

Quick FAQs to the most commonly asked questions. We are just repeating some questions that come back to us often!

- **What should we wear?**
 - While working, men and women can wear jeans, t-shirts. Don't bother packing the shorts, except for at the hotel or relaxing at our house! During services, it is best if the men have docker-style pants and shirt; women should have a skirt (to knees, at least) and blouse.

- **Can I bring a computer? What about power?**
 - Sure, bring your laptop. If the team is staying at the Pentecostal Union Ministry Center, you will have access to wi-fi. Computers are made for 110-240 voltages, so power isn't a problem. You just need to bring an adapter to fit your plug into the European outlet (2 round prongs). You can buy those at any travel store in the U.S.

- **How much cash do we need? What about credit cards?**
 - Do not bring credit cards. They are not used very often in Moldova (but good for the rest of travels in Europe). Cash is up to you, but you don't need a lot. ATMs are common, and are actually the safest way to get Moldovan lei. If you do bring cash, make sure it is clean, unmarked, and not torn.

- **What will be eating?**
 - Don't worry, it is all safe. No insects, snakes, or raw fish (oh wait...that is OK if we call it sushi) will be ingested. Lots of soup, bread, and fruit (when it season). **If you promise to hand over all remaining trail mix, snacks, and chocolate to the missionaries, we will allow you to bring them into the country.**

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER WHILE IN Moldova

1. Moldova is a beautiful country. Their customs, traditions and perspectives on life and family are often different from yours. We suggest that you don't judge but seek to understand, learn and appreciate their way of life. Many people go back to the US saying, "if only they had this" or "if we could send this or that, then we could make a difference." If you concentrate on sharing the Gospel and the love of Christ, you will make a difference and God will do the rest.

2. If you have questions, ask us or your translator. Your translators are there for you. If you are not sure, ask them first. We want your visit to be pleasant and meaningful. Be careful not to use slang words. Although many Moldavians speak English, they don't

always understand what we mean by certain words or phrases and your comment could be misunderstood as an insult.

IN CHURCH and Community Ministry:

1. In witnessing, be sincere. Express what Jesus has done in your life and what He means to you. Then continue as the Holy Spirit leads. When speaking of spiritual things the people will not understand the humor that some Americans blend into their testimony. The believers take their faith and their Lord very seriously. With the Orthodox, they also take their tradition seriously even though they may not know what they believe. Don't get caught up in tearing Orthodoxy down. Build Christ up and share His love for them.
2. Men and Women: At all times, dress modestly and conservatively. It is a different culture, and we do not want to risk offending anyone or hindering the work here. So for this trip, leave the halter-top, tight clothing, and mid-riff shirts at home!
3. Americans are known to be a little loud (sorry to offend you!). So when out in public, whether working, eating at a restaurant, or praying for the neighborhoods, please refrain from loud talking and laughing. We don't want to draw attention to ourselves.
4. Every Orthodox believes that they are Christian, due to Orthodox tradition in the country. Don't be drawn into telling them why they are wrong. Just tell them what Jesus means to you and ask them what Jesus means to them. Please know how to share your faith and understand what you believe well enough that you don't have to follow a word by word format. It will be important that you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life, the priesthood of the believer, and can share God's grace with the love of Christ shining through you.
5. Don't use church words. For you to say, "I was born again" or "I was saved", may confuse most people. "I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior" will be more meaningful.
6. When speaking (preaching or testimony) don't put your hands in your pockets, chew gum or cross your arms. Be comfortable and share what the Lord places on your heart. The people want to know more about Americans and what we believe. And many of them have relatives living in the US now!
7. Christ has selected you for a purpose. He will accomplish His purpose if you are willing. He is using you even in your uncertainty. Enjoy your walk with Him while you are here and listen to Him. He will guide you and use you. If you use this opportunity to join Him in his work, you can expect to return home a changed person.
8. Do not become involved in ethnic differences. Be equal and objective. In the villages don't make fun of or tease one another about the facilities (outdoor toilets, the paper

etc.) or use words such as gross, awful, etc. Certain circumstances are part of the everyday life of the people and not the unusual. Your translators may live in such surroundings or have many relatives that do. Remember to be equal and objective.

9. Be sensitive to the people. They may not be as affluent, educated or sophisticated as you are, but they are God's special people and He has placed you there to be a caring example of Christ. However, you will be amazed at how many have degrees from a university, but it may not be apparent. The culture is different.
10. If a confrontation arises with any official, Orthodox Priest or member of the community, just look pleasant and let your translator, pastor or missionary handle it. Don't stand around and listen – casually remove yourselves from the confrontation. Dispersing tends to defuse the situation.

OTHER THINGS:

1. Bottled water is readily available. Plain water is called "apa Plata". The water preferred by most people is "apa minerale," meaning that it has both gas (carbonation) and minerals added.
2. Your favorite soft drink may be available. Coca-Cola is recognized by name, or as cola. Diet Coca-Cola is Coke Lite. The soft drink called Fanta is very good and comes in several flavors. Other familiar goodies available here are Mars Bars and Snickers Bars.
3. Tap water - leave it in the sink! It is a good idea not to drink the water. Raw vegetables and fruits are generally safe to eat but it's a good idea to peel the fruit. If you have a sensitive system, don't overdo it unless you know the restaurant is okay and it's safe to eat the salad. All cooked vegetables are safe. Coffee and other boiled drinks are OK.

Missions Teams

Organize Prayer Support

Prayer will determine the success of your trip. If a team is going to be prepared and honor the Father with their effort, then they must seek Him in prayer. They must enlist prayer partners to pray for them to know his will, and be prepared spiritually and physically to do His will.

1. **Prayer card:** Create a prayer card / bookmark. Provide a space for the team members name, the prayer partners name, prayer partners e-mail address, street address, telephone number, and a place for the prayer partner to sign with the words, "I will pray for you as you prepare for and make the mission trip to Moldova." Leave place for the team member to sign with the words, "I will provide you with all prayer request involving the mission trip to Moldova as we prepare and work." Have team

members enlist as many prayer partners as possible. Team members should include coworkers, friends, neighbors, Sunday School class members, members of the congregation and family. Offer the opportunity for prayer partners to meet together and pray for the team.

2. **Prayer:** As the team begins to form, make prayer the focus of your weekly meetings. Pray for God's leading during the meeting, in decisions, for understanding of the mission and for willing and submissive hearts. Pray for those concerned about finances, time, and ability, to trust their concerns to Him. In the large group take prayer request concerning the trip and ask members to pray for the person to their right. Have a staff member open the prayer time by praising God for the opportunity he has allowed to serve and pray for prepared hearts as He develops the team into His instrument. In all future meetings begin with a group prayer time and before the meeting ends divide into groups of three or four, share concerns and pray for one another.
3. **Staff support, and equipping:** Make sure that the staff members are aware of the progression of the team and that they are willing to meet one on one with team members and pray with them privately in time of need or concern.
4. **Personal journal:** Beginning with the first meeting, encourage team members to keep a journal of this walk with God, as they seek his will, respond, prepare, go, and return from the trip. List prayer request, your concerns, and answered prayer. Write down the most significant scripture God placed on your heart today. Don't just write about events, but what our Lord Jesus Christ is saying to you through them, and what your response is. Answer the questions, "What does He want me to do next?" You will forget moments of inspiration if you don't record them as they occur. God will use your journal to reveal something of Himself and something about you, long after you pinned the thought.

Spiritually Prepared Team

Offer ways that team members can prepare spiritually. Involve other church members to prepare and lead some of these sessions.

1. **Personal testimony:** Here we use the word testimony because it is a word that is used in planning guides, etc., and can include a long process in your Christian walk. However, please consider referring to your profession of faith as "My salvation experience." One full meeting should focus on preparing testimonies. Provide team members with the format and other information in writing their testimony. You might begin by having those leading the meeting, share their salvation experience (testimony). Tell the group to write their salvation experience and be prepared to share it verbally during next weeks meeting. Some will need more help than others and may not have a completed testimony the first week, but all should complete the process within the next two weeks.
~ It is not necessary to use the age at which you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. Your testimony will be stronger. Traditionally in the Moldova evangelical churches, children are not considered old enough to make such a decision, thus diminishing the effectiveness of your testimony if you were under 16.

~ Don't use terms like "I went down front and accepted Jesus", "I was saved when _____",

~ If you are attending a college, use the word university in your testimony. College does not mean the same here as it does in the US. Here college is usually between high school and university.

2. **Quiet time with God:** Encourage team members to have a daily quiet time with God. Reading scripture, daily devotionals and praying. Offer them scriptural guides, and provide them with appropriate devotional materials.

Prayer walking: We may take some time to walk through some of the neighborhoods here, praying for the people and churches.

When the team returns home: Have a special service for the team members to share their testimonies about what God has done in their life through the trip, and what He wants them to do next. Show slides or power-point presentations on an overhead as the program proceeds. Arrange for team members to speak with women's groups, Sunday School departments and civic organizations. Make a large bulletin board displaying pictures of the trip with a mission statement, including Scriptures. Get a follow-up article published in the local newspaper complete with pictures and interviews with team members. You might use this means to create an interest and invite the community to the special share night service. End the service with a strong but short evangelism message and invitation.

Missions is simply an outreach of God's heart. We are to reach and minister to the world, starting in our own neighborhoods and throughout the world.

Continuing the trip: We pray that you will want to continue to invest in the harvest field in Moldova. I hope this trip will serve to inspire you to build upon the work here, perhaps with trips in the years following.

E-Mail addressed for Moldova:

Our e-mail is listed below. You will be provided a list of emergency telephone numbers to leave with your family before your departure to Moldova.

- o Andy.raatz@agmd.org

If you are staying in Chisinau at the ministry center, you will have wireless access. It is always nice if at least 1 or 2 people bring laptop with wireless access. We will work to get you a few moments in an internet café to check your e-mails accounts online. The internet cafes are usually very cheap.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. We're looking forward to your arrival!

Overview

FACTS ABOUT Moldova

We are pleased that you are coming to Moldova to share the Gospel and Christ's love. The following is a general overview of Moldova. We want this trip to be a blessing to you as you join God in his work here in Moldova, and to return you to your home church and family with a changed world view and a desire to share what Christ has done through you.

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’”

Romans 10:14-15 NIV

If you are uncomfortable with the words preaching and preach, won't you change them to witnessing and witness as you read back over the verses?

“Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me.’” Isaiah 6:8b

A General Overview

Geographical location: Moldova is a land locked country. To the West is Romania and then the rest of the country is surrounded by Ukraine. The country is very small in size, about the size of Maryland.

Climate: temperate: Summer temperatures are hot. Winters can be severe with temperatures –10/15 degrees below 0. There is heavy snow fall in January and February.

Population Growth Rate: - 0.23% (1999 est.)

Life Expectancy at Birth: Average 70.83 years; male 67.05 years; female 74.81 years (1999 est.) Though the latest surveys have the life expectancy dropping.

Infant Mortality Rate: 18.12 deaths per 1,000 live births (1999 est.)

National Capital: Chisinau 750/800 thousand.

Main Cities: Chisinau is in the center of the country, Baltsi is in the North, and Tirospol is in the South.

Airport: Chisinau International Airport.—Airport Code (KIV)

Official Language: The official language is Moldavian. It is a dialect of Romanian. However, Russian is widely spoken throughout the country. It seems to be about 50% Romanian-speaking, 50% Russian. In the south, there are area villages of Gagauz (a Turkish dialect). There is also Bulgarian and Ukrainian spoken here.

Flag Description: Three equal vertical bands of blue (hoist side), yellow, and red. In the middle of the flag is an eagle holding a cross in his beak, holding a scepter in one claw and an olive branch in another.

Economy – overview: After the collapse of the Soviet Bloc in 1989-91, Moldova was left with an obsolete industrial base and a pattern of industrial capacity wholly unsuited to its needs. Basically, Moldova's economy is totally dependent on people working outside the country, sending funds back for family.

Currency: 1 leu (plural lei) = 100 bani. July 2004, the Lei exchanged for 1 US Dollar was 11.55 lei. It has dropped from 14 lei/dollar to now around 9.5 lei/dollar. Notes are in denominations of Lei 500; 200; 100; 50, 20, 10, 5 and 1. Coins are in denominations of bani 50, 25, 10, 5, and 1.

Currency Information: Moldova is largely a "Cash Only" economy; credit cards and travelers checks are of limited benefit. Major credit cards are welcome in few places in the capitol city. However, it can be risky to use them. Traveler's Checks are almost useless in Moldova: They are accepted in some large banks and rarely in exchange shops. Usually you can expect to pay a charge of 5% - 10%.

Currency Exchange: It's recommended that visitors bring hard currency in US Dollars. Dollars are easily exchanged if they are the new style (larger image) and have no tears, worn spots or writing on them. They will not accept bills in any condition that are older than 1990. Whatever you do, don't exchange money on the street or from any individual (bellboy, waiter, etc.). Always ask for a currency exchange receipt. You may be asked for it and you cannot change your money back into dollars without it. **MAKE SURE YOUR MONEY IS ALL CLEAN AND NEW-LOOKING.**

ATM Machines: ATM machines are available in Chisinau and Balti, unless there are some new installments in other places of the country that we have not heard about.

Medical Facilities: Medical care in Moldova is limited. Basic medical supplies are scarce. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services. **U. S. medical insurance is not always valid outside the United States. Even when it says it's valid, it will not be accepted by most medical care facilities around the world. You will have to pay cash and get your money back when you get back to the US (if you're lucky). Supplemental medical insurance with specific overseas coverage, including provision for medical evacuation is available through the AGWM MAPS for mission teams. This is available for your protection and strongly encouraged for all team members.**

For further information, travelers may contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov>

In the past year, several Americans here in Moldova (primarily in Chisinau) have had the opportunity to be in a hospital. There is a missionary with another organization that had a baby here. They are both doing fine. We will do our best to keep you well and safe but please arrange supplemental medical insurance for overseas travel through AGWM. I will go on record and say, **"DO NOT COME WITHOUT IT!"**

Required Immunizations: No vaccinations are required for entry into Moldova, but selective vaccinations are recommended. Hepatitis A and Tetanus Diphtheria (td) are good immunization shots to have. You may want to consider Hepatitis B as well (ask your doctor). Some or all of the shots will be available at your county health department for a small charge.

Religions: Romanian and Russian Orthodox 90% (The general feeling is that you are Orthodox if you were born in Moldova. Even if you don't practice the faith.), Baptist 22,000 members, and Pentecostal have about 11,000 members. Roman Catholics have a small part here.

Passport: Passport must be valid for a minimum of 3 months after your return from Moldova. Be safe, if your passport expires within 6 months of your trip departure date, get it renewed.

Visas: *No longer required! You simply need a current passport, and proceed through customs.*