



2007 Minerals Yearbook

MOLDOVA

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF MOLDOVA

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Moldova had a small mineral industry that was primarily engaged in the mining and production of industrial minerals and mineral products, including cement, clays, dimension stone, gypsum, limestone, industrial sand, and sand and gravel. Moldova had a steel minimill in Ribnita (the Moldova Steel Works), which had the capacity to produce more than 1 million metric tons per year (Mt/yr) of crude steel and 960,000 metric tons per year (t/yr) of rolled products. Moldova was dependent on imports for all its coal, natural gas, and oil supplies, which came mainly from Russia (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2008).

The country's main mineral resources were of industrial minerals to produce construction materials and for use in the cement, chemical, glass, and food processing industries. Small deposits of iron ore, natural gas, and oil have been explored but were not economic to develop. According to assessments as of January 1, 2007, reserves of industrial minerals had been determined for 17 types of industrial minerals in 423 deposits, of which 176 deposits were being mined and 56 deposits were prepared for development but were being kept in reserve by the Government until conditions were deemed suitable for their development. Argillaceous and carbonate rocks were extracted for cement production, and blast furnace slag, gypsum, and pyrite cinders were used as additives in cement production. Raw materials for cement production were based in two clay and two limestone deposits, which had adequate reserves to provide these raw materials for cement production for 50 years at the 2006 level of output (Zhalalite and others, 2007).

Moldova had been experiencing a continuing shortage of high-strength gravel and stone. The country was mining granite at one deposit, the Kosoutsokoye, which in 2006 produced 130,000 cubic meters; this amount was not adequate to meet Moldova's requirements for high-strength construction stone. Also in 2006, out of 125 explored sand and gravel deposits, 71 were being mined with the capacity to produce 925,000 cubic meters of sand and gravel. Although this amount was three times greater than the amount produced in 2000, it was significantly less than the country produced in 1990. Of 105 known deposits containing reserves of clay and loam suitable as raw material for bricks, ceramic drainage pipes, and tiles, 11 deposits of ceramic raw materials were under development. Of 16 explored deposits of porous clay filler (keramzit) for cement, 2 were under development (Zhalalite and others, 2007).

Production

In 2007, the gross domestic product was estimated to have increased by 3% compared with that of 2006 (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2008). The value of industrial production in Moldova decreased by 6.9% compared with that of 2006, but cement production increased by 26.7% and crude steel production increased by 47.3% (Interfax Russia & CIS Statistics Weekly, 2008). The large increase in cement production was

accompanied by a large increase in limestone production, which suggests the opening of a limestone quarry in 2006. Data on mineral production are in table 1.

Structure of the Mineral Industry

Practically all mineral production enterprises were stock companies that had the participation of foreign enterprises (Zhalalite and others, 2007). Table 2 is a list of major mineral industry facilities.

Commodity Review

Metals

Iron and Steel.—The country's only steel mill was located in the region of Transnistria, which is a territory within the internationally recognized boundaries of the Republic of Moldova. A separatist movement in Transnistria declared the territory's independence as a separate republic of the U.S.S.R. on September 2, 1990. Although the separatist Transdnistrian Moldovan Republic (also known as Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic) continued to exercise effective control over most of Transnistria, its independence had not been recognized by Moldova or internationally. The steel mill was Transnistria's leading industry and accounted for about 50% of the region's budget revenues, and steel was one of Transnistria's major exports.

In July 2007, the U.S. International Trade Commission determined that revoking an existing antidumping duty order on steel-reinforced concrete bars from Moldova (among a number of other countries) would likely lead to a continuation or recurrence of material injury within a reasonably foreseeable timeframe. Therefore, the antidumping duty order was to remain in place (U.S. International Trade Commission, 2007).

Industrial Minerals

Gypsum.—In the northern part of Moldova, two gypsum deposits had been explored, of which one, the Kirovskoye, had been mined since 1958; the other was being held in reserve. As of January 1, 2007, explored gypsum reserves in the Kirovskoye deposit reportedly were 16 million metric tons (Mt), and 25 Mt of explored gypsum reserves were contained in other deposits being held in reserve. With the creation of the Moldovan-German Chinisau Municipal Council (CMC)-Knauf AG joint venture in 2006, gypsum production reached more than 725,000 metric tons (t) in 2006 and more than 846,000 t in 2007. A portion of gypsum production was exported (Zhalalite and others, 2007).

Outlook

The mineral industry of Moldova is likely to continue to be centered on the production of industrial minerals and steel. The country has very limited resources of hydrocarbons and iron ore, and its only significant mineral resources are of industrial minerals used in the cement, chemical, construction materials, food processing, and glass industries. To significantly increase its production of industrial minerals, Moldova would have to increase its investment in exploration significantly, which would probably require the country to establish additional cooperative projects with foreign partners (Zhalalite and others, 2007).

References Cited

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- U.S. International Trade Commission, 2007, ITC makes determinations in five-year (sunset) reviews concerning steel concrete reinforcing bar from Belarus, China, Indonesia, Korea, Latvia, Moldova, Poland, and Ukraine: U.S. International Trade Commission, July 10. (Accessed December 30, 2008, at http://www.usitc.gov/ext_relations/news_release/2007/er0710ee1.htm.)
- Zhalalite, R.P., Il'inskiy, Yu. F., and Bilyk, A.N., 2007, Sostoyaniye mienral'no-syr'yevoiy bazy Respubliki Moldova [The condition of the mineral-raw material base of the Moldovan Republic]: Gornyy Zhurnal [Mining Journal], no. 10, p. 43-46.

TABLE 1
MOLDOVA: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
METALS					
Crude steel	886,000	1,012,600	1,016,000 ^r	675,400	995,000
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS					
Cement	255,400	439,700	641,000	837,000	1,060,000
Clays, unspecified	--	--	--	227,968	165,040
Gypsum	116,100	102,500	562,700	725,900	846,400
Lime	2,880	1,911	1,900	2,153 ^r	1,135
Limestone	--	--	--	15,333	166,870
Sand and gravel ^e	1,000,000	1,600,000	1,900,000	289,042 ^{r,2}	272,197 ²
MINERAL FUELS AND RELATED MATERIALS					
Natural gas, dry	million cubic meters	NA	NA	NA	56
Peat ^e		475,000	475,000	475,000	475,000

^eEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. ^rRevised. NA Not available. -- Zero.

¹Table includes data available through February 28, 2009.

²Reported figure.

TABLE 2
MOLDOVA: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2007¹

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location or deposit names	Annual capacity ^e
Cement	S.A. Ciment Rezina (joint venture with Lafarge S.A.)	Rezina	1,100,000
Granite	thousand cubic meters	Cariera de granit si pietris din Soroca S.A.	150
Gypsum	Chisinau Municipal Council (CMC)-Knauf AG (joint Moldovan-German venture)	Kirovskoye deposit	850,000
Oil and natural gas:			
Oil	Redeco Moldova oil and gas company [Resource Development Company, Ltd. (REDECO), 50%, and Costilla Energy, Inc., 50%]	Valeni oilfield	100,000
Natural gas	thousand cubic meters	do.	5,000
Sand and gravel	do.	NA	71 mined deposits
Steel, crude	OJSC Moldova Steel Works minimill [Rumney Trust Reg, 75%; Energy Investment and Management Corp. (EIM), 15.6%; Government, 9.4%]	Ribnita, Transnistria region	1,100,000

^eEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. do. Ditto. NA Not available.

¹Table includes data available through March 31, 2009.