
	<b>Republic of Moldova</b>	
<b>Area</b>	13,070 Sq. Mi. (5% larger than Maryland)	
<b>Capital</b>	Chisinau	
<b>Population</b>	2,604,000 (about the same as San Antonio metropolitan area)	
<b>Ethnic Groups</b>	75.1% Moldovans, 7% Romanians, 6.6% Ukrainians, 4.6% Gagauz, 4.1% Russians, 1.9% Bulgarians and others	
<b>Religions</b>	96.8% Orthodox Christian	
<b>Human Dev Index</b>	.767 (High); (v. USA .921 – Very high)	
<b>Currency</b>	Moldovan leu (1 USD = 18,84 Moldovan lei)	
<b>GDP (PPP)</b>	\$13.7 billion USD (World Bank 2021)	
<b>GDP (PPP) per cap</b>	\$5,231 (World Bank 2021)	
<b>Major Trade Partners</b>	European Union (59% of exports in 2022), Commonwealth of Independent States (22% of exports in 2022)	
<b>Main Organizations</b>	Member of the UN, Council of Europe, WTO, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States, and an official candidate for membership in the European Union since 2022.	

On the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, this republic declared its independence and took the name Republic of Moldova. It became a member of the UN in 1992. Moldova has faced several challenges:

- no prior tradition of self-government and sovereignty.
- it was difficult to agree on a constitution and find political leaders untainted by association with the highly centralized, authoritarian Soviet Union.
- the transition from a controlled economy to a free market economy has been rocky.

Since Moldova gained independence in 1991, it has coped with the de facto Russian-backed secession of Transnistria, a multiethnic and predominantly Russian-speaking region with about 10% of Moldova’s population and a substantial industrial base. Moldovan authorities support extending special status for the separatist region of Transnistria within a territorially whole and sovereign Moldova. OSCE is leading negotiations to find a comprehensive settlement for this conflict frozen for more than three decades.

The Republic of Moldova is a parliamentary democracy with competitive, multiparty elections. The constitution provides for executive and legislative branches as well as an independent judiciary and a clear separation of powers. The president serves as the head of state (elected by popular vote) and the prime minister serves as the head of government, appointed by the president with parliament’s support. Legislative authority is vested in the unicameral parliament (101 members elected by popular vote every 4 years).

The main economic sectors are agriculture - with a strong focus on fresh produce; wine-making - with internationally acclaimed brands; light industry - especially textiles and footwear; meat and dairy; constructions; cosmetics; automotives. Services account for more than 60% of all. Primary exports include food and beverages, agricultural products, apparel and transport equipment. main imports include energy resources, natural gas, petroleum products, machinery, vehicles, and chemicals.

**Fun Facts:** Moldova has the world’s largest wine cellar and celebrates National Wine Day. Most Moldovans speak 2 or 3 languages. Many Moldovans observe both the old and new Orthodox religious calendars. This means they celebrate Christmas and New Year’s twice. What a deal! Find out more: <https://moldova.travel/en/>