



The Republic of Moldova
Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia



### **FOREWORD**



Dear Partners, Dear Friends,

The central objective of the Executive and Legislative authorities of ATU Gagauzia are the stimulation of business development and the attraction of investments to the region, realizing that only by developing the economy through domestic and foreign investments can create jobs, increase revenue, develop social infrastructure, and standards of living.

The Executive Committee of Gagauzia pays constant attention to the activities of businesses in the autonomy and builds a constructive dialogue to identify the solutions of any issues by initiating and adopting regulations to encourage entrepreneurial activity and investment in the region. The building blocks for such an enabling policy are the openness of the region to domestic and foreign investors, improving the business and investment climate, and the creation of preferential conditions for attracting investments to the main sectors of the region.

The Gagauz autonomy has the authority to adopt its own legislation in order to implement economic reforms and to stimulate investment activity. This year, on the initiative of the Executive Committee, the People's Assembly of Gagauzia adopted a new «Investments Law».

Foreign and domestic enterprises that decide for an investment in Gagauzia and open work places may take advantage of the regional law on investment, obtaining grants in-kind, preferences on taxes, investment subsidies for construction and installation works, for the creation of industrial and technical infrastructure as well as for the purchase of equipment.

Gagauzia is an integral part of the Republic of Moldova, with functioning preferential trade regimes with the CIS and the European Union. On 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016, a comprehensive free trade regime with the Republic of Turkey came into force. Free trade area regimes offer excellent opportunities for investors by expanding their activity to Gagauzia. Investors can profit from trade opportunities in a 360° perspective.

It is also important that Gagauzia has a favorable geographical location, natural and climatic conditions, modern logistics and infrastructure, and advanced legislation for the implementation of investment projects. The Authorities of the autonomy and the whole Gagauz nation are open for a mutual beneficial cooperation and efficient development of new opportunities.

Due to competitive advantages that the region has, we feel confident to recommend some priority sectors for investment. These are agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, and business process outsourcing. However, of course, we do not want to limit ourselves only to these sectors. There are many other attractive business fields, and you know your business best. In any case, we will be delighted if you decide to join us. Let us develop the economic potential of the Gagauz autonomy together. We invite you to Gagauzia – the region of new opportunities!

Irina VLAH The Bashkan of Gagauzia

### **CONTENT**

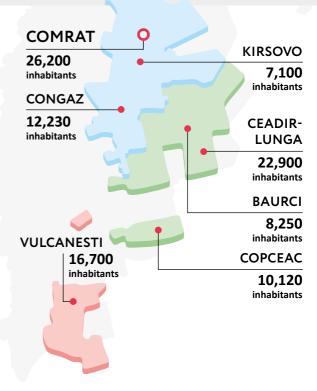
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### **GAGAUZIA PROFILE**

Political and administrative status	Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia
Yotal area	1,848 km²
Currency	Moldovan Leu (MDL)
📤 Capital	Comrat (26,200 inhabitants)
Total population	<b>162,000 people</b> (4.8% of the Moldovan population)
Spoken languages	Gagauzian, Russian, Turkish, Romanian

### **Q** LOCATION

Situated in the southern part of the Republic of Moldova, Gagauzia is bordered by the Ukrainian district of Odessa to the Fast and has administrative border with districts of Leova, Cantemir, and Cahul to the West. By car, it takes 1.5 hours to travel from the capital of Gagauzia, Comrat, to the capital of Moldova, Chisinau. Its location in the South of Moldova is close to the Danube ports of Giurgiulesti (International Free Port, Moldova), and to the river ports of Galati (Romania), Reni, and Ismail (both Ukraine).

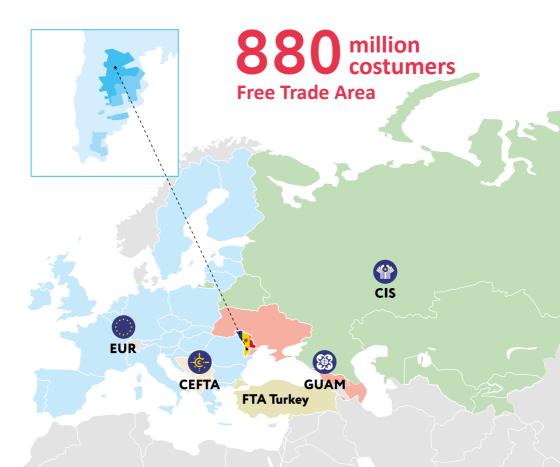




### **ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

The Republic of Moldova has signed 43 Free Trade Agreements (FTA), all of them are valid also for Gagauzia, including:

- DCFTA Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the European Union –
   500 million customers
- FTA with CIS countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) 250 million customers
- FTA with Turkey 80 million customers
- CEFTA Central European Free Trade Agreement (Moldova, Macedonia, Albania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and UNMIK (Kosovo) 30 million customers
- GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) 60 million customers



### **ECONOMIC POTENTIAL**

GDP in current prices, 2015	5.780 billion EUR
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity), 2015	4,514 EUR
Inflation rate, 2016	6.4%
Economic growth, 2016	4.1%

Note: General data for the Republic of Moldova

Leading industries in Gagauzia are agriculture and food processing (wine making and production of canned fruits and vegetables), textile, apparel, and footwear. Gagauzia is well known for its agricultural potential and traditions for decades, defined by common multicultural values in the region.

A total of 7,141 companies, of which 2,828 are the companies registered as legal entities, and 3,564 individuals, are registered in all economic sectors of Gagauzia. Circa 200 enterprises with foreign share ownership are registered in Gagauzia. In 2016, 241 economic operators, of which 17 are with foreign ownership, were registered in the Authonomy.

Products, works and services amounting to 1307.1 million MDL (in current prices) were produced in 2016, including manufacturing industry — 1297.6 million MDL, Gagauzia accounting for 3.7% of the total in the

Republic of Moldova. The index of industrial production as compared to 2015 made up 111.1%. In 2016, the share of industrial production in Gagauzia increased and amounted to 3.2% of the total volume of industrial production in the Republic of Moldova. In the structure of production, works and services by industrial enterprises of ATU Gagauzia, Comrat district accounts for 39.8% (521.0 million MDL), Ceadir-Lunga district accounts for 22.5% (293.6 million MDL), and Vulcanesti district – 37.7% (492.5 million MDL). The volume of products shipped in 2016 by surveyed industrial enterprises amounted to 1244.7 million MDL, of which 71.8% was exported (893.5 million MDL), 28.2% was placed on the domestic market of the country.

The gross agricultural output in all economic categories in 2016 made up 1792.7 million MDL (in current prices), which is by 18.3% more than the level of the previous year.

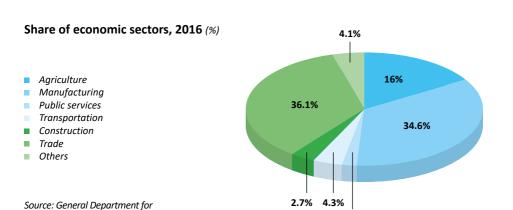
## Industrial and agricultural production, 2011-2016

(million EUR)

- Industrial production
- Agricultural production



Source: General Department for Economic Development, ATU Gagauzia



Businesses located in Gagauzia can export duty free to the West (EU), East (CSI) and Southeast (Balkans). 40% of Gagauzian exports have as destination the EU market, while 29.9% the CIS market. The Turkish

Economic Development, ATU Gagauzia

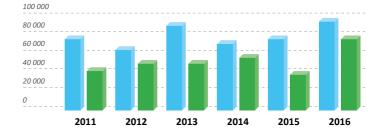
market represents an important niche for Gagauzian products (14.8% of total exports in 2016).

# Total volume of exports and imports, 2011-2016

(thousand EUR)

ExportImport

Source: Customs Service of the RM



2.2%

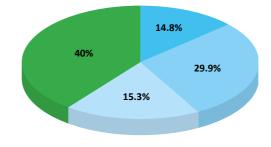
### Export by destination, 2016 (%)



Turkey

CIS

Other coutries



Source: Customs Service of the RM

# COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA AND TURKEY

The FTA signed by the Republic of Moldova and Turkey, entered into force on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, provides competitive advantages for both sides. The current situation stated in the table below, describes the actual trade relations between Turkey and Russia, regulated by the specified import rates.

Starting with November 1<sup>st</sup> 2016, the Republic of Moldova can act as a trade and production mediator between Turkish and Russian companies, as Turkish companies residing in the country will have the opportunity to export to Russia tax-free.

	EU	CIS	Turkey
Exports, 2016 (thousand EUR)	37,204	27,874	13,791
Main trade partners	Romania, Poland,Bulgaria, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Italy	Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan	
Main traded goods	Oil seeds, Beverages (Alcohol and Non-Alcohol) Glass products, Fuel / Industrial Oils / Knitwear, Apparel	Beverages (Alcohol and Non-Alcohol) Fruits and nuts, Cereals / Boilers and Equipment	Knitwear / Oil Seeds
Imports, 2016 (thousand EUR)	18,668	28,709	19,840
Main trade partners	Romania, Italy, Bulgaria, Germany, Poland	Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus	
Main traded goods	Boilers, Fuel / Industrial Oils Paper, Vehicles Cotton	Fuel / Industrial Oils Boilers, Bakery Products Cacao Products Wood Products	Knitwear Boilers Paper Metal Products

### Competitive advantage of the **FTA** with Turkey

Code of commodity group	Goods	Import duty, %
61	Clothing, knitwear	10
34	Detergents	5-11
30	Pharmaceutical preparations	2-7,5
74	Cooper and articles thereof	3-5
07	Vegetables, edible roots and tubers	5-15
87	Vehicles and Parts	5-20
08	Fruit and nuts	3-10



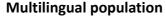








### TOP REASONS TO INVEST IN GAGAUZIA





Gagauzia offers a qualified and multilingual workforce, due to three official languages in the region: Romanian, Gagauzian, and Russian. The State University in Comrat registers an average of 520 graduates yearly. The skilled and multilingual workforce available is highly demanded within the trade regimes/relations the Republic of Moldova is involved in. Servicing and exporting to EU, CIS and Turkey can be done smoothly, customs free and without language barriers.

### **Special Legal status**



According to the Special Legal status, Gagauzia is an autonomous territorial unit (ATU) with decision power in the economic and fiscal areas.

### Law of ATU Gagauzia on Investments



Adopted on August 9, 2016, the Investment law in Gagauzia establishes incentives for investments from MDL 5 million (*creating at least 10 jobs*), while guarantying investment protection and support.

### Free Economic Zone



FEZ «Valkanes» and its subzones in the cities of Comrat and Ceadir-Lunga offer further preferences, including a reduced Corporate Income Tax *(CIT)* of 6%, customs office on site operating 24/7, 0% VAT on equipment imported etc.

### **Doing Business 2017 Ranking**

Moldova is constantly improving its business climate, being well positioned in the Doing Business ranking (44 / 190 in 2017).

### **Communication Infrastructure**



Communication infrastructure in Moldova, including Gagauzia, is at high performance level, achieving excellent coverage in both wired and wireless communications. Landline is available in most settlements, nonetheless the amount of mobile subscriptions is growing very fast compared to the landline.

# INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES & INCENTIVES

### Law on Investments in Gagauzia

This law defines the legal and economic framework for investment preferences, guarantees the protection of investor's rights, defines measures to support investments by public authorities, and provides arbitration of investors involving disputes.

### Investment incentives



Provision of natural grants by local public authorities – transfer of land, buildings, structures, machinery and equipment, and vehicles;



Tax incentives – refund of Corporate Income Tax every calendar year for a period of 5 years;



Investment subsidies – reimbursement of up to 30% (not more than 5 million MDL) of the actual costs for construction and installation works, purchasing of equipment without VAT, reimbursement of up to 50% of the retraining costs of personnel for the manufacturing production;



One-stop-shop – assistance provided to investors at documents collection and preparation, by reducing the permits issuing time.

Investment preferences are applied in the following areas: Manufacturing, Agricultural sector, Infrastructure, Energy efficiency and Renewable energy sources, Informational Technologies, Tourism and Hotel services.



# FREE ECONOMIC ZONE "VALKANES"



FEZ "Valkanes" in Vulcanesti City

The Free Economic Zone (FEZ) represents excellent platform for export-oriented manufacturing companies, which benefit of preferential customs and tax regime.

FEZ "Valkanes" was established in 1998. It is located in Vulcanesti city and includes two subzones in municipalities of Comrat and Ceadir-Lunga. The total area of FEZ "Valkanes" is circa 200 hectares, namely in Vulcanesti City – 107 hectares, Comrat Municipality – 50.3 ha, and Ceadir-Lunga Municipality – 42 ha.

FEZ "Vaklanes" is located in the proximity of 7 km to the East from the City center of Vulcanesti. The FEZ has immediate connection to European road E584 connecting the cities of Poltava (UKR) and Galati (ROU). The subzone is delimited to the East along the railway route connecting Vulcanesti with Chisniau and Black Sea port on Danube River. Out of the total area of the two subzones in Vulcanesti (107 ha), circa

Organizational Form	FEZ administration
Land Ownership	Public
Land Destination	Construction purposes
Total Land Area	107 ha
Free Buildable Area	20 ha
Land Purchase Price	0.65 EUR/m <sup>2</sup>

#### **Residents:**

"DK-Intertrade" SRL

(144 jobs, alcohol production);

• "Terra Impex" SRL

(231 jobs. construction net products):

• "Industrial Invest" SRL

(42 jobs, oil production);

"Metalmesh-Exim" SRL

(25 jobs, processing of non-genetically modified soybeans and the production of soy proteins);

• "MGK-Textil" SRL

(15 jobs, socks production, apparel);

### Activities that can be carried out in FEZ:

- Industrial production
- Foreign trade activity
- Sorting, packaging, labeling, etc.
- Public services, warehousing, logistic, construction materials and others.



SRL "Terra Impex", FEZ "Valkanes"



SRL "Industrial Invest", FEZ "Valkanes"

### Comrat subzone



FEZ "Valkanes", Comrat Subzone

Comrat subzone is located in the northern part of Comrat Municipality in the proximity of 4 km from the city center. The FEZ has immediat access to European road E584 connecting the cities of Poltava (*UKR*) and Galati (*ROU*). The land plot area is 50.3 hectares.

Organizational Form	FEZ administration
Land Ownership	Public
Land Destination	Construction purposes
Total Land Area	50.3 ha
Free Buildable Area	50.3 ha
Land Purchase Price	1.5 EUR/m²

### Activities that can be carried out:

- 10.3 ha intended for the construction of greenhouses and nursery;
- 40 ha intended for manufacturing, cold stores and warehouses, food and beverage industry, construction materials, metal and wood industry.

### Ceadir-Lunga subzone



FEZ "Valkanes", Ceadir-Lunga Subzone

Ceadir-Lunga subzone is located in the northern part of Ceadir-Lunga Municipality in the proximity of 3 km from the city center. The greenfield land plot of 42 hectares is situated in immediate proximity to the existing industrial zone of the municipality.

The subzone has connection to National roads R36 (Basarabeasca – Ceadir-Lunga – Taraclia) and R37 (Ceadir-Lunga – Comrat – Cantemir), and railway route connecting the municipality with Basarabeasca

(railway customs crossing point with Ukraine) and Blank See port on Danube River.

Organizational Form	FEZ administration
Land Ownership	Public
Land Destination	Construction purposes
Total Land Area	42 ha
Free Buildable Area	42 ha
Land Purase Price	0.65 EUR/m <sup>2</sup>

### **INCENTIVES IN FREE ECONOMIC ZONE (FEZ)**

**0% CIT** 

for a period of 3 (5) years when investing at least 1 (5) million USD

**0% VAT** 

no Excise and Customs duties

**10 YEARS** 

State guarantee on legislation changes

24/7

Customs office on site

Road and utilities infrastructure

EU border green lane (AEO)

**Dual vocational system** 



Great number of available productive labor with competitive cost



Ongoing professional support by FEZ Administration

### **BUSINESS START-UPS**

The Republic of Moldova is ranked 44 out of 190 countries in the Doing Business 2017 ranking

It takes

### 4 procedures and 1 day

to register a business in Gagauzia

### Forms of business entities in Moldova/Gagauzia:

- Limited liability company (SRL / LLC);
- Joint-stock company (SA / JSC);
- General partnership;
- Limited partnership;
- Co-operatives.

# Business incubator in Ceadir-Lunga

**Business Incubator in Ceadir-Lunga** – founded by the Moldovan Government in 2014, is supporting business start-ups by offering office and industrial spaces incl. infrastructure for rent (474 m² free office space) at a special rate (30% of market price in the 1st year, 50% in the 2nd, and 80% in the 3rd year), credits up to 60,000 MDL,

and consulting services free of charge. There are 15 residents registered, 5 in the manufacturing sector and 10 in the service sector.

### **Innovation center in Comrat**



Innovation Center "Innocenter" in Comrat

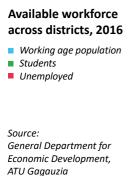
Incubator "Innocenter" Innovation Comrat - founded by the Comrat State University in 2012, in order to increase the competitiveness of the Gagauz region by developing small and medium enterprises (through technology transfer and marketing services, while building business relations to potential investors). The incubator has two registered residents, "Tomai-Vinex" company (winemaking, researching new technologies of grape processing) and "Goliat-Vita" company (furniture production with an innovative recycling process of the wood shavings).

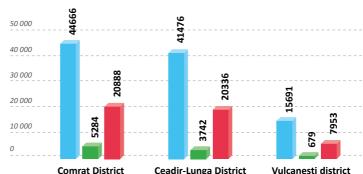
### **AVAILABLE WORKFORCE**

Working age population (15 to 64 years old)	103.8 thousand (64.1 % of the total population)
Employment rate (ratio of the employed to the working age population)	32%
Unemployment rate	2.6%
Average net wage	ca. 180 EUR / month
Full load labor cost	ca. 1.85 EUR / hour

Gagauzia's labor force combines low-cost with high-productivity, deriving from the industrial experience and history of the Republic of Moldova. While the medium age of Gagauzian population stands at 35 years, companies operating in the region have the possibility to develop their business

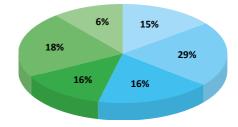
with the help of qualified professionals with multilingual skills. The Gagauz cultural diversity based on rich traditions, is characterized by openness, flexibility, tolerance, results orientation and hospitality of the population.





### Employment by economic sectors, 2016 (%)

- State administrationManufacturing
- Education
- Agriculture
- Trade
- Health



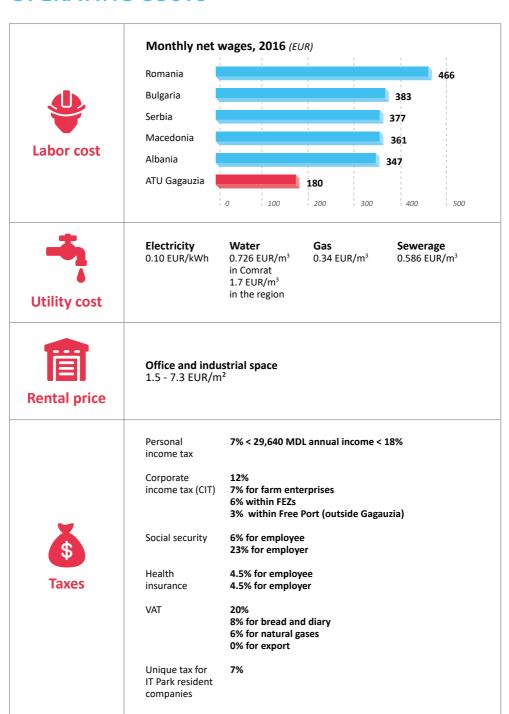
Source: General Department for Economic Development, ATU Gagauzia



- Comrat State University
- Comrat Vocational School
- Comrat Pedagogical College
- Ceadir-Lunga Vocational School
- 5 Svetlii Agricultural and Technical College
- **6** Vulcanesti Vocational School

Educational institution	Enrolled students (2016/2017)
Vocational schools (3 years lyceum + 2 years specialty)	791
Trade schools (4 years cycle)	883
University (3-5 years cycle)	1580
Training center (3-6 months cycle)	120

### **OPERATING COSTS**

























**FEZ Subzone** 

Business Incubator Ceadir-Lunga

Innovation center

### SRL "Transtest"

Location: Ceadir-Lunga



"Our company operates in Gagauzia since 2007, and has been manufacturing snack products, roasting and packing sunflower seeds, pistachios, and peanuts. We provide employment to 60 people.

We want to invest more in Gagauzia, because there is political stability in the region, and I think we will succeed. This is the main factor that drives us forward. In circumstances where there is political stability, it is possible to invest in business development, to attract investments, and to expand production."

### Iurii Meraji,

Director at "TransTest" SRL

### SRL "Azamet-Pro"

Location: Ceadir-Lunga



"We have our production facilities in Gagauzia, primarily, due to logistics, i.e. delivery of raw materials and access to raw material sources. In addition, I am a patriot of my small motherland, and I really want to see it developing and economically stable.

In Gagauzia, the authorities do not create obstacles for business. The Executive Committee of Gagauzia is ready to provide assistance in the opening of new markets. Besides that, we hope for entering into force of the new Investment Law that will contribute to the rapid business development."

#### Valentina Uzun,

Director at "Azamet-Pro" SRL

### SRL "Transoil-Oil-Group"

Location: Ceadir-Lunga



"Gagauzia has several advantages for running business here:

- 1. Geographical location of Autonomy is close to the international ports of Reni and Giurgiulesti. Logistics is the business driver!
- 2. The presence of large agricultural producers, which are the raw material suppliers to the fat-and-oil industry and flour-milling industry.
- 3. Political stability in the region, the dialogue between authorities and business.
- 4. The presence of young and enthusiastic staff that is ready to develop business in the region.

To improve the investment climate, I consider it is necessary to make decisions on granting tax incentives («tax holidays») in the first years of activity for new investors at the level of the Executive Committee and the People's Assembly of Gagauzia. We need a strong legislative framework to support investors, especially manufacturing enterprises.

We plan to expand the business in Gagauzia.

In the near future we plan to open in Comrat a company for processing agricultural products. Planned investment is around 2 million euros. The number of jobs will be about 120-150.

It is also planned to open a large transportation logistics center in Comrat.

And in Ceadir-Lunga it is planned to start production of cereals. The production capacity of the equipment will be 40 tons per day. Planned nvestment is about 500,000 euros"

#### Mihail Caraseni,

Director at SRL "Trans-Oil Group"

### SRL "Terra Impex"

Location: Vulcanesti, FEZ "Valkanes"



"Our company is focused on production, which is exported. We operate in Gagauzia in the Free Economic Zone "Valkanes". This gives us certain benefits – it is profitable to work here.

For the moment, we have 227 jobs created, and we have both the capability and the willingness to expand our production."

#### Mihai Vaida,

Director at SRL "Terra Impex"

### SRL "Industrial Invest"

Location: Vulcanesti, FEZ "Valkanes"



"Our company employs 42 people.

There is a Free Economic Zone in Gagauzia. The Autonomy is also very close to the sea port of Giurgiulesti. Once the process of the road modernization leading to the port is finished – the South of Moldova will be an exemplary one. Thus, the South of the Republic of Moldova is an attractive region to work. The Autonomy created a very comfortable business environment – everyone knows each other, supports and tries to help."

### Sergei Milkan,

Director at SRL "Industrial Invest"

### SRL "Ridiager-SV"

Location: Comrat



"In my opinion, Gagauzia has very important and significant advantages for running business here:

- New investment law helps investors to develop their business;
- Professional and strong team of the Executive Committee, headed by the Bashkan (Governor) of Gagauzia Irina Vlah, is very interested in economic development of the region.

At present, much attention is paid to investors who want to develop their business on the territory of the Autonomy. The new investment law and the authorities' openness to the business are the best indicators of it.

We are confident that the work on the territory of Gagauzia is not only possible but necessary. Our company creates new jobs and looks forward with confidence and optimism to the future, because we really feel the support of the Gagauzian Authorities."

#### Svetlana Camiliciu,

Director at SRL "Ridiager-SV"

### **Fujikura Automotive MLD SRL**

Location: Comrat, FEZ "Valkanes" | Comrat Subzone



"Fujikura has a factory in Chisinau. We employ more than 1000 people, producing and making exports for European market.

We needed a new extension of our business, and we decided for Gagauzia, based on the proactive and professional approach of ATU Gagauzia Authorities in supporting us in start-up process. An important decision factor is the availability of working force in the region, and the positive experience in our existing plant."

### Angela Piliughin,

Business Expansion Director Fujikura Automotive Europe Adminstrator Fujikura Automotive MLD





# INVEST IN MOLDOVA & INVEST GAGAUZIA HELP YOU

STRATEGY EVALUATION

DECISION&
INVESTMENT

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE AND PROVIDING INFORMATION

Identification of sector specific > investors

General data and statistics for investors feasability study support

Sector-specific details & information of legislation Joint project management assistance together with FEZs & IPs administration

Coordination and support of negotiations with local authorities

### LOCATION CONSULTING / SCOPING MISSION SUPPORT

Identification of project-specific

locoations

Identification of sourcing opportunities

Information on suitable locations Relevant site

presetantion
and
preselection

Site visit organization

Arranging
meetings with
public
authorities,
relevant
private sector
representatives

Final site
decision
support

### **AFTERCARE / POSTINVESTMENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Identification of and general information on relevant tax, legal and administrative issues

Connecting with relevant recruitment, legal, tax and other consulting companies

Facilitation and communication with public local and central authorities, as well as relevant private sector representatives

Advice on administrative and legal issues

Supporting investors and associations in their efforts to improve the business climate



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