



Moldova

General Information



Population

2 457 783 (World Bank 2023)

2 423 300 (National Bureau of Statistics 2024)



Immigration

177 875 (Eurostat 2022)

104 438 (UN DESA Immigration Stock 2020)

177 875 (National Bureau of Statistics 2022)



Emigration

1 159 443 (UN DESA Emigration Stock 2020)

241 448 (National Bureau of Statistics 2022)



Working-age population

1 582 642 (World Bank 2023)

910 200 (National Bureau of Statistics 2024 Q3)



Unemployment rate

1.6 % (World Bank 2023)

3.6 % (National Bureau of Statistics 2024 Q3)



GDP

16 539 436 547.3 current prices USD (World Bank 2023)

300 466 300 000 MDL (National Bureau of Statistics 2023 (current prices MDL))



Refugees and IDPs

Refugees

121 480 (UNHCR 2024)

207 (Inspectorate General for Migration 2024, as of 8 July)

Asylum Seekers

1 839 (UNHCR 2024)

1 873 (Inspectorate General for Migration 2024, as of 8 July)

IDPs

0 (UNHCR 2024)



Citizenship

By Birth

Yes (GLOBALCIT 2022)

By Descent

Yes (GLOBALCIT 2022)

Years of Residency

6-10 (GLOBALCIT 2022)



Territory

33 851 km² (CIA World Factbook)

Migration Authorities

Responsible Body

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Line Ministries

Ministry of Foreign Affairs & European Integration

Ministry of Labour & Social Protection

State Chancellery

Agencies

General Inspectorate for Migration

General Inspectorate of Border Police

National Employment Agency (ANOFM)

Bureau for Relations with Diaspora

Security and Intelligence Service

Key Policy Documents

Programme on the Management of Migration Flows, Asylum and Integration of Foreigners (2022-2025)

The National Strategy 'Diaspora 2025'

The National Development Strategy 'European Moldova 2030'

Programme on Integrated Border Management 2022-2025

The Mechanism for coordinating the state policy in the field of diaspora, migration and development

2011 Law on the Integration of Foreigners in the Republic of Moldova

2010 Law on the Regime of Foreigners in the Republic of Moldova

Since 1990, the population of the Republic of Moldova has been steadily declining owing both to lower birth rates and considerable emigration, with the country experiencing negative **net migration** year after year. During the 1990s, there was a notable outflow of irregular migrants. However, from the 2000s onwards, enhanced legal channels led to a sharp increase in regular labour migration, a trend that continues today.

Between 2014 and 2023, the resident population of Moldova decreased by nearly **450 000** people. Simultaneously, the stock of Moldovan nationals living abroad, according to UN DESA, rose from **930 000 in 2015 to 1 160 000 in 2020**. According to **official data on border crossings**, 241 448 persons left Moldova in 2022 – almost twice as many as in 2014, marking the largest outflow in a decade. Most of those leaving are **young people** below 44 years of age. This ongoing outmigration presents challenges for a country with a population of just 2.5 million, making Moldova dependant on **remittances**, which exceeded 2 billion US\$ in 2023, corresponding to 12.3% of the country’s GDP. This situation also underscores the need for smart policies to capitalise on the vast Moldovan diaspora.

Unfavourable socio-economic conditions in Moldova make labour migration an attractive strategy. In 2022, some **93 000 Moldovans** went abroad for work or to seek employment for a period of less than a year, and another **126 000 Moldovans** either had a job abroad or planned to work abroad for a longer duration. EU Member States remain key destinations for Moldovan labour migrants. In 2023, preliminary data indicates that nearly **22,500 Moldovans** received their first residence permits in EU countries. Of these, approximately 9,600 were granted for employment purposes, while around 9,000 were issued for family reasons. The number of valid permits issued to Moldovans for employment reasons in the EU at the year-end constituted nearly **80 000 in 2022 and over 70 000 in 2023**, based on preliminary data. Poland issued the largest number of first-time work permits to Moldovan nationals, exceeding **8 000 in 2022 and approaching 6 000 in 2023**. Meanwhile, Italy continues to host the largest number of Moldovans with valid work permits, with over 60 000 in 2022 and more than 55 000 in 2023.

Immigration to Moldova for permanent residence remains low but has seen an increase in 2022 and 2023. In 2023, the country recorded **7 203 immigrants**, 42.4% of which arrived for work reasons, including investment, 38.7% to reunify with their families, 12.7% for studies, 3.7% for volunteering, and 2.5% for other purposes. The majority of them came from Russia (1796), Ukraine (1277), Türkiye (771) and India (468). The stock of international immigrants, as recorded by UN DESA in 2020, accounted to 104 438 persons, with 40 000 from Russia and 42 000 from Ukraine.

The outbreak of war in Ukraine in February 2022 triggered an influx of displaced persons into Moldova, stretching the country’s limited capacities and prompting the adoption of urgent measures, including the introduction of Temporary Protection on 1 March 2023. During 2023, Ukrainian citizens dominated (90%) among asylum seekers at the first instance, followed by Russian nationals (3.6%) and Syrian nationals (1%). **As of July 2024**, 2,502 asylum seekers were registered in Moldova’s asylum system, of which 207 with refugee status, 422 beneficiaries of humanitarian protection, and 1,873 cases under examination. Between 1 March 2023 and July 2024, 65,113 displaced people from Ukraine were registered in Moldova.

Beyond the immediate impact of the war in Ukraine, the conflict has accelerated Moldova’s rapprochement with the EU. The country applied for EU membership in March 2022, received candidate status in summer 2023, and began official negotiations in summer 2024. While the path to EU membership remains uncertain in length, it is expected to drive further reforms process in migration, asylum and border management in Moldova. The country has already enhanced cooperation with the EU through deployment of FRONTEX and EUROPOL officers (along the existing EUBAM), as well as the establishment of the EU Security and Border Management Hub in Chisinau. Moreover, already in early 2021, Moldova joined the European Migration Network as an observer state. In 2022, the country approved new sectoral programmes on *Migration Flows, Asylum, and Integration of Foreigners* and *Integrated Border Management*. That same year, the government also **approved** the National Development Strategy “European Moldova 2030”, outlining the strategic vision for the country’s development over the next seven years, with a strong focus on migration. Together with the National Strategy “Diaspora 2025”, both documents **address** a wide range of aspects covered by the Global Compact for Migration, including diaspora engagement in policy making, creating investment opportunities, protecting the rights of Moldovans abroad, and implementing return and reintegration programs. As of summer 2024, Moldova has over 13 valid readmission agreements with several EU Member States, Switzerland, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Türkiye, Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, and is negotiating similar agreements with several other countries from the Caucasus and Central Asia.

latest update: 28 August 2024

Relevant Publications

[Asylum seekers from the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian Countries in the EU](#)

[Labour migration from East to West: The example of foreign workers in Austria](#)

[Migration and Mobility in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: What to expect in times of COVID-19?](#)

[Moldova Extended Migration Profile 2008-2013](#)

[Moldova Migration Profile Light 2015](#)

[Moldova Extended Migration Profile 2010-2015](#)

[Implementation of the Association Agreement is the major challenge for Moldova](#)

[Labour emigration in Moldova is constantly increasing](#)

[Overview of the EU Mobility Partnership Instrument: Summary of the Initiatives in Georgia and Moldova](#)

[Understanding Migrants' Rights: A Handbook for the Republic of Moldova](#)

[Moldova Extended Migration Profile 2017-2021](#)

[EMN study 2023: Annual report on migration and asylum EMN Observer Country Statistical annex \(2023\)](#)