



EU- MOLDOVA

EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: SUPPORTING REFORMS, PROMOTING CHANGE



Fundamentals of the relationship

The EU's increasingly close relationship with the Republic of Moldova goes beyond cooperation, encompassing gradual economic integration and deeper political cooperation. Relations between the EU and Moldova have been guided by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and the ENP Action Plan.

In June 2014, the EU and Moldova signed an Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (AA/DCFTA), which represents a qualitative step forward in EU-Moldova relations. The first EU-Moldova Association Council took place in March 2015, and confirmed Moldova's commitment towards stronger ties with the EU. A new impetus to key reforms will be crucial for Moldova's political association and economic integration with the EU.

Moldovan citizens can travel visa-free to the Schengen area since 28 April 2014. Moldova has been a signatory of the Energy Community Treaty and a full member of the Energy Community since 2010.

The EU participates as an observer in the "5+2" negotiation process on the settlement of the Transnistrian conflict, and it continues to support a comprehensive, peaceful settlement based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova with a special status for Transnistria.

***EU Moldova Association
Agreement:
- signed in June 2014
- provisionally applied since
1 September 2014***



High Representative Federica Mogherini meets Chiril Gaburici, Prime Minister of Moldova

Visa free travel to the Schengen area

From 28 April 2014, Moldovan citizens can travel to the Schengen area visa-free, providing them with a tangible benefit of EU-Moldovan cooperation. Around 500 000 people benefitted of this opportunity in one year of implementation of the visa-free regime.

Support for reforms and economic development

EU assistance to Moldova from 2014 to 2017 is focusing on public administration reform, agriculture and rural development, police reform and border management. The selection of those priority sectors, was based on comprehensive consultations with the Government, Civil Society Organisations, multilateral and bilateral donors, International Financial Institutions and International Organisations.

In 2014, the EU committed €131 million of bilateral aid to Moldova. This includes a new programme on support for the DCFTA (€ 30 million), the European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD, worth €64 million) and a programme on public administration reform (€37 million).

Assistance in the implementation of AA/DCFTA

The EU's cooperation programmes are designed to accompany Moldova in its stronger political and economic relations with the EU following the signature of the AA/DCFTA. Helping the Government and the business community adapt to the challenges and opportunities of trade with the EU is a key priority. This is addressed from several angles: improving the policy framework and national legislation on small business and competitiveness, reinforcing quality infrastructure and market surveillance (metrology, standards, conformity controls), information campaigns, sustainable management of natural resources in rural areas, promoting the agro-food sector.

EU Financial Cooperation: between €335- 410 million for 2014-2017

Exports to the EU of some Moldovan products doubled or even tripled in the first six months of free trade area. These include honey, grapes, dried fruits, wheat, barley, sugar, leather articles, synthetic yarns and certain machinery. Exports of wine, carpets and some clothing products also increased significantly.



A new small and medium sized enterprises (SME) law as well as an action plan to implement the 2015-17 development strategy in the same sector were drafted in 2014, and Moldova became the first Eastern Partnership country to conclude an Agreement with the European Union on its participation in the Competitiveness of Enterprises and SME programme (COSME). Moldova also became the first Eastern Partner to be associated to the Horizon 2020 programme for research. By joining these two programmes, Moldova has the opportunity to increase competitiveness of its economy, through support to SMEs and to research and innovation, which are strategic areas for economic growth. In the fields of education and culture, Moldova also participated in the Erasmus + programme and finalised negotiations to participate in the Creative Europe programme.

Regional cohesion and rural development

The ENPARD programme also addresses a set of confidence-building measures aiming at reducing regional disparities and increasing the dialogue between regional and central authorities. These include: exchange of practices and study visits; promotion of local entrepreneurship; small-scale common infrastructure projects involving different municipalities.

During 2014 ongoing programmes and projects continued being implemented, as for example the Economic Stimulation in Rural Area (ESRA) programme. ESRA focuses on EU-Moldova cooperation in regional and rural development, and has a significant impact on growth, jobs and social inclusion. The programme targets less advantaged rural areas helping to create new opportunities for small business.