

MEPs urge Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine to pursue reform and Russia to leave

Russia must end its direct or indirect involvement in conflicts in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine and stop interfering with their EU aspirations, say MEPs in a review, voted on Thursday, of their progress on reform. One year after the three ratified their association and deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (AA/DCFTAs) with the EU, MEPs highlight remaining reform tasks for each country and take note of the 6 April Dutch referendum on the EU-Ukraine deal.

In a resolution welcoming the progress of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine on their "chosen path of closer political and economic integration with the European Union", MEPs call on Russia to end its direct or indirect involvement in conflicts in the territories, including its occupation of Crimea.

They point out that Georgia's exports to the EU rose by 15%, and Moldova's by 62% in the first year, and say they expect to similar growth in those from Ukraine.

MEPs also point out that EU financial support must be matched by concrete progress on reform.

Georgia: independence of media and courts

MEPs worry about the independence of the judiciary and possible threats to media pluralism in Georgia, referring, for example, to a lawsuit over ownership of the "Rustavi 2" broadcaster. They back the idea of sending an EU expert mission to oversee the case.

They also criticize "blurred criteria" for appointing prosecutors and investigators and also the "undue pressure" exerted on judges at the Constitutional Court of Georgia, pressure acknowledged by the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe.

Moldova: the new government must deliver

MEPs welcome the newly-approved government of Moldova, which is now taking office after more than a year of stalemate and "systemic political instability". They also deplore the theft of €1 billion from Moldova's banking system, and urge that those responsible be brought to justice.

Ukraine: Russia's shadow, corruption, Dutch referendum

MEPs condemn Russia's suspension of its free trade agreement with Ukraine at the very moment when the EU-Ukraine free trade deal entered into force. They deplore the "heavy trade restrictions" on Ukraine's exports to Russia, voice concerns about Ukraine's economic and financial standstill and repeat the need for further EU financial assistance. They call on EU member states to avoid building new gas pipelines from Russia that bypass Ukraine, such as "Nord Stream II".

They expect Ukraine's leadership to fulfil its commitments to fight "endemic" corruption, which, they say, remains the biggest challenge to its reform efforts.

MEPs also "take note" of the upcoming Dutch referendum on the EU-Ukraine agreement and "trusts that the decision of the Dutch people will be taken on the basis of the merits of the agreement, recognising its tangible effects on the EU and the Netherlands in particular".

Procedure: Non-legislative resolution

Further information

[Adopted text will be available here \(click on 21.01.2016\)](#)

[Video: extracts from debate on Free Trade Agreements with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine:](#)

[EPRS: EU-Georgia Association Agreement](#)

[EPRS: EU integration – no going back for Moldova?](#)

[EPRS: Economic impact on the EU of sanctions over Ukraine conflict](#)

Political groups

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