

the Republic of Moldova

Moldova was once part of Bessarabia, a region traded between Romania and Russia throughout history, and one of the main centers of Jewish life in Europe. About 270,000 Jews lived there before World War II. This number was drastically reduced to 4,000 by 2004. Places like Telenesty, which had a Jewish population of 2,841, now only have six. Most Jews moved to Israel, Canada and the US, or simply perished in the Holocaust.

Former Soviet Republic and independent since 1991, Moldova is a young country in development; in search of identity - it is a country without being a nation. Moldovans are divided between the ones who miss the old days of Russian communism and those who dream of progress and identify with Romania. As the CEO of STRATFOR, George Friedman, put it in his essay **Geopolitical Journey, Part 4: Moldova:**

Moldova is a country in need of explanation... First, there is the question of what kind of country Moldova is. Second, there is the question of why anyone should care. Oddly, I went to Moldova thinking I knew the answer to the second question but not the first. I came away unsure of either.

Ironically, my family and I traveled to look for the traces of my people in a country with troubled memories of its own history and uncertain of its past.

