is literate: the [literacy rate](/wiki/Literacy_rate) of the population aged 15 and over is estimated at 99.4% ([Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of)).[[110]](#cite_note-110)

### Crime[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The [CIA World Factbook](/wiki/CIA_World_Factbook) lists widespread [crime](/wiki/Crime) and underground economic activity among major issues in Moldova.[[1]](#cite_note-1) [Human trafficking](/wiki/Human_trafficking) of Moldovan women and children to other parts of Europe is a serious problem.[[111]](#cite_note-111)[[112]](#cite_note-112)

### Health and fertility[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The [total fertility rate](/wiki/Total_fertility_rate) (TFR) in Moldova was estimated in 2014 at 1.56 children/woman,[[113]](#cite_note-113) which is below the replacement rate of 2.1. In 2012, the average age of women at first birth was 23.9 years, with 75.2% of births being to women under 30, and 22.4% of births being to unmarried women.[[114]](#cite_note-114) The [maternal mortality rate](/wiki/Maternal_mortality_rate) was 41 deaths/100,000 live births (in 2010)[[115]](#cite_note-115) and the [infant mortality rate](/wiki/Infant_mortality_rate) was 12.59 deaths/1,000 live births (in 2015).[[116]](#cite_note-116) The [life expectancy](/wiki/Life_expectancy) in 2015 was estimated at 70.42 years (66.55 years male, 74.54 years female).[[116]](#cite_note-116) Public expenditure on health was 4.2% of the GDP and private expenditure on health 3.2%.[[117]](#cite_note-117) There are about 264 physicians per 100,000 people.[[117]](#cite_note-117) Health expenditure was 138 US$ (PPP) per capita in 2004.[[117]](#cite_note-117) Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, the country has seen a decrease in spending on health care and, as a result, the [tuberculosis](/wiki/Tuberculosis) incidence rate in the country has grown.[[118]](#cite_note-118) According to a 2009 study, Moldova was struggling with one of the highest incidence rates of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in the world.[[119]](#cite_note-119) The percentage of adults (aged 15–49) living with [HIV/AIDS](/wiki/HIV/AIDS) was estimated in 2009 at 0.40%.[[120]](#cite_note-120)

### Emigration[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Emigration is a mass phenomenon in Moldova and has a major impact on the country's [demographics](/wiki/Demographics) and economy. The [Moldovan Intelligence and Security Service](/wiki/Moldovan_Intelligence_and_Security_Service) has estimated that 600,000 to one million Moldovan citizens (almost 25% of the population) are working abroad.[[121]](#cite_note-121)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Eminescu.jpg)[Mihai Eminescu](/wiki/Mihai_Eminescu), the national poet of Moldova and Romania [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Located geographically at the crossroads of [Latin](/wiki/Romance_peoples), [Slavic](/wiki/Slavic_people) and other cultures, Moldova has enriched its own culture adopting and maintaining some of the traditions of its neighbours and of other influence sources. The culture of Moldova is a combination of [Romanian culture](/wiki/Culture_of_Romania) and [Russian culture](/wiki/Culture_of_Russia).[[122]](#cite_note-122) The traditional Latin origins of Romanian culture reach back to the 2nd century, the period of [Roman](/wiki/Ancient_Rome) colonization in [Dacia](/wiki/Dacia).

The country's cultural heritage was marked by numerous churches and monasteries built by the Moldavian ruler [Stephen the Great](/wiki/Stephen_the_Great) in the 15th century, by the works of the later renaissance Metropolitans [Varlaam](/wiki/Varlaam,_Metropolitan_of_Moscow) and [Dosoftei](/wiki/Dosoftei), and those of scholars such as [Grigore Ureche](/wiki/Grigore_Ureche), [Miron Costin](/wiki/Miron_Costin), [Nicolae Milescu](/wiki/Nicolae_Milescu), [Dimitrie Cantemir](/wiki/Dimitrie_Cantemir)[Template:Efn](/wiki/Template:Efn) and [Ion Neculce](/wiki/Ion_Neculce). In the 19th century, Moldavians from the territories of the medieval Principality of Moldavia, then split between Austria, Russia, and an Ottoman-vassal [Moldavia](/wiki/Moldavia) (after 1859, Romania), made a significant contribution to the formation of the modern [Romanian culture](/wiki/Culture_of_Romania). Among these were many Bessarabians, such as [Alexandru Donici](/wiki/Alecu_Donici), [Alexandru Hâjdeu](/wiki/Alexandru_Hâjdeu), [Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu](/wiki/Bogdan_Petriceicu_Hasdeu), [Constantin Stamati](/wiki/Constantin_Stamati), [Constantin Stamati-Ciurea](/wiki/Constantin_Stamati-Ciurea), [Costache Negruzzi](/wiki/Costache_Negruzzi), [Alecu Russo](/wiki/Alecu_Russo), [Constantin Stere](/wiki/Constantin_Stere).

[Mihai Eminescu](/wiki/Mihai_Eminescu), a late [Romantic](/wiki/Romanticism) poet, and [Ion Creangă](/wiki/Ion_Creangă), a writer, are the most influential [Romanian language](/wiki/Romanian_language) artists, considered national writers both in Romania and Moldova.[[123]](#cite_note-123) The largest ethnic group is a speaker of Romanian and shares the [Romanian culture](/wiki/Romanian_culture). The culture has been also influenced (through [Eastern Orthodoxy](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox)) by the [Byzantine](/wiki/Byzantine) culture.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The country has also important minority ethnic communities. Gagauz, 4.4% of the population, are [Christian](/wiki/Christian) [Turkic](/wiki/Turkic_peoples) people. [Greeks](/wiki/Greeks), [Armenians](/wiki/Armenians_in_Moldova), [Poles](/wiki/Poles), Ukrainians, although not numerous, were present since as early as the 17th century, and had left cultural marks. The 19th century saw the arrival of many more Ukrainians from [Podolia](/wiki/Podolia) and [Galicia](/wiki/Galicia_(Central_Europe)), as well as new communities, such as [Lipovans](/wiki/Lipovans), [Bulgarians](/wiki/Bessarabian_Bulgarians) and [Bessarabian Germans](/wiki/Bessarabian_Germans).

In the second part of the 20th century, Moldova saw a massive Soviet immigration, which brought with it many elements of [Soviet culture](/wiki/Soviet_culture).

### Media[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) In October 1939, [*Radio Basarabia*](/wiki/Radio_Basarabia), a local station of the [Romanian Radio Broadcasting Company](/wiki/Romanian_Radio_Broadcasting_Company), was the first radio station opened in Chișinău. Television in Moldova was [introduced in April 1958](/wiki/Timeline_of_the_introduction_of_television_in_countries), within the framework of [Soviet television](/wiki/Soviet_television). Through cable, Moldovan viewers can receive a large number of [Russian channels](/wiki/Television_in_Russia), a few [Romanian channels](/wiki/Television_in_Romania), and several [Russian language](/wiki/Russian_language) versions of international channels in addition to several local channels. One Russian and two local channels are aired. Infotag is the state news agency. Moldova are also home to Dj Dorian, awarded the number 1 dj in the whole of Moldova in 2016. He has a wife named Emily and they make an annual income of approx 20 million usd.

### Food and beverage[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|A popular Moldovan dish of stuffed cabbage rolls (](/wiki/File:Sarmalute_mamaliguta.JPG)[sarma](/wiki/Sarma_(food))), accompanied by [sauerkraut](/wiki/Sauerkraut) and [mămăligă](/wiki/Mămăligă). Moldovan cuisine is similar to neighbouring [Romania](/wiki/Romanian_cuisine), and has been influenced by elements of [Russian](/wiki/Russian_cuisine), [Turkish](/wiki/Turkish_cuisine), and [Ukrainian cuisine](/wiki/Ukrainian_cuisine). Main dishes include [beef](/wiki/Beef), [pork](/wiki/Pork), [potatoes](/wiki/Potatoes), [cabbage](/wiki/Cabbage), and a variety of [cereals](/wiki/Cereals). Popular alcoholic beverages are [*divin*](/wiki/Moldovan_wine#Divin) (Moldovan [brandy](/wiki/Brandy)), [beer](/wiki/Beer), and local [wine](/wiki/Wine).

Total recorded adult alcohol consumption is approximately evenly split between spirits, beer and wine.

### Music[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

[right|thumb|250px|A still image from](/wiki/File:DragonsWhateverShot1.PNG) [O-Zone's](/wiki/O-Zone) [music video](/wiki/Music_video) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Moldova_at_ESC_2011.jpg)[Zdob și Zdub](/wiki/Zdob_și_Zdub) performing at the [2011 Eurovision Song Contest](/wiki/Eurovision_Song_Contest_2011). [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Among Moldova's most prominent composers are [Gavriil Musicescu](/wiki/Gavriil_Musicescu), [Ștefan Neaga](/wiki/Ștefan_Neaga) and [Eugen Doga](/wiki/Eugen_Doga).

In the field of popular music, Moldova has produced the band [O-Zone](/wiki/O-Zone), who came to prominence in 2003, with their hit song "[Dragostea Din Tei](/wiki/Dragostea_Din_Tei)." Moldova has been participating in the [Eurovision Song Contest](/wiki/Eurovision_Song_Contest) since 2005. Another popular band from Moldova is [Zdob și Zdub](/wiki/Zdob_și_Zdub) that represented the country in the [2005 Eurovision Song Contest](/wiki/2005_Eurovision_Song_Contest), finishing 6th.

In May 2007, Natalia Barbu represented Moldova in Helsinki for the [Eurovision Song Contest 2007](/wiki/Eurovision_Song_Contest_2007) with her entry "[Fight](/wiki/Fight_(song))". Natalia squeezed into the final by a very small margin. She took 10th place with 109 points. Then [Zdob și Zdub](/wiki/Zdob_și_Zdub) again represented Moldova in the [2011 Eurovision Song Contest](/wiki/2011_Eurovision_Song_Contest) finishing 12th. [Dan Bălan](/wiki/Dan_Bălan), another popular artist, released the album *Chica Bomb* in 2010.

The band [SunStroke Project](/wiki/SunStroke_Project) with [Olia Tira](/wiki/Olia_Tira) represented the country in the [2010 Eurovision Song Contest](/wiki/2010_Eurovision_Song_Contest) with their hit song "[Run Away](/wiki/Run_Away_(SunStroke_Project_and_Olia_Tira_song))". Their performance gained international notoriety as an [internet meme](/wiki/Internet_meme) due to the pelvic thrusting and dancing of Sergey Stepanov, the band saxophonist. He has been fittingly dubbed "Epic Sax Guy".

Among most prominent classical musicians in Moldova are Mark Pester, a violinist, conductor and the first professor of the State Conservatory. Mark Pester was a student of the famous violin teacher [Leopold Auer](/wiki/Leopold_Auer) at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. As a conductor, he staged the first operas in Moldova and performed with the soloists including [Sergei Rachmaninov](/wiki/Sergei_Rachmaninov). Other prominent classical musicians in Moldova are [Maria Biesu](/wiki/Maria_Biesu), one of the leading world's sopranos and the winner of the Japan International Competition; pianist [Mark Zeltser](/wiki/Mark_Zeltser), winner of the USSR National Competition, Margueritte Long Competition in Paris and Busoni Competition in Bolzano, Italy. Another outstanding pianist is [Oleg Maisenberg](/wiki/Oleg_Maisenberg), the winner of the Schubert International Competition in Vienna.

### Holidays[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Most retail businesses close on [New Year's Day](/wiki/New_Year's_Day) and [Independence Day](/wiki/Independence_Day_(Republic_of_Moldova)), but remain open on all other holidays. [Christmas](/wiki/Christmas) is celebrated either on 7 January, the traditional date in [Old Calendarists](/wiki/Old_Calendarists) [Eastern Orthodox Churches](/wiki/Eastern_Orthodox_Church), or on 25 December, with both dates being recognized as public holidays.[[124]](#cite_note-124)

### Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [*Trânta*](/wiki/Trîntă) (a form of [wrestling](/wiki/Wrestling)) is the national sport in Moldova. [Association football](/wiki/Association_football) is the most popular team sport in Moldova.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[Rugby union](/wiki/Rugby_union) is popular as well. Registered players have doubled, and almost 10,000 spectators turn up at every [European Nations Cup](/wiki/European_Nations_Cup_(rugby_union)) match.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The most prestigious [cycling race](/wiki/Cycling_race) is the [Moldova President's Cup](/wiki/Moldova_President's_Cup), which was first run in 2004.

Athletes from Moldova have won European medals in [Athletics](/wiki/Track_and_field), [Biathlon](/wiki/Biathlon), [Football](/wiki/Football) and [Gymnastics](/wiki/Gymnastics), World medals in [Archery](/wiki/Archery), [Judo](/wiki/Judo), [Swimming](/wiki/Swimming_(sport)) and [Taekwondo](/wiki/Taekwondo), as well as [Olympic](/wiki/Olympic_Games) medals in [Boxing](/wiki/Boxing), [Canoeing](/wiki/Canoeing), [Shooting](/wiki/Shooting), [Weightlifting](/wiki/Olympic_weightlifting) and [Wrestling](/wiki/Wrestling).

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

* [List of Moldova-related topics](/wiki/List_of_Moldova-related_topics)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

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## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links)

* [Template:Official website](/wiki/Template:Official_website)
* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Moldova, Republic of](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/moldova.htm) from *UCB Libraries GovPubs*.
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Moldova profile](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17601580) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News).
* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Template:Osmrelation-inline](/wiki/Template:Osmrelation-inline)
* [Key Development Forecasts for Moldova](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=MD) from [International Futures](/wiki/International_Futures).

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