

ProjectsAbroad

Issue V, May 2014

Salutare Moldova



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## Moldova May Edition 2014

Inside and Out

### Donation LEARN TO DO GOOD...

By Galina Oltu, Leader of NGO "Golden Lotus".

This Children's Center wasn't easy to find, it was lost between typical high-rise buildings and was situated in the basement of one of these buildings. The centre's children are from risky families and we got acquainted with them through our partner organization, Projects Abroad. We have been familiar with them for a long time and maintained a cordial relationship helping each other: they send us volunteers from all over the world to meet our people, mostly pensioners and invalids, to speak with them, teach English, feed them and organize different events and rehabilitation. We take them to excursions, to humanitarian actions, translate and give lessons, etc. We also extend help to those in need and try to help as much as we can. This time we visited the Children's Center with some toys for the children's room, and clothes for the children and grown-ups as we do sometimes collect things for these people in need. It's always very touching to see that you can extend a helping hand to those in need. Our organization, "Center of the Support and Development", was formed in 2002 and since then we have tried everything we can to help people in different ways. Norwegian organization, "Norway Moldova", helped support us a lot with some of our projects and still helping us with paying for our very small office where we can meet for our activities. We participate in different Republican and municipal events for volunteers, but we are probably the only organization with the majority of aged volunteers that we do not get financial support from the state or other organizations besides Projects Abroad. In our country the volunteers' movement has just started and doesn't have long way experience and real support from the Government. To be a volunteer isn't so easy and we have to be taught how to help without humiliating the dignity of people, how to find the money for work, how to attract more people, etc. We tried to learn from our foreign friends and sometimes very successfully. From the very beginning we had the idea to not only receive the fish, but to study how to catch it ourselves. We started to collect clothes and money, things for lottery, organizing different events for aged people from the Republican House for Pensioners and Invalids, boarding school for handicap children, families with a lot of children; trying to help them as much as we can. There are articles in newspapers about us, the TV interviews and the Honorable papers from the authorities, there are some interesting ideas, and people would like to join us. Some people are very surprised that we are not getting paid for doing our jobs and our volunteers live very poor. It's difficult to understand that even poor people would like to be significant and useful to others. It gives them power to live and feel themselves and not miserable, but worthy citizens of the society, not outside of the life, but inside...Our foreign friends coming to Moldova through Projects Abroad help us to be the members of the world volunteers' movement and be proud of it.





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### Thank you

Our partners from "LOTOSUL DE AUR" ("GOLDEN LOTUS") non-governmental organization made a donation through Projects Abroad Moldova to the "Fantastic" Daily Care Centre for children. The donation consists of several boxes with toys (teddy bears, water ducks, construction toys, etc). This donation will be used for different activities with children. We would like to say **Thank you** for our partners for their support and continuously productive collaboration with us.



Care project

### Get a better "start" in life

By Roger Mikalsen from Norway.

I was on a quick getaway in Chişinău, Moldova, in autumn of 2013 and it made such an impression on me that I wanted to do something to improve the daily lives of the poor elderly or provide assistance, so that the children get a better "start" in life. The first thing I noticed when I was here was that the warmth and hospitality of the people here exude and the other thing was the "Moldavian" or Romanian language. For me this was like listening to the most beautiful music and I'm sure if elves exist, this would be the language they use. Here they also speak Russian, and it is a language that has always fascinated me and now there are two languages.

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When I came home to Norway, I started to investigate if there was any opportunity to participate by volunteering here in Moldova and the first one I contacted was "Salvation Army" in Norway, but I only got a short and terse reply that they had no projects in Moldova. I actually thought they were friendlier then that when they reach a time is an organization that may particularly help the poor. Otherwise, I contacted or read about in time and start to learn. The best way I think is to "understand" the people and learn about their culture before starting to learn the language, so I started searching the Moldovan culture and then I found "Projects Abroad". I contacted the office in Norway (it turned out that they have an office there as well) and then started the process. I eventually got in touch with Igor Fonari, Elena Chirica and others; they all being very kind and nice people. I would help with the care as I thought, that it was important to help with the care of children and help them to get a better start in life, whether it was in school, a nursery or an orphanage, I did not know before I came here. Now I see that unfortunately there are many more that need help. I hope that we get more people to "discover" the warm people of Moldova with "the language of the elves" and that some may also do something extra to help them. I also finally started to study Russian and eventually I also started with the Romanian language. I therefore came here to Chi in u or Kishinev, which the city is also called. Eugenia Doro is my young and cute supervisor and she is with me at the orphanage. The children "adopted" me right away and I have become as fond of them as my own children, and when the weekend comes, I look forward to meeting the children again on Monday, although I have just started my third week of my 12 week project. There are many sad facts and I think it's very good that at least these children receive care and support and I hope it continues until they are adults and can fend for themselves. They were so happy and grateful just to borrow some markers and ordinary crayons to color copies of black and white drawings; that was completely touching. Actually, it was intended that I should just study the language for the first two weeks but this is a much better way to do it, it gives me a very great pleasure to see how happy and grateful the children get that I'm there for them. I hope that I will get the opportunity to come back to them and I think it's sad that I have to wait for six months before I can come back to the country. Of course, I miss my own children very much but I know that they are safe and the smallest are living with their mothers who are very fond of them and give them their love and care, which I also do when the children are with me. I could not really write much about caring failure among both parents and politicians here in Moldova, but that is unfortunately in many countries and even in Norway. I know that we have such problems but we have certainly not as great poverty here. Actually, we have to learn from both the children and the people here in Norway, that we are so rich and spoiled that we complain about the smallest things and we are very quick to "shout and cry" if the price of tobacco or alcohol goes up a few dollars. If we all think to ourselves so we are fully aware of how much unnecessary things that we are complaining about. Although poverty is very big here, the people are still as friendly and hospitable and mostly I see parts of them help with what they can. This will not be any moral stand but I thought that I had to say something about what I thought. I am very happy and grateful that I got to come here and meet all the wonderful children and warm hearted people with the "language of the elves", as you see I think that the Romanian language is the most beautiful in the world to my ears. These are the first impressions I formed for myself since I came here three weeks ago and I am sure it will be considerably more during the nine weeks I have left, but I get to write more about that later.





## **First Impression of Moldova**

**By Smit S. Deliwala from United Arab Emirate.**

If you asked me a few months back what Moldova was, I probably would've told you that it must be a Turkish dessert. I've studied European geography, history and civics to a certain extent, yet the country of Moldova was never mentioned in most of my readings. Moldova is a small landlocked country nestled between Ukraine and Romania. The capital is Chi in u and is the country's most prosperous and populated city. I flew into Chi in u from Istanbul. As soon as i landed, i noticed a simple, not too chaotic airport. People were very polite and friendly and i quickly got out. I am attending Chi in u on a three week Medical Project mostly concentrating on the areas of surgery, anaesthesiology, internal medicine and neurology. My host family have been absolutely delightful and have catered to my every need. When I had a sore throat, they had medications ready for me as they heard my cough got pretty loud, even though I never requested it. I am a strict vegetarian (no meat, no fish and no eggs) and they made sure they made food according to my diet and even went to the extent of making desserts and bread without eggs - i was absolutely shocked with such amazing hospitality. The country itself is gorgeous - greenery everywhere, the air is fresh and crisp, streets are clean - I mean it's fantastic. The weather has been quite delightful as well, with the occasional rainfall which drenches the city in such a beautiful manner that it feels like I'm back in the tropics. Moldovan cuisine is heavy on bread, soups and meat. One particular dish that I enjoyed was the, "Pl cinta" - it is a flat bread stuffed with whatever you want. The city has many fast food restaurants like McDonalds, KFC, Star Kebab - so you don't miss home that much. The hospital where I worked at is really nice, it has a good influx of the local medical students, residents and very knowledgeable doctors. The staff are willing to answer any of your questions and just love having international students on board. You see a variety of cases that would be hard to see in the West. This is where I think Projects Abroad has really struck a cord for me; I have my own personal translator!! How cool is that. His name is Sergui and he is my medium to Chi in u and my work. I've been very fortunate that during my stay we've had a lot of social events planned by our enthusiastic coordinators. We've gone to museums, the deep markets of Chi in u (literally miles and miles of stores), walked the streets of the main city, admired government buildings, parks, cathedrals - I mean this is the heart of Eastern Europe and you need to absorb every bit of it. The museums house captured military equipment from World War II. The Cathedrals are lined with gold embroideries and with beautiful artworks from all over. The parks have statues and literature and natural flora that are so spectacular. Not to mention that free Wi-Fi is found all over the city - restaurants, parks, malls and streets while not to forgetting that Moldova has the third fastest internet in the world (Shocked? Yep i sure was!).



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Coincidentally, Victory Day and Europe Day fell during my stay. These two days commemorate the ending of World War II and the unity of the European countries after that. On Victory Day, we went to the large open memorial square where hundreds, if not thousands of people congregated to pay respects to the fallen soldiers. We saw pro-Russian rallies, we also saw the, "Eternal Flame" - which is a flame that never dies and it is present to provide light to the fallen soldiers of Moldova- people were selling memorabilia outside, there was food - it was a mini-fair. On Europe Day we all met at the city centre and witnessed great performances from artists who came from different parts of Europe. Also there were stalls from each European country and they were giving out country guides, maps, memorabilia and souvenirs to the public. I've also had the chance to visit the opera, the play that I saw was called, "Rigoletto" - it was everything I thought an opera would be - a smart dress code, wonderful seating and great acting. The largest mall here called, "Mall-Dova" is fantastic as well and houses many famous fashion brands and fast food restaurants like McDonalds, KFC etc. I've been here for 12 days so far and I've seen, learnt and understood so much. All in all, Moldova is a world of it's own - it's secluded and self-sufficient in many ways than one. It has so much to offer if you are willing to open your arms and absorb it all in.





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Photos Page

### Volunteer's Happy Moments



### Volunteers and staff in their placements, social activities.



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### Staff Contact details

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Thank you all for your collaboration!  
Thank you for being with us!  
If you have anything you'd like to contribute,  
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