

EU-Moldova Relations

Political and legal foundations

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

The [Partnership & Cooperation Agreement \(PCA\)](#) came into force in July 1998 for an initial period of ten years, after which it is automatically renewed by consent of the parties. The PCA establishes the legal and institutional framework for bilateral relations between the EU and Moldova, sets the principal common objectives, and calls for activities and dialogue in a number of policy areas:

- ⇒ **Trade and economic co-operation:** Liberalisation of trade based on Most Favoured Nation treatment and the elimination of quantitative restrictions; legislative harmonisation (provisions governing goods, services, labour, and capital, as well as competition and intellectual property protection, aiming at bringing Moldova in line with the legal framework of the single European market).
- ⇒ Co-operation in the fields of **science and technology, energy, environment, transport, postal services and telecommunications** and a range of other areas such as **education and training, social and cultural cooperation.**
- ⇒ **Political dialogue** on domestic, regional and international issues of mutual concern such as observance of principles of democracy and human rights and political stability in the region (particularly related to the Transnistria region).
- ⇒ In **Justice and Home Affairs**, the PCA sets out specific areas for co-operation such as money laundering, measures to counter illicit production, and the fight against drugs.

A Protocol to the PCA was signed by the EU and Moldova on 30 April 2004 to extend the application of the agreement in full to the 10 new Member States that joined the EU on 1 May 2004. A further protocol to the PCA extending its application to Bulgaria and Romania was signed on 17 April 2007.

European Neighbourhood

The Commission launched its [European Neighbourhood Policy \(ENP\)](#) in its [Communication on Wider Europe of March 2003](#). The ENP was complemented further in a Communication in July 2003. The July communication introduced the concept of Neighbourhood Programmes and outlined a new financial instrument to support the policy for the period post-2006 ([European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument](#)) when the TACIS Programme came to an end.

Following endorsement of these concepts by Council conclusions in March and October 2003 respectively, the Commission further elaborated the policy initiative in a [Strategy Paper](#) in May 2004. Country Reports were published for the main countries included in the ENP, including a [Country Report on Moldova](#). The Council and European Council welcomed and endorsed the Commission's Strategy Paper in June 2004. The main instrument to implement the European Neighbourhood Policy is the [EU-Moldova ENP Action Plan](#) developed jointly by the EU and Moldova in the first part of 2004 and jointly adopted at the Cooperation Council on 22 February 2005. On 4 December 2006, the Commission launched its Communication on [Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy](#). Accompanying this Communication, the Commission published [progress reports](#) assessing progress made in implementing the Action Plans.

The EU Moldova Action Plan is a political document laying out the strategic objectives of the cooperation between Moldova and the EU. It covers a timeframe of three years. Its implementation helps to fulfil the provisions in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and encourages and supports Moldova's objective of further integration into European economic and social structures. Implementation of the Action Plan contributes to significantly advancing the approximation of Moldovan legislation, norms and standards to those of the European Union. In this context, it helps building solid foundations for further economic integration based on the adoption and implementation of economic and trade-related rules and regulations with the potential to

enhance trade, investment and growth. It furthermore helps to devise and implement policies and measures to promote economic growth and social cohesion, to reduce poverty and to protect the environment, thereby contributing to the long-term objective of sustainable development.

Priorities identified in the Action Plan

The priorities identified in the Action Plan cover the strengthening of administrative and judicial capacity; ensuring respect for freedom of expression and freedom of the media cooperation on economic and regulatory issues with the aim of improving the business climate and enhancing the long-term sustainability of economic policy, and sustained efforts towards a viable solution to the Transnistria conflict. Further collaboration on a number of cross cutting issues related to border management, management of migration and the fight against trafficking, organised crime and money laundering are also identified as priority for EU-Moldova enhanced cooperation. Moldova and the EU cooperate closely in implementing the Action Plan. The new Moldovan Government has put it at the centre of Moldova's reform programme.

The Institutional Framework

The bilateral institutionalised contacts are to a large extent determined by the PCA and include:

- The **Co-operation Council** (annual) at Ministerial/Commissioner level (EU-Presidency, European Commission, High Representative, Government of Moldova) has the overall responsibility for the running of the PCA. The latest meeting of the Cooperation Council took place in Luxemburg on 19 June 2007;
- **Co-operation Committee** meets at senior civil servants level and is chaired alternately by the European Commission and the Moldovan side;
- **Sub-Committees** meet at specialised experts' level and support the work of the Co-operation Committee. Currently, four subcommittees are operational:
 - Sub-Committee on **Trade and Investment**
 - Sub-Committee on **Financial, Economic and Statistical issues**
 - Sub-Committee on **Customs and Cross-border Cooperation, and Justice, Freedom and Security**
 - Sub-Committee on **Energy, environment, networks, science and technology, training, education**

The Parliamentary Co-operation Committee between the European Parliament and the Moldovan Parliament holds in principle two meetings a year - one in Brussels and one in Chisinau. The latest meeting took place in Strasbourg on 25-26 October 2006.

Within the Council of the European Union, the Council Working Group on Eastern Europe and Central Asia has general oversight of relations with Moldova.

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/moldova/intro/index.htm