

# **M O L D O V A**

## **SECTION A**

### **Capital**

Chisinau 667,100 (1992 est.)

### **Area**

33,843 sq km (13,008 sq mi).

### **Form of government**

Republic

### **GDP—per capita**

Purchasing power parity—\$2,200 (1999 est.)

### **Population**

4,460,838 (July 1999 est.)

### **Ethnic composition**

Moldavian/Romanian	64.5%
Ukrainian	13.8%
Russian	13.0%
Gagauz	3.5%
Bulgarian	2.0%
Jewish	1.5%
Other	1.7%

### **Official language**

Moldovan

## **Minority languages**

Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz, Jewish, other

## **Legislation dealing with the use of languages**

*The Constitution of Moldova*, adopted on July 29, 1994

Two laws were passed in August of 1989: “*The Law on the status of the State Language in the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic*” and “*The Law on the function of language on the territory of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic*”.

These laws had two tasks; to correct the language policy “made in Moscow”, and also to stress the independence of the Moldavian from the Russian culture.

The Moldavian language was declared the State Language and should be applied in the political, economic, social and cultural sectors.

The Gagauzian language became the second State Language in the areas with a high proportion of Gagauz people in the local population. In the Gagauzian area every official must be able to speak three languages Moldovan, Gagauzian, and Russian.

The Russian language was recognized as the official lingua franca. Previously, the downgrading of Russian had been one of the reasons for the conflict in the Trans-Dniestr region, which is mainly inhabited by Russians. The identity of the Romanian and Moldavian languages was officially recognized. Cyrillic script was replaced with Latin script.

The law concerning the special legal Status of Gaguzia stipulates that throughout Gaguzia the official languages are Moldovan, Russian and Gaguzian. At the same time, there is the “*Law on spoken languages on the territory of the Republic of Moldova*”, which stipulates that, the State guarantees the use of the Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian, Iwrit, Yiddish and other languages used by ethnic minorities living on the territory of Moldova.

## **Background notes**

Present-day Moldova comprises a large part of the eastern half of the historic principality of Moldavia. At its largest extent, in the Middle Ages, the principality stretched from the Dniester River in the east almost to the Carpathian Mountains in the west. Much of the eastern half of Moldavia, between the Prut and Dniester rivers, was traditionally known as Bessarabia (Bessarabiya). Moldavian territory was divided in 1812,

when the Ottoman Empire took control of all the land west of the Prut River and Russia took control of the rest. The Russian government gave the name Bessarabia to the territory under its control so as to distinguish it from the neighboring Ottoman-controlled Moldavia.

In 1918 Bessarabia became independent and then united with Romania. Troops of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR, the successor to the Russian Empire) occupied Bessarabia in 1940. The Soviet government joined most of Bessarabia to part of the already existing Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR), across the Dniester River, to form the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. Romania regained Bessarabia in 1941 but lost it again to the USSR in 1944. When the USSR collapsed in 1991, the republic became the independent country of Moldova. Although independent from the USSR since 1991, Russian forces have remained on Moldovan territory east of the Nistru (Dniester) River. The Russians claim to be supporting the Slavic majority population (mostly Ukrainians and Russians) who has proclaimed a "Transnistria" republic. In addition to the region of Bessarabia, present-day Moldova also includes territory along the left bank of the Dniester known as Trans-Dniester. The remainder of the historic principality of Moldavia is now part of Romania and the Ukraine.

After declaring independence in 1991, Moldova signed the agreement which helped establish the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), an organization composed of former Soviet republics. Moldova became a formal member of the CIS in 1994. That year the country adopted its first post-Soviet Constitution. In the early 1990s secessionist movements among certain ethnic groups took hold in the Trans-Dniester region and in the Gagauz region in the south.

The country remained divided (during 1999), with mostly Slavic separatists controlling the Transnistrian region along the Ukrainian border. This separatist regime has entered into negotiations with the national Government on the possibility of a special status for the region. Progress in resolving the ongoing conflict has been blocked by the separatists' continuing demands for "statehood" and recognition of the country as a confederation of two equal states. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Russian Federation and the Ukraine act as mediators. The two sides generally have observed the cease-fire of 1992, which ended armed conflict between them, but other agreements to normalize relations often have not been honored. A Christian Turkic minority, the Gagauz, enjoys local autonomy in the southern part of the country. The Gagauz elected a new governor (bashkan) and 35 deputies to their popular assembly in free and fair elections in September 1999.

Declaration on state sovereignty signed on August 27, 1991

Note: Moldova is the Romance-language term for what, in Soviet times, was called Moldavia and what, historically, is Central Bessarabia—a territory between the rivers Prut in the West and Dniester in the East.

## **SECTION B**

### **Where does one observe language to be a problem in the country?**

According to the 1989 state language law, a citizen should have the option to choose which language to use in dealing with government officials or commercial entities. Officials are obliged to know Russian and Romanian/Moldovan “to the degree necessary to fulfill their professional obligations”. Since many Russian speakers do not speak Romanian/Moldovan (while educated Moldovans speak both languages), they argued for a delay in the implementation of the law in order to permit more time to learn the language. Parliament has since postponed implementation indefinitely. Addressing a minority concern, the Constitution provides parents with the right to choose the language of instruction for their children.

In October of 1999 the Parliament approved the Government’s decision to grant “district” status to Taraclia, a region in the south with a 64% ethnic Bulgarian majority. The vote reversed the results of the territorial-administrative reform begun in January, which had eliminated Taraclia’s district status and merged it into a region where Bulgarians would no longer constitute a majority. Voters in the Taraclia district approved a referendum in January not to be included in the larger district, with 88% of eligible voters participating and 92% voting in favor of the referendum.

In the separatist Transnistrian region, discrimination against Romanian/Moldovan speakers has continued. State schools are required to use the Cyrillic alphabet when teaching Romanian. Many teachers, parents, and students objected to the use of the Cyrillic script to teach Romanian. They believe that it disadvantages pupils who wish to pursue higher education opportunities in the rest of the country or Romania. The Cyrillic script was used to write the Romanian language in Moldova until 1989. “Moldovan”, as it was then called, was officially decreed during the Soviet era to be a different language from Romanian, which is written in the Latin alphabet. The 1989 Language Law reinstituted the use of the Latin script.

As a result of an agreement between the Government and the separatist authorities, eight schools in the separatist region obtained permission in

1996 to use the Latin alphabet, with salaries and textbooks to be supplied by the Moldovan Ministry of Education. These schools are considered private schools by the local authorities. They must pay rent for their facilities and meet local curriculum requirements, building codes, and safety standards. The Government has no budgetary provisions for the high rents asked for these facilities. As a result, classes were held in local homes or run in shifts in the few available buildings.

After delaying its opening and threatening to keep it closed, the separatist authorities allowed the Romanian Language School (Latin alphabet) in Tiraspol to open in September without restriction from the authorities. The school is operating three to four shifts per day to accommodate the number of students.

### **The use of language in everyday life e.g. education, broadcasting and other**

The use of the Moldovan or Russian languages in relations with administrative bodies and public services is the choice of every individual citizen. The Law also guarantees the use of Gagauzian in Gagauzia. In the localities with Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian and other ethnic groups, the language of communication is either the mother tongue of the respective minority or any other acceptable language (Article 6 of the Law on the Use of Spoken Languages on the Territory of the Republic of Moldavia).

National minorities have the right to pre-school, primary and secondary education in their native language. Language instruction in Moldova is provided in the following languages of national minorities: Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauzian, Bulgarian, Yiddish, German and Polish. Other minorities can learn their national languages optionally. Russian, Ukrainian and Gagauzian are all used as languages of instruction. Higher education and vocational-technical education is undertaken in Moldovan and in Russian. There is the Gagauzia University in Gagauzia. Mixed schools have parallel classes: Moldavian-Russian, Russian-Ukrainian, and Russian-Bulgarian.

The National Radio of Moldavia broadcasts the following specialized programs in the languages of ethnic minorities: Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauzian, Bulgarian, Yiddish and Roma. The Moldavian Television also broadcasts in the Russian, Gagauzian, Ukrainian, Jewish, Bulgarian, and Romany languages.

In the capital there are five national libraries: Ukrainian, Russian, Gagauzian, Bulgarian, Jewish. All of them are financed by the State.

### **Did the country ratify any international treaty dealing with the protection of minorities?**

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (December 10, 1948) adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III)

The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities was signed on July 13, 1996, ratified on November 20, 1997 and enacted on February 1, 1998.

### **What else can be found about languages and minorities?**

Russian became the official language of Moldova in 1944 upon Moldova's annexation to the USSR from Romania. Before this time, Romanian was the nation's official language (Also, during Soviet rule, Romanian-language materials published within the country were printed only in Cyrillic; this form of the Romanian language came to be known as "Moldovan").

During this period, fluency in Russian was essential for the people of the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic to perform social and professional functions, and to acquire government jobs. As a result, a large percentage of the non-Russian ethnic populations became bilingual, proficient in Russian as well as their own ethnic language. As time passed, however, the practical need for non-Russian ethnic groups, especially new generations, to know or learn their native language was non-existent, and resulted for many in the loss or suppression of that segment of their ethnic identity.

Since the acquisition of national independence in 1990, the Romanian language has been reinstated as the national language of Moldova, in an attempt by the Moldovan ethnic majority to encourage nationalism and independence, and to regain lost cultural heritage. Due to a number of cultural and political forces, many ethnic groups became bi- or tri-lingual, speaking their own language, as well as Russian, Moldovan, and/or another language of the former USSR. While under Soviet rule, Moldova's population developed into an extensively bilingual society, with Russian as the dominant language. Beginning in 1989, the national liberation movement served, in part, to return the nation to its pre-Soviet cultural past. Part of that process involved designating Romanian as the official language—an action overwhelmingly supported by ethnic-Moldovans. The lack of opposition initially encountered in non-Moldovan ethnic groups was, in part, a reflection of the bi- and tri-lingual abilities of the populace, who did not perceive such a change as a threat to their culture. Mistakes and delays experienced as the government initiated the language change began to aggravate the socio-political situation,

however, and social opposition to the new language grew. New laws adopted to regulate the national-linguistic environment did not satisfy any ethnic community, and resulted in political demonstrations of opposition.

Legislation was adopted in an attempt to facilitate the language transition. The laws attempted to acknowledge the interests of all national ethnic groups, while establishing a functional national language. The passing of legislation was confronted, however, not only by socio-political difficulties, but also conceptual and mechanical problems, including the country's lack of preparedness for initiating a new official language, due to lack of training material, as well as methodological and professional systems. Thus, although Romanian replaced Russian as the official language of Moldova, it was not done without difficulty or conflict. The process also served to create rifts between formerly integrated multi-ethnic communities.

The social attitudes of and towards ethnic groups in Moldova have changed dramatically in recent years. While under Soviet rule, the Moldovan government had no motivation to define or highlight ethnic majority and minority groups; under Soviet socialization practices, intensive migration and ethnic integration were encouraged in order to form a "Soviet" nation characterized by a uniform Russian speaking community. Due to Soviet policy, there was no established standards allowing native Moldovans - the ethnic majority - to become the political majority and respected social force in the nation.

As a result of the Soviet policy, Russian-speaking immigrants, although an ethnic minority, were able to obtain the highest social and political roles in the republic; there was no need for them to integrate psychologically or socially into the established cultural community, as the language and culture of the community had been modified to their advantage. Resulting from this policy was suppressed frustration and bitterness toward the Russian ethnic minority as they usurped the social and political roles of the Moldovan ethnic majority.

With the acquisition of independence, the native ethnic majority of Moldova has gained power, in order to avoid past difficulties experienced due to ethnic suppression, the government must prepare the nation for the change in the social and cultural roles by assisting in the adaptation of different ethnic groups to the political, cultural, linguistic and civil differences they are to experience under the new government.

## **SECTION C**

### **Legislation dealing with the use of languages**

#### ***Updated (2001)***

In July 2001, The Moldovan Parliament passed a *Law on the Rights of National minorities*.

A communist proposed *advertisement law amendment* to authorize commercials in the Russian language alongside the official Moldovan language was also passed in the summer of 2001. Max van der Stoep, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in the letter to the Moldovan Foreign Minister wrote: "The amendment in question provides in Article 8, paragraph 3, that advertisement must be in the State language, with the possibility also to include a translation into another language. Such a mandatory use of the State language in the private sphere of commercial advertising would be in contradiction of the freedom of expression as guaranteed by Article 32, paragraph 1, of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova and by the Moldova's international commitments and obligations. Equally, the proposed amendment would interfere with the freedom of enterprise as guaranteed by Article 1126, paragraph 2, of the Constitution. Unless the subject of an advertisement would concern a matter of legitimate public interest such as public health or national security, the requirement to use State language could not be justified under international standards. Accordingly, the proposed amendment should be withdrawn. Of course, this does not mean that the Government may not take steps to encourage the use of the State language through its effective promotion."

#### ***Updated (February 2002)***

One of the main goals of the Moldovan communist parliamentary group is to make the Russian language the second official language of the ex-soviet Republic of Moldova. The leader of this group stated that the Republic needs Russian as the state's second language in order to have a common language that can be understood by all ethnic groups.

On the other side, the committee for "de-russification" was set up in the Moldovan educational system. According to this committee, the educational system is suffering "the abusive and totalitarian measures of the communist government."

On February 11, 2002 the ruling Moldovan Communist Party lifted a ban on the opposition Christian Democratic Party (PPCD). PPCD was leading



the peaceful but not officially registered demonstrations daily since January 9 on the central square in Chisinau. PPCD leaders said that the demonstrations showed public opposition to the Communists' decision to institute Russian-language classes in Moldovan schools.

Ion Morei, the Minister of Justice, said that the PPCD was organizing the demonstrations, which have numbered up to 5,000 participants, to undermine what he called "national unity."

### ***Updated (April 2002)***

As written in the previous news, a group of communist deputies presented in the Parliament a draft law to give the Russian language the official status in the country. On March 4, 2002; however, the Moldovan Constitutional Court considered such a proposal not to be in line with either the Constitution or any of the international agreements signed by Moldova.

### ***Updated (October 2002)***

The existing legislative framework comprises the essential problems of national minorities:

- The use and the preservation of the mother tongue
- The right to mother tongue education
- The right to organize ethno-cultural associations
- The gratification of religious needs and etc.

The 1994 Constitution of the Republic of Moldova was built on the concept that "the Republic of Moldova is a single indivisible motherland for all its citizens" (Article 10/1) and "the state acknowledges and guarantees the right of all citizens to keep, develop and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity" (Article 10/2).

According to *the 1991 Law on Citizenship*, the "zero" variant was adopted, granting citizenship to everyone, who at the moment of adoption of the law lived on the territory of the republic on the permanent bases.

*The Law on Identification Documents* does not contain regulations about the ethnic origin of a person.

*The Law on Education* and *the Law on Functioning of Languages Spoken in Moldova* stipulates the essential principle according to which the state

guarantees the right to choose the language of instruction at all levels of education process.

Article 8 of the Law on Education stipulates that:

- 1) The state ensures, according to the Constitution and Articles 18, 19 and 20 of the Law on the Functioning of Languages the right to choose the language of education and upbringing at all levels of the educational process.
- 2) The right of citizens to be brought up and educated in their mother tongue is ensured by founding a sufficient number of educational institutions, classes, groups, and conditions for their functioning.
- 3) Studying of the state language in the Republic of Moldova is obligatory in all educational institutions. The requirements for studying and teaching the state language are established by the state educational standard...

Source: World Congress on Language Policies, Barcelona, April 16-20, 2002, "National Minorities Education in Moldova: The Legal Framework and Practice," by A. Stoianova, [http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article23\\_ang.html](http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article23_ang.html)

## **Background notes**

### ***Updated (October 2002)***

The representatives of the following nationalities live in Moldova: Russians, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Gagauz, Jews, Gypsies, Poles, and Germans. In comparison with the other states, representatives of the national minorities in Moldova do not constitute majority in certain area. Meanwhile, 90 percent of the Russian minority live in the urban areas, Ukrainians can be found in both urban and rural places.

Ethnic Russians and Ukrainians are descendants of peasants who settled in Bessarabia in 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Many came during the "Soviet Union period." Bulgarians and Christian Turkic people (Gagauz people) moved from the Balkan to Bessarabia after 1812 (the Russian annexation).

In 1940, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic was created after annexation of Bessarabia to the Soviet Union. The policy in the republic focused on "russification," to deny the fact that Moldovans and Romanians had been one nation, separated because of territorial claims by the Soviet Union. The first step after 1941 was to reform the Romanian script from the Latin to the Cyrillic alphabet. A cohort of

linguists worked to prove that the Moldavian language was independent of Romanian. One thesis said that Moldavian was an independent Eastern Roman language (Sergievski), another one proclaimed that because of intense contacts between Moldavians with Russians and Ukrainians, the formerly Roman language was transformed into a Slavic one (Ceban).

Being a part of the Soviet Empire, the basic education was possible in the national languages, but for higher education profound knowledge of the Russian language was necessary. So anyone, who wanted to improve his social status, had to learn Russian and thus adapt to Russian culture.

In the middle of 1960s, the situation deteriorated when tensions arose in the external relations between Romania and the Soviet Union and an anti-Romanian campaign was organized. Romanian books and films were prohibited, exchange programs were no longer possible. Russian became the official language, used especially in the administrative and economic sector. The share of non-Moldavian population was much higher in urban than in rural areas, and Russian was more or less a common language for all non-Russian nationalities in the Soviet Union.

The socio-linguistic situation started to change at the time of perestroika, launched by M. Gorbachov. Already in 1988, a commission on behalf of the Communist Party of Moldova investigated the necessity and worked out a concept for a possible language reform. Finally, two laws were passed in August 1989: the Law on the Status of the State Language in the Moldavian Socialist Soviet Republic and the Law on the Functioning of Languages on the Territory of the Moldavian Socialist Soviet Republic. The task of these laws was to correct the language policy “imposed by Moscow,” and to stress the independence of Moldovan and Russian culture.

Thus, the Moldovan language was declared the state language, used in the political, economic, social and cultural sector. The Gagauz language became the second state language in the areas with a high proportion of Gagauz population. The Russian language was declared a language of communication among nationalities. The “degradation” of the Russian language was one of the reasons for the conflict in the Transnistria region,<sup>1</sup> which is mainly inhabited by non-Moldovan speakers. Identicalness of the Romanian and Moldovan languages was officially recognized and the Cyrillic script was replaced by Latin.

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<sup>1</sup> A major split created between Moldovan and Russian-speaking population, including Russians, Ukrainians, Gagauz and Bulgarians, especially after Moldovan was declared the state language (1989) resulted that Russians proclaimed illegally the Transnistrian Moldovan Republic on the left bank of the Nistru River.

At the end of 1980s another separatist movement, acting in a strong concert with the Transnistrian separatists, emerged by Gagauz. The Gagauz-Halki (people of Gagauz) who had colonized the south of the country in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries also asked for self-determination for their 157,000 people.

Eventually, with changes in the leadership of the Republic of Moldova in 1994, the Gagauz backed away from their demands and accepted the legal authority of the Moldovan Government. A law had been passed that gave the Gagauz a special autonomy status, known as Territorial Administrative Unit of Gagauz-Yeri, as well as the right to declare independence if Moldova would change its political statutes regarding Gagauzia. Under the Constitution, Gagauzia received a large cultural and administrative autonomy that allowed it to preserve its cultural traditions and costumes, including the language.

Source: World Congress on Language Policies, Barcelona, April 16-20, 2002, "The Republic of Moldova: Dimension of the Gagauz socio-linguistic model," by Ana Coretchi (Moldova), Ana Pascaru (Moldova), C. Stevens (USA), [http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article15\\_ang.html](http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article15_ang.html)

### **Where does one observe language to be a problem in the country?**

#### ***Updated (March 2002)***

Representatives of ethnic minorities in Moldova support learning of the Russian language in schools but disagree with the way the government introduced this language as a compulsory study.

The Chairwoman of the Union of Ukrainians in Moldova said: "I believe the way they used to introduce the Russian language is not correct. No force is needed here; the Ministry of Education should explain the reasons for its moves before acting."

According to the other Ukrainian community leaders the authorities should be concerned more with the Ukrainian language teaching, as the Ukrainian minority is the largest community living in Moldova.

Chairman of the Belarus Community in Moldova said also that there exists another way to introduce the Russian language in the school curriculum "in order to avoid tension in our society."

Chairman of the Roma Association in Moldova is "not against the Russian language, but he categorically disagrees with the introduction by force of this study in school".

### ***Updated (July 2002)***

#### EDUCATION

A series of demonstrations have been taking place in Moldova's capital Chisinau since January 2002. They are organized by the opposition Christian-Democrat People's Party (CDPP).

The Moldovan protest movement comprises a wide range of participating organizations: media, civil society, intellectuals, youth, etc. According to the PACE (the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe) Draftsmen, the conflict between pro-Romanian and pro-Russian positions bears great risks.

The main sources of the troubles are certain educational reforms proposed by the Communist majority in power. The Romanian-speaking population protests against the laws providing for the Russian language and history education, as well the changes in regional and local government. The latter are already enforced.

The decision of the Moldovan Government from June 12, 2002 to forbid the form "the Romanian language and literature" in official acts and to replace it by "the Moldovan language and literature" has caused many protests. This also goes against the recommendations of the Council of Europe.

Moldovan is the State language, but its education seems to be a challenge. Even representatives of the Russian-language minority deplore the lack of knowledge and proficiency in Moldovan/Romanian, if not its inexistence. This proves to be a handicap for the relevant population in its relations with the government. Youngsters miss opportunities on the labor market because of insufficient linguistic capacities.

According to the draft government proposal, Russian will be an official language. It is difficult to establish the difference between the two concepts. The Russian language is a minority language, but it will preserve its position as a common language. The great majority of the population speaks it: it is the language of social and trade relations between the country's linguistic minorities.

Source: <http://www.eurolang.net/>, Eurolang, Brussels, July 3, 2002 by Emese Medgyesi

### ***Updated (October 2002)***

At the beginning of this year, the Moldovan government adopted a decision to introduce the Russian language as a compulsory subject in

pre-university institutions. This decision supported the revival of the Russian language and effectively ignored social needs of the minorities to learn Romanian.

From January public protests erupted in the center of Chisinau as a reaction to this effort of the Communist Parliament majority. According to the demonstrators it would violate the rights of the other national minorities (Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Gagauz, etc.) living in the country. Some parents of the non-Moldovan students, who believe their children should be integrated into Moldovan society and study in the Moldovan/Romanian language, expressed their disapproval and frustration with the proposal and signed several petitions to stop it.

The proportion of the Romanian population that is against mandatory education in Russian has not changed substantially (74 percent in 1992 and 69 percent in November 2001). By contrast, among the members of Ukrainian minority in 1992, only 19.5 percent believed that everyone should be taught Russian, however, in 2001, it was almost 53 percent (the questions were not fully identical). Among ethnic Russians, the percentage has increased from 20.1 to 65 percent.

Another effort of the communists was the proposal to amend the Constitution and to make Russian the second official language alongside Moldovan. Also the Bilateral Treaty between the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation signed at the end of 2001 contained a paragraph in the additional protocol stating that the Russian language must be declared the second official language besides Moldovan (Romanian).

According to the opinion poll conducted in November 2001, both these decisions (Russian – a compulsory subject, Russian – the second official language) were disapproved by about 58 percent of the population. The former was supported by 35 percent, and the latter by only 33 percent of the population. The proportion of Russians who believe that Russian should become the second official language has increased from 52.7 percent to 71 percent.

The following questions were asked in 1992:

- “The Romanian Language should be required for minorities”

80 percent of Moldovans, 43.2 percent of Ukrainians and 50.3 percent of Russians agreed

- “Each group should be required to learn only its own language”

13.1 percent of Moldovans, 37.4 percent of Ukrainians and 27.2 percent of Russians agreed

Source: World Congress on Language Policies, Barcelona, April 16-20, 2002, "The Republic of Moldova: Dimension of the Gagauz socio-linguistic model," by Ana Coretchi (Moldova), Ana Pascaru (Moldova), C. Stevens (USA), [http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article15\\_ang.html](http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article15_ang.html)

Minelres News, by Ionas Aurelian Rus, a graduate student (ABD) in the Department of Political Science at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, ionasrus@rci.rutgers.edu, February 2, 2002 from the letter to the Honorable Ambassador David H. Swartz, Chisinau

**What does it cost in terms of money, time and government resources to police the country's language restrictions?**

***Updated (October 2002)***

GAGAUZ

Gagauz identity remains confused because, as a consequence of totalitarian past and russification, the majority of people continue to speak Russian instead of their native language. Also, most Gagauz leaders are pro-Russian and they tend to reject Romanian Moldovans constituting the majority. Moldovan critics and foreign observers allege that Russian is the main language used in Gagauz government offices.

In response to Gagauz demands, the central government in 1992 established a new University in Comrat. This university was established in spite of there had already existed a Department for National Minorities at the State Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga," in Chisinau ensuring higher education accessibility for minorities and a sufficient number of teachers in the communities populated by Gagauz and Bulgarians minorities. Because until now the subjects at the University of Comrat have been taught in Russian, young people are not familiar with either the Romanian or Gagauz languages.

Source: World Congress on Language Policies, Barcelona, April 16-20, 2002, "The Republic of Moldova: Dimension of the Gagauz socio-linguistic model," by Ana Coretchi (Moldova), Ana Pascaru (Moldova), C. Stevens (USA), [http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article15\\_ang.html](http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article15_ang.html)

## **The use of language in everyday life, education, broadcasting and other**

***Updated (October 2002)***

### EDUCATION

The annual statistics before 1989 in different educational institutions showed the diversity of nationalities among pupils and teachers, but only two languages of instruction. In 1989, 59.4 percent of students were taught in Moldavian and 40.6 percent in Russian.

After 1989 the situation has not changed significantly when teaching at all levels was conducted in two languages, Moldovan and Russian. The languages of national minorities as well as foreign languages are studied as a separate subject in some schools. In other schools a number of subjects are taught in them. If we consider a national minority school to be the school, where the language of the majority of the population is obligatory, but all other subjects are taught in national minority languages, then there are only several experimental schools (classes) with the Ukrainian, Yiddish, and Bulgarian languages of instruction. Russian still remains the primary language of education for national minorities.

Currently, there are four types of minority schools in the country:

- Schools with the Russian-language instructions, where representatives of different minorities traditionally study
- Schools with Russian as a medium of instruction, where mother tongue (Ukrainian, Gagauz, Bulgarian) is studied as a mandatory subject, three hours per week in grades 1-9; and two hours per week in grades 10-11 in a general secondary school and in grades 10-12 in a lyceum
- Schools and classes with the Russian language of instruction, where mother tongue is studied as a subject and in addition one to three other subjects are taught in it
- Schools and classes with a native language (Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Polish, German) as a medium of instruction

In all those types of schools the Moldovan language is obligatory in all grades.



Today from 634,691 pupils 508,954 (80.2 percent) are of Moldovan ethnic origin, 42,790 (6.74 percent) belong to Ukrainian ethnic group, 34,762 (5.47 percent) are Russians, 31,416 (4.95 percent) belong to Gagauzian minority, 10,834 (1.7 percent) to Bulgarian ethnic group, 1,055 (0.16 percent) to Jewish minority, 1,755 (0.28 percent) are representatives of Roma people and 3,125 (0.49 percent) belong to other minority groups.

The majority of children belonging to national minorities study at schools with the Russian language of instruction. Thus, from 1,489 pre-university institutions (primary schools, gymnasiums, general secondary schools and lyceums) 260 (17.4 percent) are with the Russian language of instruction and 114 (7.6 percent) have separate classes in Russian and Moldovan.

Seventy-eight percent of the total number of children are instructed in the Moldovan language; 131,574 (21.8 percent) study in the Russian language; 374 (0.06 percent) pupils are instructed in Ukrainian and 171 (0.02 percent) pupils in the Bulgarian language. There are two schools where Jewish history, culture and languages (Hebrew and Yiddish) are studied.

While the Gagauz movement for autonomy has resulted in increased attention devoted to the language in schools and media, it has not influenced the use of Russian as a main language of instructions. All of 36 schools and 16 lyceums (29,483 pupils), Pedagogical College and the Comrat State University in Gagauzia teach in Russian with the exception of a single school in Vulcanesti and a lyceum in Comrat, which use Moldovan. However, Gagauz children study their own language (3 hours per week) in primary classes and in secondary schools as a subject. Moldovan is a compulsory subject in all schools, though to find qualified teachers, who wish to live and work in Gagauzia is a problem.

The Ukrainian language is studied in 34 schools and 3 lyceums (5,984 pupils) (Transnistrian area is not included). The Bulgarian language is studied in 27 schools and 3 lyceums (7,925 pupils).

One of the realities of minority schools is the need to learn four languages: mother tongue (Ukrainian, Bulgarian, etc.), state language (Moldovan), the Russian language and one foreign language (English, German, French, etc.).

- Mother tongue education for ethnic minorities is a basis for the development of personality, preservation of national identity, preservation and development of minorities' culture and social integration. Therefore, respect for the principle of mother tongue education is an absolute must.

- Moldovan must be the second language because it is one of the main conditions to integrate a person to socio-political, economic and cultural life of the republic.
- Russian should be also obligatory, taking into account the long-lasting cultural tradition, geo-political and economic situation of the country.
- Democratization of Moldovan society favors conscious study of foreign languages as a way of expansion of personal possibilities and a tool of European integration.

## TEACHERS

Training of minority teachers is another very important issue. Conditions are created to train teaching personnel for pre-schools and primary schools with the Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz and Bulgarian languages of instruction. Specialists in Russian, Ukrainian, Gagauz and Bulgarian philology are trained at four state universities: Moldovan State University, Pedagogical State University "Ion Creanga" (Chisinau), Pedagogical State University "Aleco Ruso" (Balti), Comrat State University (Comrat, Gagauzia) and one private university in Chisinau (Slavic Private University).

Personnel for the Russian language kindergartens and primary schools is being trained in Pedagogical college "Alexei Mateevich" (Chisinau), Bendery Pedagogical College and Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga." Balti State Pedagogical University trains teachers with double qualification "Romanian and Russian languages."

Teachers for kindergartens and primary schools with the Ukrainian language of instruction and specialists with the qualification "Romanian and Ukrainian languages" are prepared at Lipcani Pedagogical College and Balti Pedagogical University.

Training of teachers with the qualification "Romanian and Gagauz Philology" is carried out in Comrat State University and Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga" (Chisinau). Teachers for Gagauz kindergartens and primary schools are trained at Comrat Pedagogical College "Mihail Ciakir."

Pedagogical personnel for Bulgarian pre-schools and primary schools are trained at Taraclia Pedagogical College and Lyceum "Saint Kiril and Metody." Teachers with double qualification "Romanian and Bulgarian philology" are prepared at Pedagogical State University "Ion Creanga" and Comrat State University.

Students' language and pedagogical practice is organized at Moldovan educational institutions as well as in the institutions in Russia, Ukraine and Bulgaria.

Source: World Congress on Language Policies, Barcelona, April 16-20, 2002, "National Minorities Education in Moldova: The Legal Framework and Practice," by A. Stoianova, [http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article23\\_ang.html](http://www.linguapax.org/congres/taller/taller3/article23_ang.html)

## APPENDIX A

### MAP OF MOLDOVA



## **APPENDIX B**

### **MOLDOVA - CONSTITUTION**

(Constitution as adopted on 29 July 29 1994)

#### **Article 10**

(2) The State recognizes and guarantees all its citizens the right to preserve, develop and express their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity.

#### **Article 13**

(1) The national language of the Republic of Moldova is Moldovan, and its writing is based on the Latin alphabet.

(2) The Moldovan State acknowledges and protects the right to preserve, develop and use the Russian language and other languages spoken within the national territory of the country.

(3) The State will encourage and promote studies of foreign languages enjoying widespread international usage.

(4) The use of languages in the territory of the Republic of Moldova will be established by organic law.

#### **Article 16**

(2) All citizens of the Republic of Moldova are equal before the law and the public authorities, without any discrimination as to race, nationality, ethnic origin, language, religion, sex, political choice, personal property or social origin.

#### **Article 35**

(2) The State will enforce under the law the right of each person to choose his/her language in which teaching will be effected.

(3) In all forms of educational institutions the study of the country's official language will be ensured.

#### **Article 78**

(2) Any citizen of the Republic of Moldova over 35 years of age that has been living in the country for at least 10 years and speaks the state

language can run for the office of President of the Republic of Moldova. The appropriate organic law shall determine the manner of selecting the candidates aspiring to this office.

### **Article 118**

(1) Legal cases will be heard in the Moldovan language.

(2) Those persons who do not know or are unable to speak Moldovan have the right to take knowledge of all documents and items on file and to talk to the court through an interpreter.

(3) In accordance with the law legal hearings may also be conducted in a language that is found to be acceptable by the majority of the persons participating in the hearing.

Note: The complete text of the Constitution of Moldova can be found at then Internet site maintained by the T.C. Williams School of Law's Constitution Finder Project at the University of Richmond.

## **THE DNIESTER MOLDAVIAN ACT ON THE LANGUAGES OF DNIESTER MOLDAVIAN REPUBLIC**

### **Introduction**

There have always lived people of different nations and languages in the territory of the Dniester Moldavian Republic and all languages both in their standard form and in local and historical dialects are sources of not just national but World heritage.

Language dualism and multi-language standards have become a common rule in this populous country and that was also proved by the first Constitution of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialistic Republic in 1924. Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine were claimed official languages and the status of equality was given to all other languages used in the territory.

Legal equality of all languages stated in the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Dniester Moldavian Republic was approved at the Session of the Highest Soviet of Dniester Moldavian Republic on 8th December 1990.

The Dniester Moldavian Republic guarantees equal development and preservation of languages used in its territory and creates legal guaranties in the field of language and culture development for all inhabitants regardless their nationality.

Advertising hostility, disdain and contempt of any language, or any other breach of Dniester Moldavian language laws, is unjustifiable, as it is creating obstacles, limits and privileges in language use which is contradictory to the national policies stated in the Dniester Moldavian Constitution.

The Act does not apply to using languages in non-official relations, in the army or in religious communities.

## 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

### **Article 1. (Language Sovereignty and Citizens' Rights)**

The Dniester Moldavian Republic guarantees language sovereignty of all citizens regardless their origin, social and property status, race and nation, sex, education, religion, employment and other circumstances.

Each citizen has an equal natural and legal right to choose freely a language of communication and to use it in all spheres of life.

It is unjustifiable to limit the rights of any citizens connected with the use of their mother tongue or other languages of CIS in different political and social spheres.

### **Article 2. (Right to Work and Other Constitutional Rights, Freedoms and Interests Independent of Language)**

It is illegal to set any direct or indirect limitations to constitutional rights, freedoms and interests, to grant any direct or indirect advantages concerning Dniester Moldavian citizen rights to work based on their abilities to speak the languages of CIS with the exception of cases when Dniester Moldavian legislation requires special language skills necessary for specific positions.

### **Article 3. (Legal Language Status)**

All languages possess equal legal status and gain equal protection in the territory of the Dniester Moldavian Republic.

The official language status is equally assigned to the Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine language.

In individual districts, priority is given to any of the above stated languages by the Republic or local authority's decision or by referendum which takes place in the Republic or respective administrative district.

#### **Article 4. (Language Development)**

The Dniester Moldavian Republic represents a material base for full development of all official languages and other languages used in its territory and supports their research. The Highest Soviet adopts a state program of language development in the Dniester Moldavian Republic involving steps to guarantee language education and education in the languages, pedagogic studies, development of literature, science and art, TV and radio broadcasting, book, magazine and newspapers publishing, professional, text-book and dictionary publishing as well as other activities taking place at national culture centers, regional societies and clubs, out-of-school clubs and other places aiming at learning, teaching and promoting all Dniester Moldavian languages.

Language program is financed from the Republic and local budgets and it can be additionally supported by national cultural centers and national and regional societies or private donations from citizens.

Program implementation is supervised by legislative and executive bodies of the Dniester Moldavian Republic.

#### **Article 5. (Communication Between Nationalities)**

Cultural and historical tradition in the Dniester Moldavian Republic has proved Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine languages to be equal means of communication among people, nevertheless, such status may be given to other language used in the Dniester Moldavian Republic.

#### **Article 6. (Written Standard of Moldavian Language)**

The original Cyrillic alphabet is the standard of any written communication in the Moldavian language.

Enforcing the use of the Latin alphabet in the Moldavian language may be prosecuted.

#### **Article 7. (Fund and Language Heritage Protection)**

The Dniester Moldavian Republic via state archives, libraries, museums, scientific and research institutes supports research, protection, development, preservation and use of Moldavian language heritage as well as of other languages in the territory.

#### **Article 8. (Language Protection Guaranty)**

Legal language status is guaranteed and protected in all social, legal and economic spheres.



Social language protection is enforced by scientific language policy aimed at equal preservation, study and development of all languages used in the territory of the Dniester Moldavian Republic.

Legal language protection includes responsibility of those citizens and legal entities who breach the Law provisions as well as other language norms of the Dniester Moldavian Republic.

Economic language protection is carried out through the state language development programs and their material and financial support.

## 2. THE LANGUAGES OF THE STATE ADMINISTRATION

### **Article 9. (State Administration Bodies)**

Within the whole structure the state administration bodies (e.g. sessions of the Soviets of People's Deputies in the Dniester Moldavian Republic on all levels, the Highest Soviet of Nations sessions, Nations and Republic Soviet sessions, committees, commissions, Presidium of the Highest Soviet, Government etc.) communicate in one of the official languages (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine), which has been agreed by the respective or higher administrative body.

Those individuals who cannot speak the official language of the state administration have the right to decide for their mother tongue or any other CIS language. If necessary, the state administration body involves an interpreter.

### **Article 10. (Acts and other Legal Documents)**

The acts and other legal documents of the Republic and local state administration in the Dniester Moldavian Republic are issued in the Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine languages. All of them are official and equal in their legal force.

### **Article 11. (Parliament Elections and Referendum)**

Preparation and administration of Parliament election and referendum in the Dniester Moldavian Republic is carried out in the language spoken by majority of people in the region.

Election documents are provided in one of the official languages according to the decision made by the Central Election Commission.

Voting cards for election and referendum are provided in the language used by the citizens of the electoral district.

### 3. JUSTICE, STATE ARBITRATION, NOTARY AND PARISH REGISTER

#### **Article 12. (Court and Misdemeanor Proceedings)**

In the courts of the Dniester Moldavian Republic either one of the official languages (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine) or the language of majority in respective region is used.

Court participants who cannot speak the language of the proceeding have the right to learn the court documentation, to participate in the proceeding using an interpreter and to appear in the court in their mother language.

In cases specified by laws, participants may ask for investigation and court documentation translated into their mother language or other language they speak.

Impeachment of language provisions in the court proceeding is a reason for cancellation of the court decision.

#### **Article 13. (Misdemeanor Suit)**

Participants of misdemeanor suit who do not speak the language of suit have the right to appear in their mother language and use the service of an interpreter.

Documentation is provided in an official language (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine). An interpreter is assigned to a person who does not speak the language of suit and documentation.

#### **Article 14. (Arbitration)**

The Action of Arbitration involving parties presented in the Dniester Moldavian Republic is maintained in one of the official languages - Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine.

The Action of Arbitration involving a party presented at the territory of a CIS country is maintained in Russian.

Documents in Moldavian or Ukraine languages sent to arbitration bodies in another country of CIS shall be translated into Russian.

#### **Article 15. (Notary Actions)**

Notary documentation of the state notary bureaus, Executive Committees of Municipal, Local, Regional and Town Soviets of People's Deputies is provided in the language of legal action in the respective territory.

If the person appealing to the notary or to the Executive Committee of the Local Soviet of People's Deputies does not speak the language of documents, they are provided in an official language (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine) or a language chosen by the applicant.

#### **Article 16. (Parish Register)**

Parish register documents are written in the language of legal action used in the respective region.

#### **Article 17. (Prosecution Supervision)**

The documents of prosecution supervision are written in an official language (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine) decided upon the Dniester Moldavian Republic Government in coordination with the Executive Committees of Local Soviets of People's Deputies. That is also the language of correspondence with citizens, state and co-operative entities and institutions, interest associations of the Dniester Moldavian Republic.

The language of communication between Prosecution of the Dniester Moldavian Republic and other CIS countries prosecutions is Russian.

#### **Article 18. (Legal Aid)**

Legal aid to citizens, companies, institutions, organizations and other entities is provided in an official language (Moldavian, Russian, Ukraine) or a language accepted by both parties.

### **4. THE LANGUAGES OF STATE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION BODIES, ENTITIES, INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **Article 19. (State and Public Administration Bodies, Entities, Institutions and Organizations)**

Sessions, meetings and other organization and legal forms of activities in state and public bodies, entities, institutions and organizations are maintained in an official language (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine) agreed by the participants of the sessions.

The citizens who do not speak the language of session are provided an interpretation into their mother language or the language they understand. Participants in the sessions and conferences are entitled to use the language they speak. If necessary, their performance is translated.

## **Article 20. (Communication Between Citizens and State and Public Bodies, Entities, Institutions and Organizations of the Dniester Moldavian Republic)**

Citizens are entitled to appeal to state and public bodies, entities, institutions and organizations with their instigation, requests and complaints in an official language of the Dniester Moldavian Republic.

Responses to instigation, requests and complaints are provided in the language of the citizen's inquiries.

## **Article 21. (Administrative Documents)**

Administrative documents and documentation of state and public bodies, entities, institutions and organizations is maintained in an official language (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine). The language of documents is decided by a state and public body, company, institution or organization council (Soviet) of employees in coordination with the Dniester Moldavian Republic Government and the Executive Committee of Local Soviets of People's Deputies.

## **Article 22. (The Official Correspondence)**

Official correspondence and other forms of formal relations among state and public bodies, entities, institutions and organizations on the territory of the Dniester Moldavian Republic are maintained in an official language (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine).

The language of correspondence and other forms of official communication is decided by the Dniester Moldavian Republic Government taking into account the state and public body structure and the place where an entity, institution or organization works.

## **Article 23. (The Languages of Service)**

Entities, institutions and organizations offering services (trade, medical service, local transport, communal service, inter-city transport) use an official language (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine), other language of CIS nations, or a foreign language which enables the highest efficiency of performance.

## **Article 24. (Energy and Transport Systems in CIS Countries)**

Bearing in mind the aim to ensure secure and smooth performance of energy and transport systems around CIS countries (road, rail, air, pipeline transport, air, underground and underwater electric

transmission lines), the documentation and controllers communication is in Russian.

#### **Article 25. (Business Agreements)**

Agreements between entities, institutions and organization of the Dniester Moldavian Republic and entities, companies, associations and organizations of other states are written in the official languages of the Dniester Moldavian Republic and the language of another party.

### **5. THE LANGUAGE OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE**

#### **Article 26. (Education)**

Each citizen has the right to choose freely the language of education of his/her children and the right is guaranteed by the state.

The Dniester Moldavian Republic considering the interests of nations living in a certain region founds kindergartens and schools with education in the Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine language.

Work groups, classrooms, study groups and other forms of education in mother languages are organized in kindergartens and schools of different type.

Parents or tutors are entitled to choose kindergarten or school with respective language.

#### **Article 27. (CIS Language Study Programs)**

The Dniester Moldavian Republic creates conditions for learning mother languages and other CIS national languages.

In all types of schools the students take up one Dniester Moldavian official language compulsory.

#### **Article 28. (Language Entry Exams)**

Those who apply for a study at secondary professional schools and universities of the Dniester Moldavian Republic pass a language entry exam in one of the official languages (Moldavia, Russian or Ukraine). Entry exams of other subjects are in the languages taught in the Dniester Moldavian schools.

#### **Article 29. (Science)**

In the World of science equal status is guaranteed to Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine language.

Free choice of language is guaranteed for scientific research and publishing.

Thesis and their public presentation is carried out in the language of the scientific research considering the possibilities of specialized scientific board.

Conferences, symposiums and other republic and local events are carried out in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine upon the agreement of their participants. Provided that the subject of event concerns other nations living in the Republic, it is carried out in mother language.

Interpretation service is provided.

### **Article 30. (Moldavian Language Scientific Research)**

In the field of Moldavian language scientific research the Dniester Moldavian Republic:

- organizes and guarantees scientific research of Moldavian language history, research of the nation's unique character, tradition, culture and language;
- creates necessary scientific, material and technical basis for studies of historical literary heritage written in the Cyrillic alphabet;
- takes care of preparing scientific and pedagogic experts who can further work in the sphere of science and education.

### **Article 31. (The Language of Culture)**

The Dniester Moldavian Republic guarantees equal use of the Moldavian, Russian, Ukraine and other languages in cultural life of the country.

The Republic takes care of translations into official languages (Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine) as well as into other languages of the nations, guarantees publishing of artistic, political, scientific and other literature, films, audiovisual works of art and different pieces of art being the cultural values of CIS and World nations.

### **Article 32. (National Culture Center, Clubs, Organizations and Regional Associations)**

The Dniester Moldavian Republic supports creation and establishment of culture centers, national clubs, organizations and regional associations contributing to language, tradition and culture development.

National culture centers, national clubs, organizations and regional associations are given large responsibilities. They are entitled to organize social and political, education events, develop folk customs, publish scientific, non-fiction and fiction literature and periodicals; prepare radio and TV programs in mother language, submit requests for opening new kindergartens, schools, groups and departments at secondary professional schools, universities and culture centers, establish creative teams and carry out works beneficial to the public.

## 6. THE LANGUAGE OF IT AND COMMUNICATION

### **Article 33. (IT)**

IT in the Dniester Moldavian Republic is being developed in Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine.

Computers used in state and public offices, entities, institutions, organizations shall enable working in all official languages.

### **Article 34. (Official ID Documents)**

Id's and other types of personal cards, such as labor cards, army cards, certificates, school diplomas, birth, marriage and death certificates are written in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine.

Rules of name and father's name transcriptions follow the orthography of national standard language forms. Their reproduction into other languages is done according to the norms of the respective language. Any occurring disputes may be settled in court after finding legally relevant facts.

### **Article 35. (Mass Media)**

Official languages of the Dniester Moldavian mass media (TV, radio broadcasting, newspapers, magazines etc.) are Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine, though the languages of other nations may appear in media.

### **Article 36. (Post and Telegraph Service)**

Postal and telegraph correspondence between citizens, state and public bodies, entities, institutions, organizations is accepted in Moldavian, Russian and Ukraine, cross-border correspondence (with the exception of foreign countries) in Russian.

Post and telegraph offices supply stamps, envelopes, blank sheets etc. marked in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine.

### **Article 38. (Announcements and Decrees)**

Official announcements, decrees, posters, billboards and other visual information tables are written in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine.

### **Article 39. (Goods Labels and Marks)**

The goods processed and produced in the Dniester Moldavian Republic are labeled in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine. Decision for the most appropriate language is taken by the executive committee of the local authority considering the consumers interests.

Exported goods are labeled either in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine or in the language ordered by the customer.

Brand names are written in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine.

## **7. NAMES AND HEADLINES**

### **Article 40.**

Names of state and public authorities, entities, institutions, organizations are written in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine in the following graphic order: top left is the place for Moldavian, lower middle for Russian and top right for the Ukraine name. Other possibilities to place the names are decided by Executive Committees of Local Soviets of People's Deputies.

### **Article 41. (Toponyms and Cartography)**

The names of towns, administrative districts, streets and squares are in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine, whereas additional name in other national language may be added if the majority of people belong to this nation. Reproduction is provided in transcription.

Toponyms out of the territory of the Dniester Moldavian Republic are written in official languages in transcription from the respective language.

Cartographic edition for the Dniester Moldavian Republic are issued in Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine.

### **Article 42. (Personal Names)**

Names and surnames are used in harmony with national tradition, national language standards and reproduction rules of foreign names.



## 8. THE LANGUAGES IN COMMUNICATION WITH CIS AND OTHER COUNTRIES

### **Article 43. (Relations Between the Dniester Moldavian Republic and Other Countries)**

The Dniester Moldavian consulates, trade chambers and other foreign representations

based abroad work in one of the official languages (Moldavian, Russian or Ukraine).

Contracts, agreements and other international documents signed on behalf of the Dniester Moldavian Republic are written in one of the official languages and the language of the second party or in a language agreed by all parties involved.

The language of negotiation with foreign country representatives are maintained in a language agreed by the parties taking into consideration international agreements and practice.

### **Article 44. (Communication Between the Dniester Moldavian Republic and the CIS Countries)**

Relations between the Dniester Moldavian Republic and other CIS members are maintained equally in one of the official languages of the Dniester Moldavian Republic or in another agreed language.

## 9. LEGAL PROTECTION OF LANGUAGES USED IN THE DNIESTER MOLDAVIAN REPUBLIC

### **Article 45. (Responsibility for Breaching the Language Laws)**

Advertising hostility or contempt towards any language of the CIS nations including that of the Dniester Moldavian Republic, creating obstacles, limits or privileges to their use contradictory to the Constitution principles of national policy in CIS countries and the Republic, breaching other language laws of CIS and Dniester Moldavian countries is unjustifiable and illegal.

Any action of the Dniester Moldavian state and public bodies, officers or representatives of entities, institutions, organizations that is contradictory to the laws on development and use of languages in CIS countries may be prosecuted according to the laws.

An officer refusing to accept an instigation, request or complaint or failing to take the necessary measures may also be prosecuted.

## **Article 46. (Language Law Observance Supervision)**

Language Law Observance Supervision is carried out by the Highest Soviet of the Dniester Moldavian Republic and the Dniester Moldavian Government.

The President of Dniester Moldavian Republic

September 8, 1992

## **LAW OF THE MOLDAVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC ON THE STATUS OF THE STATE LANGUAGE OF THE MOLDAVIAN SSR**

(Adopted on August 31, 1989)

For the purpose of removing deformations in the language construction in the Moldavian SSR, of state protection of the Moldavian language which is one of the basic prerequisites for the existence of the Moldavian nation within its sovereign ethnic and state formation, for the assurance of its overall functioning on the territory of the Moldavian SSR and regulation of ethnic and language relations in the Republic, the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic decrees:

To supplement the Constitution (Basic Law) of the Moldavian SSR by Article 70 of the following contents:

### **Article 70**

The Moldavian language shall be a state language of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic. The state language shall be applied in political, economic, social and cultural life and shall be based on the Latin script.

The Moldavian SSR shall ensure the protection and development of the language of the Gagauz people residing primarily on the territory of the Republic.

The Moldavian SSR shall ensure on its territory the conditions for the development and application of the Russian language as a language of inter ethnic communication in the USSR, as well as languages of people belonging to other nationalities.

The procedure for the application of languages and their interaction with the state language of the Moldavian SSR shall be established by the legislation in force and the Law of the Moldavian SSR "On the Functioning of Languages on the Territory of the Moldavian SSR".

Chairman of the Presidium

of the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR

M.Snegur

Member of the Presidium

of the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR

D.Nidelku

## **LAW OF THE MOLDAVIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC ON THE FUNCTIONING OF LANGUAGES ON THE TERRITORY OF THE MOLDAVIAN SSR**

(Adopted on September 1, 1989)

Confirmation by the Constitution (Basic Law) of the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic of the status of the Moldavian language as a state language shall be aimed to promote the full sovereignty of the Republic and to create necessary guarantees for its comprehensive and overall application in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life. The Moldavian SSR shall encourage Moldavians residing outside the territory of the Republic, and taking into account the reality of the Moldavian-Romanian language identity, and also Romanians residing on the USSR territory to get education and meet their cultural needs on their native language.

Granting the status of the state language to the Moldavian language, the Moldavian SSR shall ensure the protection of constitutional rights and freedoms of citizens of any ethnicity residing on the territory of the Moldavian SSR irrespective of a language used under the conditions of equality of all citizens before the Law.

For the purpose of state protection and development of the Gagauz language the

Moldavian SSR shall create necessary guarantees for the successive expansion of its social functions.

The Moldavian SSR shall ensure on its territory the conditions for the use and development of the Russian language as a language of inter ethnic communication in the USSR, as well as languages of people of other nationalities residing in the Republic.

## CHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

### **Article 1**

In accordance with the Constitution (Basic Law) of the Moldavian SSR the Moldavian language shall be a state language of the Moldavian SSR and shall be applied on the basis of Latin script. The Moldavian language as a state language shall be applied in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life, and shall function therefore as a language of inter ethnic communication on the territory of the Republic.

The Moldavian SSR shall guarantee free teaching of the state language to all residents of the Republic at the level necessary to perform professional functions.

### **Article 2**

The state, Gagauz or Russian languages shall be the languages of official communication in the public life at places of residence of the majority of the population of the Gagauz nationality.

### **Article 3**

The Russian language as a language of inter ethnic communication in the USSR shall be applied on the territory of the Republic along with the Moldavian language as a language of inter ethnic communication; it ensures the real national-Russian and Russian-national bilingualism.

### **Article 4**

The Moldavian SSR shall guarantee the usage of Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian, Hebrew, Yiddish, Gipsy languages and languages of other ethnic groups residing on the territory of the Republic to meet their national and cultural needs.

### **Article 5**

The present Law shall not regulate the usage of languages in private relations, professional activity of the railway and air transport (with the exception of servicing passengers), as well as in military units and institutions within the jurisdiction of the USSR Ministry of Defence, in military units of the USSR KGB and the USSR Ministry of Interior.

## CHAPTER II.

### RIGHTS AND GUARANTEES FOR A CITIZEN TO CHOOSE A LANGUAGE

#### **Article 6**

In relations with the bodies of the state authority, state administration and public organizations, as well as with enterprises, institutions and organizations located on the territory of the Moldavian SSR the language for oral and written communication - Moldavian or Russian - shall be chosen by a citizen. In localities inhabited by people of Gagauz nationality a right of a citizen to use in these relations the Gagauz language as well, shall be guaranteed.

In localities where the majority of the population are of Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian or other ethnicity, the native or other acceptable language shall be used for communication.

#### **Article 7**

For the high level administrative officials, for the officials of bodies of state authority, state administration and public organizations, as well as for officials of enterprises, institutions and organizations, who due to their professional duty communicate with citizens (public health, public education, culture, mass media, transportation, communications, trade, service sphere, housing and communal services, organs providing for the law and order, emergency and rescue services, etc.), irrespective of ethnic belonging, for the purpose of assurance of a citizen's right to choose a language, the requirements with respect to the knowledge of the Moldavian, the Russian and, in localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality, the Gagauz languages at the communication level sufficient to perform professional duties shall be established. The volume and level of the knowledge of languages shall be defined under the procedure established by the Council of Ministers of the Moldavian Republic in accordance with the legislation in force.

#### **Article 8**

At the congresses, sessions, plenary sessions, conferences, meetings, rallies and other actions organized in the Moldavian SSR the choice of a language by their participants shall not be limited.

## CHAPTER III.

### LANGUAGES IN BODIES OF STATE AUTHORITY, STATE ADMINISTRATION AND PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS, IN ENTERPRISES, INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

#### **Article 9**

The working language in bodies of state authority, state administration and public organizations shall be the state language introduced stage by stage. Translation or interpretation into Russian shall be provided.

The language for office work in bodies of the state authority, state administration and public organizations shall be the state language. If necessary, the documents shall be translated into Russian.

In localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality the working language and the language for office work in bodies of state authority, state administration and public organizations shall be the state, Gagauz or Russian languages.

The language for meetings and office work in the bodies of state authority, state administration and public organizations in localities where the majority of the population are of Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian or other ethnicity shall be the state, native or other acceptable language.

#### **Article 10**

The acts of the bodies of the state authority, state administration and public organizations shall be drawn up and submitted in the state language with the subsequent translation into the Russian language, in localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality - in the state language, Gagauz or Russian language with the subsequent translation.

The acts of the local bodies of state authority, state administration and public organizations in the territories where the majority of population is of Ukrainian, Russian, Bulgarian or other ethnicity, can be submitted in the native or other acceptable language with the subsequent translation into the state language.

#### **Article 11**

In the written communication of the bodies of the state authority, state administration and public organizations to a citizen, the Moldavian or Russian language shall be used, in localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality - the Moldavian, Gagauz or Russian language. Upon

issuance of documents the Moldavian or Russian language, or the Moldavian and Russian languages shall be used upon a citizen's choice, in localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality - the Moldavian, Gagauz or Russian language, or the Moldavian, Gagauz and Russian languages.

The bodies of the state authority, state administration and public organizations, enterprises, institutions and organizations shall accept and consider documents submitted by citizens in the Moldavian or Russian language, in localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality - in the Moldavian, Gagauz or Russian language. The translation into the Moldavian or Russian language should be attached to documents submitted in other languages.

## **Article 12**

Office work in enterprises, institutions and organizations located on the territory of the Moldavian SSR, shall be carried out in the state language. Technical standard documentation may be used in the original language.

With due regard for the demographic situation, production process requirements, office work in the enterprises, institutions and organizations specified by the Council of Ministers of the Moldavian SSR upon the proposals of the district and city Soviets of people's deputies can be carried out also in the Russian or other acceptable language.

Correspondence among the enterprises, organizations and institutions located on the territory of the Republic shall be effected in the state language and the language for the office work.

## **Article 13**

Correspondence among the bodies of the state authority, state administration and public organizations, as well as between them and the enterprises, institutions and organizations located on the territory of the Moldavian SSR shall be effected in the state language or other acceptable language.

## **Article 14**

Documentation and other information forwarded outside the territory of the Moldavian SSR shall be drawn up in the Russian or other acceptable language.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE LANGUAGE FOR PROCEEDINGS IN CRIMINAL, CIVIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CASES, FOR ARBITRATION, NOTARY,

BODIES FOR REGISTRATION OF ACTS OF CIVIL STATUS

### **Article 15**

The proceedings in criminal, civil and administrative cases in the Moldavian SSR shall be effected in the state language or in the language acceptable for the majority of persons participating in them.

The participants in a case who do not know the language in which the proceedings are effected, shall be ensured the right to be acquainted with the materials of the case, to participate in the court and investigation proceedings through an interpreter, as well as the right to make a statement and to give a testimony in the native language.

The investigation and court documents in accordance with the procedure established by the legal procedure shall be handed over to the accused, defendant and to other persons participating in a case after being translated into a language they know.

### **Article 16**

The bodies of the state arbitration shall carry out their activity in the state language or in the language acceptable for the parties in a dispute.

### **Article 17**

Notary work in the state notary's offices and executive committees of the district, city, town and village Soviets of people's deputies, as well as office work in the bodies for registration of acts of civil status of the Moldavian SSR shall be effected in the state or Russian language.

In the executive committees of the local Soviets of people's deputies the documents shall be drawn up in the state language and upon citizens' wish - in the Russian language as well; in the notary's offices and bodies for registration of acts of civil status - in the state and Russian languages.



## CHAPTER V.

### LANGUAGE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE

#### **Article 18**

The Moldavian SSR shall guarantee the right to have a pre-school, general secondary, specialized secondary, vocational training and high education in the Moldavian and Russian languages and shall create conditions for the exercise of the right of citizens of other nationalities residing in the Republic to the upbringing and education in the native language (the Gagauz, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Hebrew, Yiddish and other languages).

#### **Article 19**

The pre-school institutions and schools providing general education shall be opened in accordance with the single language principle.

Office work, meetings, audio and visual information shall be carried out in them in the language of upbringing and education.

The pre-school institutions and schools providing general education on the principle of bilingualism shall be opened in those localities where the number of children and students does not allow to open pre-school institutions and schools providing general education in accordance with the single language principle. Meetings and audio and visual information shall be carried out in them on equal grounds in the relevant languages of upbringing and education, and office work - in the state language.

#### **Article 20**

In the specialized secondary, vocational training and high education institutions education shall be guaranteed in the state and Russian languages to acquire professions necessary to the Moldavian SSR. To meet economic and cultural requirements of the Republic, groups of students studying in the languages applied on the territory of the Moldavian SSR (the Gagauz, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Yiddish and other languages) shall be established. In special national groups the teaching of specialized disciplines shall be carried out in the native language of pupils and students.

#### **Article 21**

In educational institutions of all levels the study of the Moldavian language as a discipline - in classes and groups providing education in the Russian or other languages (for students of Gagauz and Bulgarian

nationality - within the volume necessary to communicate) and of the Russian language - in classes and groups providing education in the Moldavian and other languages shall be guaranteed.

Pupils and students upon the graduation from the educational institution shall pass the final examination in the Moldavian or Russian language accordingly; that creates conditions for the expansion of the areas of communication in the whole territory of the Republic.

## **Article 22**

The Moldavian SSR shall create the necessary conditions for the development of the Moldavian and Gagauz national science and culture, as well as for scientific and cultural activities in other languages which are applied in the Republic. Defence of theses shall be carried out in the Moldavian, Russian or other languages determined by the relevant specialized council.

## **Article 23**

Scientific and practical conferences, symposia and seminars, other meetings at the republican level shall be held in the state language (with the translation into Russian), and the meetings at the Union level - in the Russian language.

## **CHAPTER VI. LANGUAGES IN NAMES AND INFORMATION**

## **Article 24**

Localities and other geographic entities in the territory of the Moldavian SSR shall have a single official name in its initial Moldavian and, accordingly, Gagauz forms (without translation and adaptation) subject to historical traditions of a given locality. The correct writing of the names of localities and other geographical entities shall be established in accordance with the special reference books.

The names of squares, streets, lanes, city districts shall be formed in the state language without translation (in localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality - in the Gagauz language), and in rural areas where the majority of the population is of Ukrainian, Russian or Bulgarian ethnicity - in the acceptable language.

## **Article 25**

The names of ministries, state committees and departments, enterprises, institutions and organizations and their structural units shall

be formed in the state language with translation into the Russian language, and in localities inhabited by people of the Gagauz nationality - in the Gagauz language as well. The names cited in quotation marks shall not be translated but transcribed.

## **Article 26**

The proper name of a citizen of the Moldavian SSR of Moldavian ethnicity shall be composed of a name (or several names) and family name (single or double). The family name shall not be altered by gender, the patronymic shall be used without suffixes. When translating the Moldavian names and family names into other languages the specificity of their writing in the Moldavian language shall remain without adaptation.

The spelling of names and family names of representatives of other nationalities residing in the Republic shall not be regulated by the present Law.

## **Article 27**

The official letterheads, texts of seals, stamps and postmarks shall be produced in the state and Russian languages, in the relevant localities - in the state, Gagauz and Russian languages.

Forms (cards) used in the social sphere (telegraph services, saving banks, institutions providing consumer services to the population, etc.) shall be produced in the state and Russian languages (in the relevant localities - in the state, Gagauz and Russian languages) and shall be filled upon the wish of a citizen in one of the languages of a form (card).

## **Article 28**

Signs with the names of the bodies of state authority, state administration and public organizations, enterprises, institutions and organizations, signboards with the names of squares, streets, lanes, localities and other geographic entities shall be produced in the state and Russian languages, in the relevant localities - in the state, Gagauz and Russian languages and shall be placed in the left side (on the top) in the state language and in the right side (below) in the Russian language, in the relevant localities - in the left side (on the top) in the Gagauz language, in the centre (below) in the state language, in the right side (lower) in the Russian language.

## **Article 29**

The texts of public announcements, notifications, advertisements and other visual information shall be designed in the state language with the translation, if necessary, into the Russian language, in the relevant localities - in the state, as well as in the Gagauz and the Russian language.

Names of the goods and products, labels (tags) of the goods, marking, instructions for goods produces in the Republic, as well as any visual information presented to the population of the Republic shall be designed in the state and Russian languages.

In all occasions the texts of the visual information shall be written in the order provided for in the Article 28 of the present Law. Print of the texts in the state language should not be of a smaller size than in other languages.

In the rural areas where the majority is the population of the Ukrainian, Russian or Bulgarian ethnicity, the visual information can be designed in the relevant languages.

## **CHAPTER VII. STATE PROTECTION OF LANGUAGES**

### **Article 30**

The heads of the bodies of the state authority, state administration and public organizations, as well as of the enterprises, institutions and organizations located in the territory of the Moldavian SSR, shall bear personal responsibility for the non-observance of the requirements of the present Law within their competence in accordance with the legislation in force.

### **Article 31**

The propaganda of animosity, neglect of languages of other nationalities, creation of obstacles for the functioning of the state language and other languages in the territory of the Republic, as well as infringement upon the right of citizens on language grounds shall entail responsibility in accordance with the procedure established by the legislation.

### **Article 32**

Control over the observance of the legislation on the functioning of languages in the territory of the Moldavian SSR shall be carried out by the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR through a specially established

Commission, and in districts (cities) - the relevant Soviets of people's deputies of the Moldavian SSR.

Note: We acknowledge with thanks data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

## **LAW OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL MINORITIES AND THE LEGAL STATUS OF THEIR ORGANIZATIONS**

Demonstrating its devotion to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international legal acts on human rights, including the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;

confirming and developing the fundamental rights, liberties and obligations of citizens, set forth in the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova;

taking into account the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the people of Moldova that has been established over the history;

proceeding from the international legal principles according to which the protection of national minorities, and their rights and liberties are an inalienable part of the protection of human rights;

The Parliament adopts the present organic law.

### **CHAPTER I**

#### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

**Art. 1.** – In the present law, persons belonging to national minorities shall include persons who reside on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, have Moldovan citizenship, possess ethnical, cultural and linguistic features that differ from the majority of the population (Moldovans) and consider themselves to be of a different ethnical origin.

**Art. 2.** – Any person belonging to a national minority has the right to freely choose whether to be considered as such and this choice or the exercise of his/her rights related to such a choice shall not be to his/her disadvantage.

**Art. 3.** – Relations arising in the context of realization by persons who live on the territory of the Republic of Moldova and are its citizens of their rights and liberties related to their belonging to national minorities shall be governed by the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, the

present law, other legislative acts as well as international treaties and agreements to which the Republic of Moldova is a party.

## CHAPTER II

### FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL MINORITIES

#### **Art. 4. –**

(1) The state guarantees equality before the law and equal protection before the law to persons belonging to national minorities.

(2) Any kind of discrimination based on the national minority affiliation is prohibited.

#### **Art. 5. –**

(1) The State assumes the obligation to facilitate the creation of necessary conditions for the persons belonging to national minorities be able to preserve, develop and express their ethnical, cultural, linguistic and religious identities.

(2) The State ensures that scientific research in the field of history, language and culture of the national minorities shall be conducted.

(3) The historic and cultural monuments of the national minorities shall be protected by the State.

#### **Art. 6. –**

(1) The State guarantees realization of the rights of the people belonging to national minorities to pre-school education, middle school, high school and professional, undergraduate and graduate education in Moldovan and Russian, and shall also create conditions for the realization of their rights to education and training in their mother tongue (Ukrainian, Gagauz, Bulgarian, Jewish, etc).

(2) With a view to ensuring the academic process of educational institutions in which teaching is done partially or integrally in the languages of national minorities, the State shall contribute to the development of curricula and teaching materials, as well as to training of teaching staff, cooperating with other countries in this area.

(3) People belonging to national minorities shall have the right to get undergraduate and graduate education in their country of descent, as

well as in other countries on the basis of international treaties and agreements.

(4) People belonging to national minorities and their organizations are entitled to create, in accordance with the law, pre-school institutions and private educational institutions of all levels. Teaching of the Moldovan language and literature, as well as of the history of Moldova in all educational institutions is mandatory.

**Art. 7.** – Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to have free use of their mother tongue, both in written and verbal form, to have access to information in this language, to disseminate it and to exchange information.

**Art. 8.** –

(1) The state shall ensure the publication of normative acts, official communications and other information of national importance in the Moldovan and Russian languages.

(2) In the localities which, in accordance with Art. 111 of the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, have been granted a special autonomy status, the normative acts of local importance, official communications and other information shall be published also in other official languages established by the respective laws.

(3) In the districts in which persons belonging to national minorities constitute a considerable part of the population, the acts of the local public administration shall be published in the language of such minority, if necessary, and at the same time in the Moldovan and Russian languages.

**Art. 9.** – The state guarantees that the modification of the administrative and territorial organization of the Republic of Moldova will not pursue the modification of the ethnic and demographic composition of the territories. Upon the making of such modifications, there shall be taken into account the local public opinion including the opinion of persons belonging to national minorities.

**Art. 10.** – The name of localities, streets, institutions and public places shall be indicated in the Moldovan and Russian languages, and, in the localities that have been granted a special autonomy status, also in other official languages, established by the respective laws.

**Art. 11. –**

(1) Public information regarding health care, maintenance of public order and safety of citizens, as well as visual information in institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Prosecutor's Office, in medical institutions from municipalities and cities, in transportation means, at bus, railway and riverboat stations, in airports, and on motorways shall be in the Moldovan and Russian languages.

(2) In the localities that have been granted a special autonomy status, such information stipulated by para.(1) may be also in other official languages established by the respective laws.

(3) In the localities in which persons belonging to a national minority constitute a significant part of the population, the information stipulated by para.(1) may be also published in the language of the respective minority, upon necessity.

**Art. 12. –**

(1) Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to appeal to public institutions in writing or verbally in the Moldovan or Russian languages and to obtain the response in the language in which the application was formulated.

(2) In the localities that have been granted a special autonomy status, the language of communication with public authorities may be one of the official languages established by the respective laws.

(3) In localities where persons belonging to national minorities constitute a significant part of the population, the language of communication with public authorities may also be the language of the respective national minority.

**Art. 13. –**

(1) Persons belonging to national minorities and their organizations shall have the right, in accordance with the law, to establish mass media institutions as well as to publish literature in the language of national minorities.

(2) The state shall ensure the transmission of programs in the language of national minorities on the national radio station and national TV channel.

**Art. 14. –** Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right, in accordance with the law, to determine their attitude towards religion,



especially to choose their religious confession as well as to carry on, individually or jointly, religious activity of enlightenment in the mother tongue or other acceptable language, to perform rituals, to maintain religious buildings and use religious literature and objects necessary for performance of the respective rituals.

**Art. 15.** – Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to observe national holidays and to commemorate their historical dates, to participate in the performance of the traditional rituals of their people, to use their national symbols privately.

**Art. 16.** –

(1) Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to use their first name, surname and patronymic (if used in their mother tongues), including in official documents, in a form acceptable in their mother tongue.

(2) If the mother tongue of a person belonging to national minorities uses an alphabet different from the Latin alphabet, his/her first name, surname and patronymic shall be transliterated in the Moldovan language in accordance with its grammar norms of transliteration of names of foreign origin.

(3) It shall be mandatory to take into account the will of the respective person with respect to the use of the right established by Art. 17 paragraph (1) in case of registration of civil status documents and preparation of the identity documents.

**Art. 17.** – The state shall contribute to facilitating humanitarian contacts of persons belonging to national minorities with their historical motherland.

### CHAPTER III

#### ORGANISATIONS OF PERSONS BELONGING TO NATIONAL MINORITIES

**Art. 18.** – Persons belonging to national minorities may exercise their individual rights by joining together, in accordance with the law, into organizations (associations, unions, communities, societies, etc.) of an enlightening, cultural, religious and charitable nature.

**Art. 19.** –

(1) Organizations of persons belonging to national minorities shall have the rights that are granted, in accordance with the legislation in force, to the public associations.

(2) No organization of persons belonging to national minority may claim monopolized representation of the interests of the respective minority.

**Art. 20. –**

(1) Organizations of persons belonging to national minorities shall enjoy the state support in realization of their programs in the field of culture, science, education, enlightenment, historical research, charity.

(2) Some programs established by para.(1), of particular interest selected through a contest, may be supported financially by the state.

(3) The agency responsible for selection, financing and control of the use of the funds distributed according to para. (2) shall be the Department for Interethnic Relations.

(4) Organizations of persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to receive and use, in accordance with the law, donations made by legal and physical persons.

**Art. 21. –** Organizations of persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to collaborate with institutions and departments of other countries that have authority over problems of interest to the relevant organizations in terms of realization of their statutory objectives.

**Art. 22. –** In case of development and promotion of the policy in the field of culture and education of national minorities, the Government, ministries, departments, local government bodies shall consult organizations of persons belonging to national minorities interests of which are affected in the respective decisions.

## CHAPTER IV

### RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT

**Art. 23. –** Representation of persons belonging to national minorities in Parliament and local councils shall be obtained as a result of elections in accordance with the legislation in force.

**Art. 24. –** Persons belonging to national minorities shall have the right to approximately proportional representation in the institutions of the executive branch and those of the judicial branch of all levels, in the army, in the law enforcement agencies.

**Art. 25. –**

(1) The agency responsible for promotion of the state policy in the field of interethnic relations including implementation of the present law shall be the Department for Interethnic Relations.

(2) Under the Department for Interethnic Relations there will function an advising body, the Coordination Council, which will comprise leaders of ethno-cultural associations as well.

(3) The House of Nationalities shall be subordinated to the Department and it shall represent the cultural and organizational center of the national ethnic and cultural organizations.

(4) The General Director of National Relations Department shall be appointed by the Government with the consent of the Parliament Commission for Human Rights and National Minorities.

CHAPTER V

FINAL PROVISIONS

**Art. 26. –** The realization of the rights and liberties of persons belonging to national minorities presumes fulfillment by such persons of their obligations before the state of the Republic of Moldova and may not limit the legitimate rights and interests of other persons.

**Art. 27. –** In the present law, nothing may be interpreted to jeopardize the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova.

**Art. 28. –** If international legal acts in the field of human rights which the Republic of Moldova has joined establish provisions other than those of the legislation of the Republic of Moldova regarding matters of fundamental human rights and liberties, including rights of persons belonging to national minorities, the provisions of the international legal norms and treaties shall apply.

**Art. 29 –** Within a period of 3 months the Government shall submit proposals to the Parliament on needed amendments in the legislation in force to be in line with the present law; adopt the necessary legal acts which will ensure implementation of the present law.

PRESIDENT of the Parliament  
OSTAPCIUC

EUGENIA

Chisinau, 19 July 2001

No. 382-XV

Note: We acknowledge with thanks data from the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

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