



SUCCESS STORY

Smoothing the Path for Business

“One-stop shops” for official documents make doing business easy

Regulatory reform has proven to be a popular and effective tool for fighting corruption and bribery in Moldova. When combined with political will and the support of the people, its record is unbeatable. Step by step, local communities and regions are joining the effort to root out corruption and make doing business easier.



Photo: USAID

Edinet Mayor Leonid Jidacevshii, left, hands the first trade license issued by the city's one-stop shop to retailer Alexandru Micenco.

“This is not the first license that I received, but it is by far the most trouble-free one. I would recommend opening a new business just to see how simple it is to get a license!” said retailer Alexandru Micenco.

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The city of Edinet is home to Moldova's third “one-stop shop” for processing official documents and permits. Opened in 2005 with help from USAID, the facility in this northern Moldovan town is one of five in the country. Bringing several government offices under one roof, one-stop shops have made it easier for businesses to obtain trade permits and licenses. In the past, 10 signatures from different government agencies were needed for each permit. It often took months to get everything in order and approved — unless you were willing and able to pay bribes to speed things along. Now the process only takes 10 days and does not require multiple trips to different offices. Businesses can even submit their forms online. Saving time, hassle, and money, one-stop shops have made waiting rooms, “unofficial taxes” or bribes, and confusing applications a thing of the past.

Alexandru Micenco, an Edinet-based retailer got his most recent trade license from the one-stop shop. He has nothing but praise for the efficient system. “This is not the first license that I received, but it is by far the most trouble-free one. I would recommend opening a new business just to see how simple it is to get a license!” he says.

Other regions in Moldova are eager to keep up with cities like Edinet that are leading reform effort. By the end of 2006, 12 more facilities are scheduled to open. With hopes of joining the European Union someday, Moldova is working hard to make doing business in the country easy, and one-stop shops are leading the charge.