

MOLDOVAN AGRIFOOD TRADE POTENTIAL IN THE FRAMEWORK OF DCFTA – A PATH TOWARDS EU ACCESSION

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Abstract. *The agri-food trade of the Republic of Moldova plays an important role in the total trade of the country, with a share of about 45% in the total exported goods and 14% in imports (2021). The trade policy of the Republic of Moldova is focused on development of strong trade relations with EU countries in the framework of DCFTA and geographical diversification of the agri-food exports to other countries. The agri-food trade by regional country groups has evolved during 2014 - 2021, being noticed certain switches of export direction from one group of countries to another, mainly in the favor of EU. This change of trade pattern is a natural one, resulting from the DCFTA agreement, thus increasing the diversity of Moldovan agri-food products, a better quality and reach of new markets. The aim of the paper is to explore the Moldovan agri-food products' export potential to EU in the new context of a candidate state. The trade values of the commodity groups 1-24 have been analyzed, also pointing to the most competitive groups of products on the EU market by using the Revealed Comparative Advantage indicator. A quantitative and qualitative analysis has been performed while observing the trade data at the level of imports and exports for the period 2014 – 2021. As a result, a series of recommendations have been provided in order to increase the competitiveness of Moldovan agri-food products in the framework of the EU future accession.*

Keywords: *agri-food trade, Moldova, EU accession, trade potential*

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