

Name:  
Rebecca Lehman

Local Name:  
Doamna Rebecca



Country:  
Republic of Moldova

Sector:  
Health Education



# Country Information

**What is the country population?**

Approximately 3 million people.

**What is the climate and geography like?**

Four seasons (hot summer, cool fall, long & cold snowy winter, rainy spring), many beautiful hills & fields.

**What is the population of your site?**

Approximately 7,000 people.

**Describe your living arrangements.**

I live in a one-bedroom apartment with my spouse. He is also a Peace Corps Volunteer. We live in an apartment building with many nice neighbors.



# Culture

**What do people wear?**

People dress up nicely & fashionably, like New York City. For traditional cultural events, people wear the national costume, shown at right.

**Are there any interesting customs or traditions?**

Very many!

Moldovans are very talented at making wine – they have been making wine for thousands of years. Most families make their own and will kindly share it with all guests.

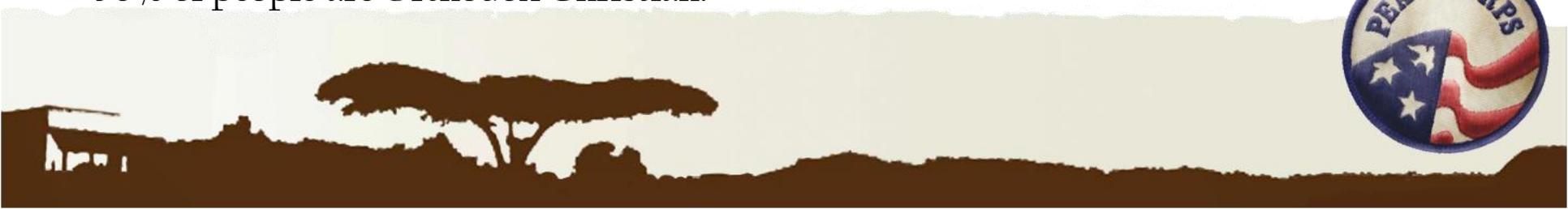
Poetry is very popular! Everyone learns many poems and poetry is part of every event.

**What is the main religion?**

98% of people are Orthodox Christian.



Jason Gordon



# Culture

## What holidays do people celebrate?

Today is Martișor, which marks the start of spring! Major holidays are Easter & Christmas. We have two of Christmases and two New Years because people celebrate the “new style” (Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>, Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>) and the “old style” Orthodox dates (a week later).

## What is the food like?

Delicious! Moldova is famous for sunflowers, so we cook with sunflower oil.

There are many fresh fruits & vegetables in summer and fall. In winter, we eat a lot of potatoes, onions, & apples. Two of my favorite dishes are mamagliga, which is made of corn meal and is similar to polenta, and placinta, savory or sweet pies filled with a variety of foods, like cabbage, or potatoes, or cherries.



## How does transportation work?

You'll find everything from fancy sports cars to donkeys pulling carts. Most people use busses and minibuses for traveling between villages.



# Work

**What is your primary project?**

I am a volunteer in the Health Education program. I co-teach Health Education classes and help organize campaigns & programs about healthy behaviors.

[Click here to see a video we made for International Day of Peace.](#)

[Click here to see a video we made called "We Love Our Hearts" as part of a video challenge.](#)

**What are your secondary projects?**

Increasing the use of technology in the school (including setting up a computer lab & training teachers), girls empowerment through yoga, making videos and on-line resources for learning Romanian for future volunteers.



# Work

**What has been your biggest success?**

Learning what I have of the language! I still have very much to learn, but I can generally communicate in daily situations thanks to the talented teachers I am fortunate to have!

**What has been your biggest setback?**

My language skills. While it is incredible how well Peace Corps teaches volunteers the language, it is still difficult to be a beginner or intermediate speaker. I am very lucky to have patient partners with excellent listening skills!



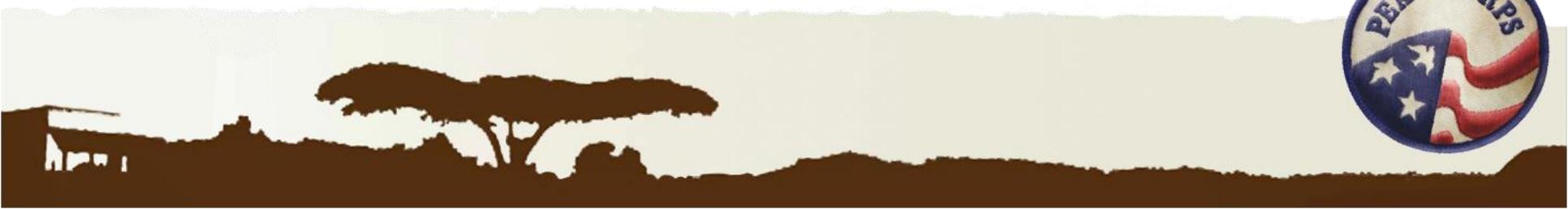
# Fun Facts

**What is your favorite moment in your service so far?**

I really enjoy the one-on-one time I get with my partners and my language tutors. My favorite parts of every week are when we sit next to each other and talk.

**What is the strangest thing that has happened to you as a Volunteer?**

I have always live in the city (Baltimore, MD; Hamilton and Cincinnati, OH; JiNan, China). Living in a village and a small town means I meet many farm animals up close – cows, goats, turkeys, chickens, rabbits, and more. I even see wild hedgehogs occasionally!



# Fun Facts

What is your favorite part of being a Peace Corps Volunteer?  
Nonviolence and relationships are two things I value greatly.

I love that as a Peace Corps Volunteer my "job" is to spread peace and friendship! I am so lucky to spend every day working for peace in our world and building international relationships.

I also love that I get to learn something every single day. Maybe a new word, maybe a new activity, maybe a new skill - I am always learning!



# Fun Facts

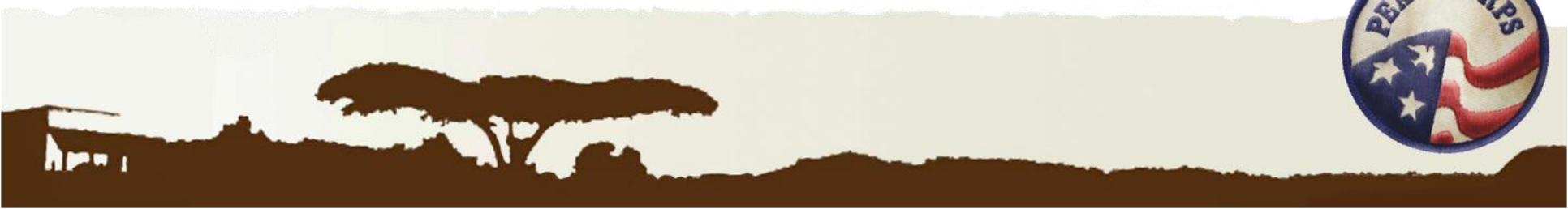
**What is your favorite word or phrase in the local language?**

Sănătate! It means health. If someone sneezes, we wish them health. If someone is leaving, we can wish them health on their way. I appreciate – especially as a health educator – that health is such a part of daily talk.

**What are things that you've found that are done better in your host country than America?**

Students begin learning other languages in second grade (at the latest! Most learn Romanian & Russian from childhood)

People are very connected to their food – most people grow food and raise animals at home, so they know very deeply where the food on their table comes from.



# Fun Facts

What aspects of your host country do you wish you could bring back to America?

I wish everyone could participate in a cultural festival that has poetry, music performances, and traditional dancing.

I also wish I could bring back how important poetry is to national identity.

