

## **India - Moldova Relations**

India recognized Moldova on December 28, 1991 and diplomatic relations were established on March 20, 1992. India-Moldova relations are friendly and cordial. India and Moldova co-operate well on matters of mutual interest at multilateral fora. Moldova usually accredits its Ambassador in Baku, Azerbaijan, concurrently to India. India accredits its Ambassador in Bucharest. India-Moldova Foreign Office Consultations has been instituted and one session was held in January 2003 in Chisinau. Moldova has been supportive of Indian candidatures in multilateral fora.

Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Mr. D. V. Sadananda Gowda visited Moldova, 2-4 November 2016, during which he had wide-ranging discussions with the then President, Mr. Nicolae Timofti, Prime Minister, Mr. Pavel Filip, Deputy PM and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, Mr. Andrei Galbur, Minister of Information Technology and Communications, Mr. Vasile Botnari and with the Ministries of Health, Economy, Education, and Regional Development and Construction. He also delivered a public lecture at the Moldova State University.

The last substantive visit from MEA was that of MOS(PK) Mrs. Preet Kaur who visited Moldova from Sept 22-25, 2013 on an official visit. In addition to call on the President and Prime Minister, she had substantive meeting with the FM during which bilateral and multilateral issues were discussed. During her meeting with the Health Minister, MOS raised the problems faced by Indian pharmaceutical companies in Moldova concerning registration of new drugs. Another proposal regarding linkage of State Medical University of Moldova with a Medical College in India was also discussed. The Rector of State Medical University expressed keen interest in attracting more medical students from India. The Moldovan side also proposed that Indian investments could be made in production of Pharmaceuticals in Moldova. Proposals for cooperation and signing of MOUs between Chambers of Commerce of both countries were also discussed. This was the first high level visit from India after a long gap.

From the Moldovan side two high level visits took place in quick succession in 1993. In March the President of Moldova, Mircea Snegur visited India. This was followed by visit of their Vice Premier Coscodan in the same year. Deputy PM Valentine Kunayev visited India in 1994, but since then no visits from Moldova have taken place.

**Agreements:** During the State visit of Moldovan President Mircea Snegur in March 1993, the following six agreements were signed:

- Declaration on Principles and Directions of Cooperation;
- Agreement on Cooperation in Education, Science, Culture, Arts, Mass Media, Sports, Tourism and Youth Affairs;
- Protocol of Consultations between MEA and the Moldovan Foreign Ministry;
- Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation;
- Agreement on Economic & Technical Cooperation; and
- Agreement on cooperation in Science & Technology

## **Bilateral Trade and Investments**

Bilateral trade between India and Moldova have been low in the past few years, hovering around US\$ 10mn. In 2014-15, India exported goods worth US\$ 8.79 mn and imported goods valued at US\$ 1.43mn from Moldova. The trend continues in the current financial year as well with total trade at US\$ 5.06 mn for the period April-August 2015 around the half-year mark.

Major articles of **exports to Moldova** include pharma products, organic chemicals, meat, edible fruit and nuts, spices, tea, coffee, cereals, oil seeds, sugar and confectionary, salt, sulphur, stone, textile and garments, electrical machinery and equipment, footwear, cement etc.

Main articles of Indian **imports from Moldova** are Plastics and articles thereof, wool and woven fabric, iron, steel, copper, aluminum, electronic machinery, optic material etc.

Indian experience in IT and traditional medicine such as ayurveda and wellness regimens like yoga, meditation etc has attracted attention in Moldova which is keen on Indian investment.

There have been sporadic visits by commercial delegations from either side. Moldovan Chamber of Commerce and Industry visited India with a 7 member delegation to participate in the India International Trade Fair in New Delhi in 2004. Three Pharma delegations led by PHARMEXCIL visited Moldova in 2010, 2012 and 2016.

A Moldovan delegation headed by Mr. Victor Bodiu, Secretary General of the Government participated in the e-World Forum 2011, held in New Delhi from 1-3 August, 2011. Mr. Bodiu also met Mr. Sachin Pilot, Hon'ble Minister of State for Communication and Information Technology and discussed possibilities of cooperation in the field of IT.

Moldova is keen to increase its export of agricultural produce to India including its wines. Apart from IT and Pharma and medical devices, agricultural and industrial machinery and machine tools are commodities which could be looked at for greater economic cooperation.

### **ITEC and other exchanges:**

Moldova has significantly increased its utilization of ITEC slots since 2010. Moldovan citizens have utilized a variety of courses under ITEC programme, especially those in audit and IT environment and remote sensing. Moldovan diplomats have trained at the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs. Scholarships under the ICCR programmes have recently been offered to Moldova. Moldova utilized 3 ITEC slots during 2015-16 and 3 slots have been offered to Moldova under ITEC for the year 2016-17.

## **Cultural Relations:**

Moldova's national poet Mihai Eminescu (1850-1889) was interested in the ancient languages and literature of India and translated Franz Bopp's "Sanskrit Grammar and Glossarium Sanscritorum" into Moldovan [Romanian]. Eminescu was deeply influenced by his encounter with Indian thought and this found reflection in his works.

Bilateral cultural interaction has been limited in the recent past. "The Indian Alliance", an India-Moldovan Cultural Association, has been doing some cultural projection annually in Moldova. There is also an Indian restaurant in Chisinau.

On 25 June 2004, the Ambassador of India presented the Library of the State University of Moldova, Chisinau, with a set of books on Indian topics, translated into Moldovan [Romanian]. Ambassador Ajai Malhotra released two books in 2005 on Mihai Eminescu, the national poet of Moldova.

An exhibition "India My Love" displaying works by the well-known Moldovan photographer Mrs. Gulnara Vishku was held from 12-18 November 2004 at the National History Museum, Chisinau. Vishku's photographs of India were also published in the Autumn 2004 issue of the inflight magazine of "Air Moldova".

International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Chisinau in 2015 and 2016.

## **Indian Community**

The Indian community in Moldova numbers about 25. They were mostly medical students in the former Soviet Union who are now engaged in the pharmaceutical business. In addition, there are few medical students (125) in the Medical University in Chisinau. A cultural association of Indians in Moldova was formed in 2001 and is active in social and commercial activities and in touch with the Embassy.

## **Useful Resources:**

Embassy of India, Bucharest Website: <http://eoiromania.in/>

Embassy of India, Bucharest Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IndiainRomania/>

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