

MOLDOVA



Country profile

Capital: Chisinau

Principal cities: Balti, Comrat, Cahul, Tiraspol

Official language(s): Moldovan (Romanian)

Other language(s): Russian, Gagauz

Population: 4.2 million (2004)

GDP per capita PPP: 1,729 int'l \$ (2004)

Currency: Leu (MDL)

Labour force activity rate (pop. aged 15-64): 70.5% (2005)

Higher Education in Moldova

Following independence in 1991, the Republic of Moldova experienced major growth and expansion in its higher education system. A number of private higher education institutions were created, and overall student numbers more than doubled between 1993 and 2005 (to 120,000).

Since 1991 the Moldovan higher education system has undergone continuous reform, covering structural and institutional organisation, humanisation and democratisation of the education process, curricular reform, learning and teaching techniques, and evaluation and assessment practices. The Ministry of Education holds overall responsibility for planning and funding higher education.

The Bologna process is high on the agendas of both higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education since 2000, when a pilot project on the ECTS was implemented, an accreditation agency was created, and the first master's degrees were introduced. The diploma supplement was introduced in 2002, and has been issued to all students in both English and Moldovan since 2005.

Moldova joined the Bologna process in 2005. As of the 2005/2006 academic year, the former specialist degree was replaced by a bachelor's degree lasting 3-4 years and a master's degree lasting 1-2 years. This new structure applies to the entire higher education system.

Higher education is provided by universities, academies, institutes and university colleges (which may operate autonomously or affiliate to universities). Admission to higher education is based on school diploma grades obtained by general secondary school and lyceum leavers. State grants are available to students with good results, while the remainder have to pay tuition fees. A new system, introduced in 2006, will make state grants conditional on exam results at university, thus ensuring that grants are consistently awarded to the best students, even if these initially commenced by paying their own tuition fees.

In 2006, a threshold system was introduced in order to deal with the demand for degrees with relatively few outlets in the labour market (such as law, modern languages and business). This system, which limits the number of students (grant-aided or fee-paying) enrolling in courses, has led to increased demand for courses with technical and engineering profiles.

Years of compulsory education: 11

Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education (ISCED levels 5 and 6)¹: 37.0 (2004)

Number of higher education institutions: 16 public; 20 private

Bologna signatory country since: 2005

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¹ The nation's total enrolment in tertiary education (regardless of age), as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education.

TEMPUS in Moldova

Participation of Moldova in Tempus

Moldova joined the Tempus programme in 1994. Its initial focus was on university management, curriculum development, and teaching staff retraining in the fields of social work, communication studies, modern European languages, and economics.

Since 2000, Moldovan non-academic actors — in particular government organisations, and to a lesser extent, enterprises — have gradually become more active in Tempus projects.

Under Tempus III, curriculum development activities focus mainly on the applied sciences and technologies, while university management projects emphasise accreditation and assessment mechanisms and the development of links to the non-academic world.

Moldovan higher education is dominated by its two major universities — the State University of Moldova and the Technical University of Moldova — which together attract nearly half the student population. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that most Tempus projects have been implemented by these two key institutions, although other universities, including those outside the capital, have consistently been involved in dissemination activities. The direct involvement of university representatives from outside the capital has been considerably enhanced since the introduction of IMGs in 2000.

Providing a framework for relations between the EU and Moldova is the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement; Moldovan implementation of the Tempus programme has also been shaped by the process of building the EHEA, with the country's strong interest in the Bologna process increasingly influencing its definition of cooperation priorities.

Impact of Tempus in Moldova

Tempus is the largest and longest running programme supporting higher education reform and cooperation in Moldova, with no other programme covering the same range of subjects.

Tempus supported the internationalisation of Moldovan universities in the 1990s by providing much-needed equipment and by laying the foundation for foreign language training for academic and administrative staff. Involvement in Tempus has also led to the development of sustainable university partnerships that have frequently led to research cooperation.

Since 2001 (when Moldovan participation on an annual basis became possible), Tempus has become a key instrument in university reform. Interest in the Bologna process originated as an initiative of the higher education institutions, which have systematically used Tempus projects to explore and pilot elements of the process, eventually proposing implementation at the national level. The academic community confirms that Moldova's speedy implementation of the Bologna principles has

been possible because of the practical experience gained in Tempus projects.

Tempus has strengthened links between universities and the labour market through the development of professionally oriented master's degree programmes, the refocusing of continuing education towards enterprise, and the establishment of early technology transfer and business incubation units. All the projects initiated through Tempus continue to function.

Participation in Tempus since: 1994

Number of JEPs: 22

Number of pre-JEPs: 9

Number of CPs: 7

Number of IMGs: 61

Number of SCMs: 10

Total budget allocated:

€ 8.155 million

(€ 3.355 million 1994-1999;

€ 4.8 million 2000-2006)

Total budget allocated to staff and student mobility in JEPs and SCMs:

€ 1.419 million (1994-1999)

€ 1.807 million (2000-2006)

Total budget allocated to IMGs:

€ 209,466 (2000-2006)

- Internationalisation
- Bologna process
- Unified curricula
- Governance
- Sustainability