

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF

MOLDOVA

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Moldova's small mineral industry was primarily engaged in the mining and production of industrial minerals and products, including cement, dimension stone, gypsum, limestone, and sand and gravel. As of 1996, the sector entitled "mining of quarries and sand pits" accounted for 0.8% of Moldova's total industrial output (Ministry of Economy and Reforms, Moldovan industry trends, accessed March 1, 1999, at URL <http://www.moldova.md/DEPART/DEPSTAT/1996/EN/18.htm>). Moldova also had a steel minimill in Rybnitsa with the capacity to produce 800,000 metric tons per year of crude steel. More than 90% of the country's industrial raw materials and more than 98% of its mineral fuels were imported from Russia.

In 1997, Moldova's gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 1.3% compared with that of 1996. It was the first positive rate for the GDP in the last 7 years and was attributed to a particularly good year in agriculture. Since 1992, economic activity in Moldova has steadily declined because of many factors, including increasing prices for imported energy resources, upon which Moldova was almost totally dependent. Also, the conflict in the separatist region of Transnistria complicated the country's transition to a market economy. Transnistria, despite its small size (about 12% of the territory and 17% of the population of the country), is an economically important region; before the disintegration of the Soviet Union, it accounted for more than one-fourth of the republic's GDP and 35% of its total industrial output (Ministry of Economy and Reforms, Moldovan industry trends, accessed March 1, 1999, at URL <http://www.moldova.md/DEPART/DEPSTAT/1996/EN/18.htm>). Moldova's major industrial facility, the minimill in Rybnitsa, is in the Transnistria region.

In the country's economic statistical reporting, output from Transnistria is no longer accrued in the national accounts. In the tables for this report, which were derived from Moldovan reporting, post-1993 data from the Transnistria region is not included. Steel production data, which was derived from other sources, does, however, include the minimill in Transnistria.

Major Sources of Information

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TABLE 1
MOLDOVA: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/ 2/

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Cement	100,000	40,000 r/	50,000	40,000	122,000
Gypsum	25,000 e/ r/	14,600 r/	13,600	12,700	20,000 e/
Lime	50,000 e/	15,900	10,800	18,800	20,000 e/
Peat	700,000 e/	646,500	454,700	462,700	475,000 e/
Sand and gravel	80,000 e/	75,553	151,073	25,753	30,000 e/
Steel, crude	604,000	633,000 r/	663,000	630,000	811,000

e/ Estimated. r/ Revised.

1/ Table includes estimates and data based on information available through March 17, 1999.

2/ Beginning in 1994, data, with the exception of crude steel, exclude production from Transnistria.

TABLE 2
MOLDOVA: MINERAL TRADE BY COMMODITY CATEGORY 1/

(In million lei and category as a percent of total exports and imports) 2/

Exports									
Commodity category	1994		1995		1996		1997		
	Million lei	% of 100%	Million lei	% of 100%	Million lei	% of 100%	Million lei	% of 100%	% of 100%
								to CIS 3/	to non-CIS
Ferrous and nonferrous metals	77.4	3.3	145.5	4.3	64	1.7	NA	NA	NA
Mineral products	61.1	2.6	37.6	1.1	11.9	0.3	NA	0.3	0.3
Pearls, precious stone and metals	3.9	0.2	10.1	0.3	5.2	0.1	NA	NA	NA
Imports									
Commodity group	1994		1995		1996		1997		
	Million lei	% of 100%	Million lei	% of 100%	Million lei	% of 100%	Million lei	% of 100%	% of 100%
								from CIS	from non-CIS
Ferrous and nonferrous metals	85.4	3.2	152.6	4	234.7	4.7	NA	NA	NA
Mineral products	1,489.1	55.3	1,756.1	46.4	1,826.1	36.8	NA	61	7.3
Pearls, precious stones and metals	3.3	0.1	10.4	0.3	16.7	0.3	NA	NA	NA

NA Not available.

1/ Data exclude trade from Transnistria.

2/ The exchange rate for the lei averaged 4.6 lei per US\$1.00 in 1996 and 4.62 lei per US\$1.00 in 1997.

Source: Ministry of Economy and Reforms of the Republic of Moldova, Moldovan economic trends, foreign trade, accessed March 17, 1998, at URL <http://www.moldova.md/ECON/met.htm>.

3/ CIS--Commonwealth of Independent States.