

PostEurop EUROPA Stamps Contest 2020 Excludes Moldova



PostEurop publicity graphic

Traditionally, the organizers of this contest, PostEurop, launch on Europe Day (May 9). This year, the same date has been selected, regardless of the operational difficulties caused by various COVID-19 restrictions in the member countries.

Many countries (including Moldova) have delayed the issuance of their postage stamps until later in the year and thus are absent from the list of participants on the launch date of this contest. If these countries do not issue their EUROPA stamps before the end of the contest (September 9) they will be excluded.

Moldova has done very well in this contest in the past, coming in with a third place (bronze medal)

in the 2017 public vote with the “Castel Mimi” stamp.

Of the PostEurop participating countries that intend to issue EUROPA stamps in 2020, the following have yet to release their stamps and are missing from the contest: Ireland, Italy, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Greenland.

But other countries have yet to release their stamps, but are still included in the contest: Luxembourg, Lithuania, Belgium, Bulgaria and Ukraine.

IMPS is not happy about this decision by PostEurop to start the contest so early in the year, and just for the sake of tradition. Nor are we happy about other aspects of their contest.

We don't like their insistence on allowing only a

single stamp to be voted upon, even if the country has issued several EUROPA stamps that year. Most especially, we do not like the fact that only one country can be chosen, rather than several.”

For these and other reasons, there was an alternative contest organized in 2018 and 2019, “Best Europa Stamps - The Collector's Choice”

In this alternative contest, multiple countries can be selected and all of their EUROPA stamps are clearly displayed to the voters.

It is planned to launch the third, 2020, edition in November 2020, after all the participating countries have issued their stamps.

www.europa-stamps-contest.com

Inside this month's issue...

New Issues:
Envelopes in May



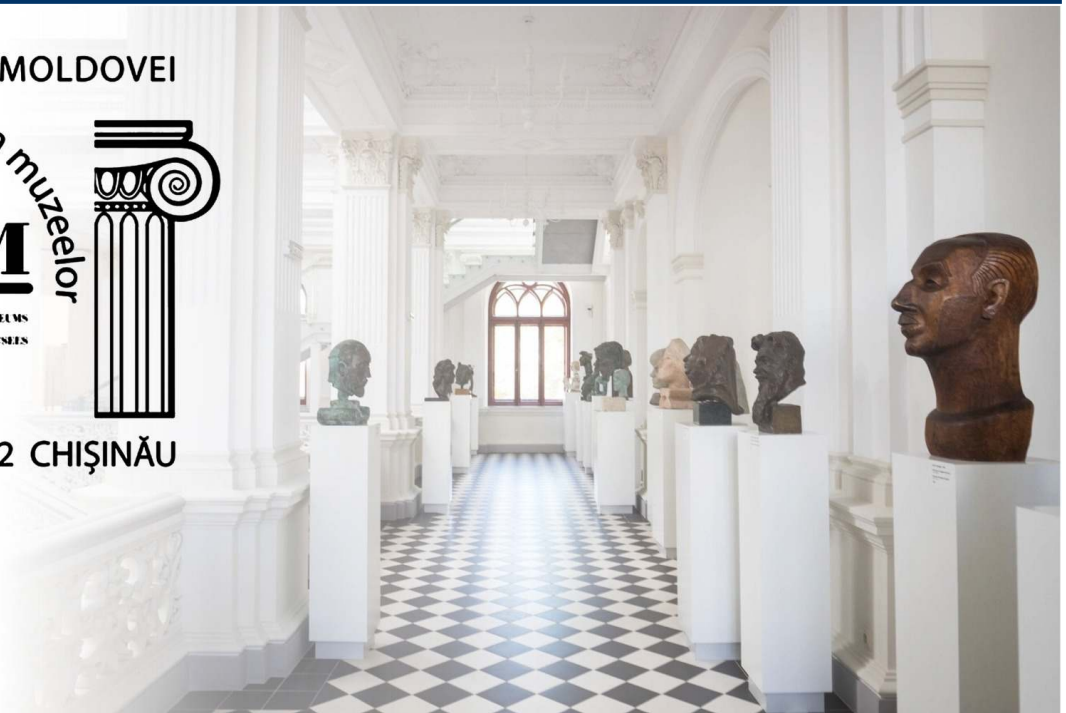
Expo News:
Towards 2021



New Virtual Gallery:
Museum Day



International Museum Day & New IMPS Virtual Gallery



May 18 was International Museum Day and Posta Moldovei issued a special commemorative postmark to celebrate the occasion.

As in previous years, the postmark (№ CS2020/4) features the emblem of ICOM, the International Council of Museums. It was issued at the main post office of Chisinau, MD-2012. On this occasion, we also announced the completion of a major new entry in the IMPS Virtual Exhibit Gallery, "Museum Heritage of the Republic of

Moldova". This extensive and exquisite 5-frame exhibit of postcards was realized by our esteemed colleague, Gheorghe Plugaru who describes his new work as follows:

The purpose of this exhibit focuses on my research to better reflect the heritage of museums in the Republic of Moldova which gives the country its unique identity. The exhibit includes a

selection of picture postcards (double and single-sided) on Moldovan museum themes (architectural, artistic, cultural, historic and scientific) from the medieval to the present days.

In this exhibit, Gheorghe has included just about every postcard printed in the Republic of Moldova on the topic of Museums and as such, this represents a major work.

The virtual gallery may be viewed in all its glory at:

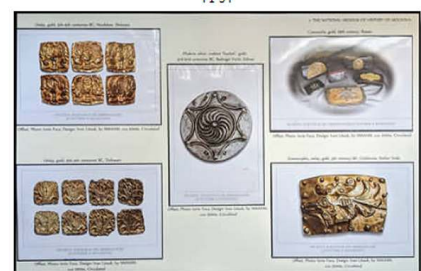
<https://www.moldovastamps.org/info-exhibits-gallery.asp?exhibitID=10>

"Museum Heritage of the Republic of Moldova"

Author	Gheorghe Plugaru (Moldova)	
Frames	5	
Class	Picture Postcards	
Type	Physical	
Status	Completed	
AWARDS RECEIVED		
EXHIBITION NAME	AWARD	
DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED		

GALLERY OF EXHIBIT SHEETS (CLICK ANY IMAGE TO ENLARGE)

FRAME 1



Towards 2021 - The Future of Physical Exhibitions

The COVID-19 pandemic has certainly decimated the 2020 philatelic exhibition plans both nationally and internationally. Everyone is looking forward to 2021 but if a cure or vaccine is still twelve months away, how much is there to look forward to, in reality?

Most of the major exhibitions planned for 2020 are postponed or cancelled. Those few that remain are not very likely to survive. This month, we already heard the sad news about the cancellation of the USA national exhibition, the Great American Stamp Show, which was due to be held in August.

All the 2020 World shows are impacted. "LONDON 2020" is postponed until 2022. "INDONESIA 2020" is postponed until November but it likely to be cancelled completely. "BULGARIA 2020" is cancelled outright.

We also heard about the cancellation of the STAMPEX show in London which was due to be held in September. This is significant, not only for UK residents, but also for international philatelists because STAMPEX was the "Plan B" venue for the LONDON 2020 world-level literature exhibition. The organizers now need to go to "Plan C" and hold this exhibition at the Royal Philatelic Society premises in December. But who could guarantee that even this will happen?

What is the FIP response? Not very much. On March 26, they issued a statement announcing the cancellation of all activities and wished us good health. Since then, they have been totally inactive and seem to have gone into hibernation. Clearly, they see no role for themselves in a world without physical exhibitions and this activity seems to be the extent of the interest in the field of philately.

If the FIP has no role in philately other than physical exhibitions and since they have published no alternatives, proposals or initiatives, one needs to wonder if this auspicious but conservative organizations has any relevancy in a post-COVID-19 world or indeed, has any future at all.

Looking forward to the big physical exhibitions planned for 2021, we see the following:



March: CAPE TOWN (South Africa): Possibly the first World exhibition on the African continent? The date of March may be optimistic, under the current circumstances. What will be the availability of flights and the level of willingness by participants to travel?

<https://capetown2021.org/>



May: IBRA 2021 (Essen, Germany): If predictions are to be believed, there may be a COVID-19 cure or vaccine available by this time but availability of international flights is likely to be very limited and the costs will be very high.

https://ibra2021.de/_ibra/



August: Great American Stamp Show (Hartford, Connecticut, USA): This is planned to be an extra-large show with international participation. It's reasonable to assume that COVID-19 will be fully controlled by this time. So long as the American Philatelic Society and the other co-sponsoring organizers of this show can survive until then, the likelihood of this show proceeding is high. Again, the availability and costs of flights for international participants is a concern.



November: NOTOS 2021 (Athens, Greece): This show should be a survivor. It has been exceptionally well organized and planned in advance. The organizers are making the best use of available internet technology to maximize online application processing. This regional show for Southern Europe should be well attended due to its proximity to its participation audience.

<https://hps.gr/notos2021/>

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has not dealt a fatal blow to physical philatelic exhibitions, it has certainly hurt it very badly and will continue to do so. It's impacts on exhibitions and on traditional philately in general, will be felt for a long time to come. It's time for some radical new thinking.

There has been a lot of talk about "virtual" philately in recent months. In terms of exhibitions, this means the presentation of the exhibit material using galleries on websites, rather than in physical form. This is certainly an excellent idea and IMPS has already embraced the concept. However, as things currently stand, virtual exhibitions are very limited and require individual clubs and organizations to develop web pages on their sites to support the display. Web design services are usually not free and few organizations have the financial resources to invest in such things. Additionally, there are presently no viable virtual alternatives to formal, competitive, physical exhibitions.

Together with our partners, IMPS intends to develop just such a system. We envision a shared platform, freely available to participating stamp clubs and formal philatelic organizations, which will provide a complete, end-to-end alternative to physical exhibitions, using an online system. It will be possible to set up all kinds of competitive exhibitions, nominate juries, declare rule and invite participation. Further details will be announced in the coming months.

New Envelope Issue: Lucian Blaga

Issued on May 8, this prepaid postal stationery envelope was designed by Oleg Cojocari and printed in 10,000 copies.

Lucian Blaga was a Romanian philosopher, poet, playwright and novelist. He was a commanding personality of the Romanian culture of the interbellum period. As a philosopher and writer, he was highly acclaimed for his originality.

The envelope (№ U416) has a retail price of 3.00L. The fixed stamp has a face value of 1.75L, corresponding to the tariff for 20g letters with domestic destinations. The stamp features a por-



trait of Blaga. The cachet on the envelope features photos of some of Blaga's published works.

Whilst Poșta Moldovei does not issue official FDCs for postal stationery, they

do issue official first day cancellations with which, local philatelists can realize private FDCs. Cancellation (№ CFU416) was dated May 8, 2020 and issued at the main post office, MD2012 in Chişinău.

New Envelope Issue: End of the Second World War - 75 Years



Issued on May 8, this prepaid postal stationery envelope was designed by Oleg Cojocari and printed in 5,000 copies.

The envelope (№ U417) has a retail

price of 3.50L. The fixed stamp has a face value of 1.75L, corresponding to the tariff for 20g letters with domestic destinations.

The stamp and envelope cachet features

elements of the “Eternity” war memorial complex in Chişinău, which was recently renovated on the orders of the President of Moldova.

Whilst Poșta Moldovei does not issue official FDCs for postal stationery, they do issue official first day cancellations with which, local philatelists can realize private FDCs. Cancellation (№ CFU417) was dated May 8, 2020 and issued at the main post office, MD2012 in Chişinău.



Moratorium on New Stamp Issues Continues

As reported in last month's IMPS Newsletter, the leadership of Posta Moldovei put an unannounced moratorium on the issuance of new postage stamps, effective from February 1 and prior to the special restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, in the month of May, no new stamps issued and the moratorium is ongoing.

Apparently, whatever contractual arrangements Posta Moldovei had with their long-term philatelic printing suppliers, Nova Imprim, were set aside and no interim arrangements were made. This is evidenced by the existence of a public bidding (tender) process that appeared on the website, e-licitatie.md, during the month.

The bidding process involves a 2.5 million Lei contract for printing of various classes of philatelic materials.

The process commenced on May 4 and was to end on May 27 but, appar-

ently, is still ongoing. A final winner is expected to be announced in the first week of June.

Thus far, the moratorium has had a catastrophic impact on the Philatelic Plan for 2020. Only one stamp has been issued in 2020 and so far, nine planned issues have been abandoned or postponed. We still have no information regarding the motives of the Posta Moldovei leadership for this action.

Curiously, in May, IMPS received a letter from the Interim Director-General of Posta Moldovei, Vitalie Zaharia, inviting us to put forward suggestions for the Philatelic Plan for 2021. However, considering the disrespectful attitude the leadership has had to the 2020 Plan, into which, IMPS had put a great deal of work, it is unlikely the we will accept his invi-



Philatelic Plan 2020

tation.

IMPS continues to monitor the situation closely and on a weekly basis.

We can only hope that the future of Moldovan Philately does not hang on the thread of Mr Zaharia's whim.



Vitalie Zaharia, Interim Director-General of Posta Moldovei
Photo: Facebook

The "Great American Stamp Show" 2020 Cancelled!



AUGUST 20-23, 2020

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

CO-SPONSORS:

A. B. A. A. F. S.

Sad philately news this month coming from the United States. The organizers of the national stamp exhibition have announced its cancellation due to COVID-19 fears.

The "Great American Stamp Show" or simply "StampShow" as it was previously named, is the American Philatelic Society's prestige annual exhibition and the most important of it's kind in the

United States. For American philately, this annual is the largest and most heavily attended. It represents the most important national philatelic exhibition in America.

The show was originally named "StampShow" but was renamed in 2019 after the results of a public vote. It was to be held in Hartford, Connecticut between August 20 and 23.

IMPS has had great success at this show in the past, having earned a gold medal at the 2019 show in Omaha, Nebraska. This news about the cancellation of the 2020 show is particularly sad for us and we had planned to participate with two major exhibits.

Considering the high average age of many of the attendees and participants, the organizers felt that the risk of exposure to the threat of COVID-19 would outweigh the benefits of holding the show. The State of Connecticut was especially badly impacted by the pandemic and having consulted with the State medical experts, the decision was made to cancel the show. IMPS applauds the decision of the organizing committee.

The Hartford venue has been confirmed for the Great American Stamp Show in 2014. The next scheduled venue will be Chicago in 2021, which will be an extra-large affair with invited international participation.

The Most Beautiful Stamps of Moldova Series: Part III: Airships (Dirigibles) 2003

In our third instalment of this series, we look at the highly elegant stamps from the series "Airships (Dirigibles)", released on April 22, 2003.

This series was designed by the well-known Moldovan artist, Vitaliu Pogolşa, who has designed many stamps for his country.

The stamps are especially appealing, not only for the fine artwork but also for the novel theme. Moldova had not issued stamps for this topic previously, nor in the years since.

The stamps were printed by Cartor Security Printing in France.

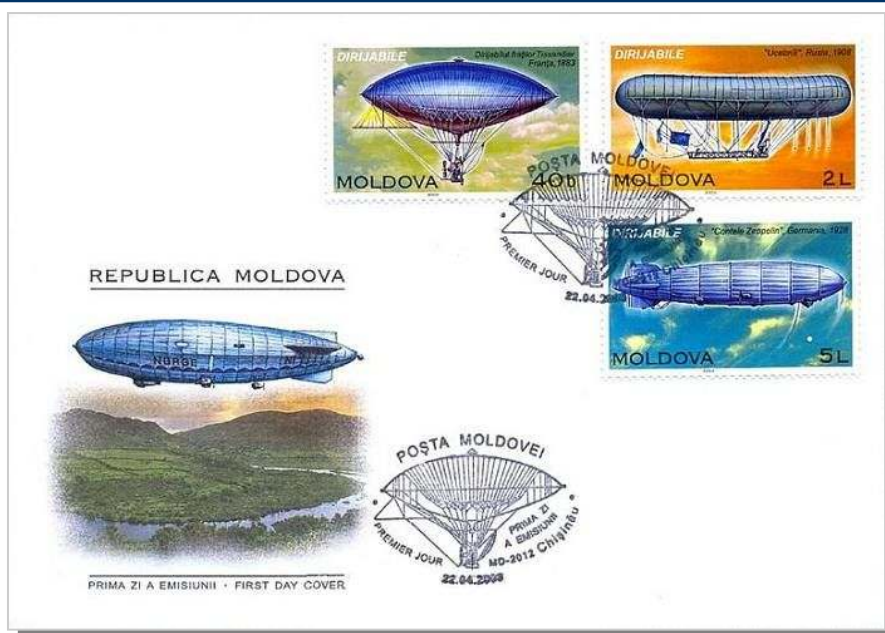
№ 456 (40b) Features the Tissandier airship (France, 1883): 48.00mm x 30.00mm, Perforated 13¼. Printed 50,000.

№ 457 (2.00L) Features the airship "Uchebnyi" (Russia, 1908): 48.00mm x 30.00mm, Perforated 13¼. Printed 50,000.

№ 458 (5.00L) Features the airship "Graf Zeppelin" (Germany, 1928): 48.00mm x 30.00mm, Perforated 13¼. Printed 50,000.

All stamps were printed on minisheets of 10v and are now valuable rarities.

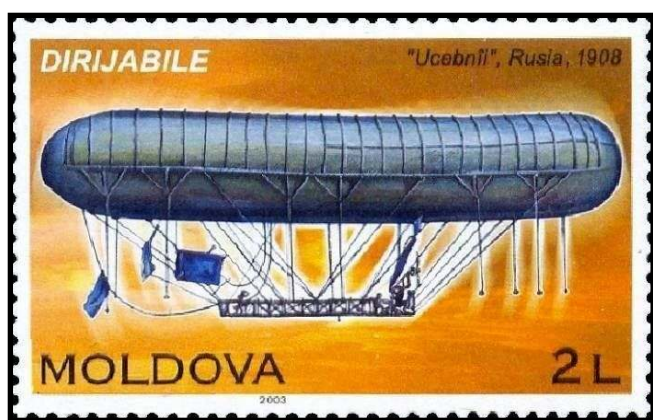
The official FDC (№ 456-458 FDC) was printed in a small quantity of only 500 pieces. The cachet features the airship "Norge" (Norway, 1926).



№ 456-458 FDC



№ 456



№ 457



№ 458

From the Blog Site of Eric Contesse:
EUROPA 2012 Stamp Set From Moldova - FDC

Originally published 28.05.2012

Eric Contesse (Lyon, France) has written over 300 blog articles about philatelic material from Moldova since 2011. Each month, we will present one (or more) of his articles.

<https://timbredujura.blogspot.com>



On April 18, 2012, the Post of Moldova has issued an interesting set of two EUROPA stamps whose theme this year is "Visit ..." ("Vizitați ...").

These two stamps, issued each in sheet of 10 stamps as well as in a booklet (I'll speak about it later), are included on the nice official FDC (Figure 1) (print run : 400 only !), laid out and illustrated by the designer of the stamps, Alexander Kornienko.

Thank you very much Sergio for this great cover with the FDC postmark of Chișinău, soberly featuring the logo of these EUROPA series :-)

The Moldovan Post has chosen to make us (re)discover two important places of country's cultural, religious and economic heritage: the Curchi Monastery (L 4.20 stamp) and the "Mileștii Mici" wine complex (L 5.40 stamp).

To note also the illustration of the envelope (Figure 1) depicting some other touristic attractions of the country (statue of Stefan cel Mare and Cathedral of Chisinau, National Museum of Archaeology and History...).

Curchi Monastery (18th and 19th century) is one of the largest Orthodox complexes of Moldova with its many buildings and churches including the Baroque cathedral (designed by Italian architect Rastrelli), the highest in the country with its 57 meters.

The "Mileștii Mici" Quality Wines Complex, a state enterprise established in 1969, is a symbol of the Moldovan wine production. More than 1.5 million bottles of high quality (a world record !) are stored in a network of underground over 200 km-long tunnels !

As mentioned above, these two stamps have also been issued in a beautiful booklet that I've had the chance to receive inside this letter !

The cover (Figure 2) evokes the vineyards of the country (nearly 150,000 hectares, 125,000 tons of wine produced annually) and a couple in traditional costume during a welcoming ceremony with bread (and probably salt...) and wine of course !

To note that this "Bread and Salt" ceremony is the main topic of the EUROPA stamp to be issued this year by Russia.



Figure 1



Figure 2



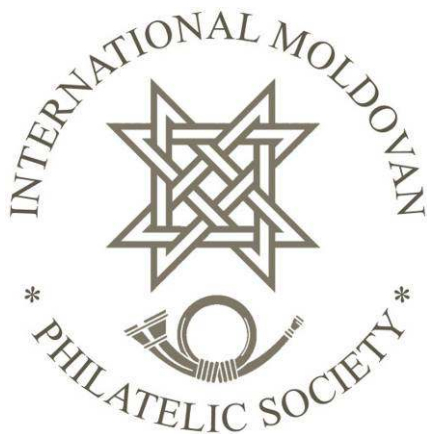
Figure 3

The inside part of this booklet (Figure 3) comprises two sheetlets, each consisting of three stamps and a coupon. These two coupons refer respectively to the route of the monasteries and the wine route.

This wine route includes Cricova, the other major winery in the country, already featured several times on Moldo-

van stamps. As for Curchi Monastery, it has already been the subject of stamp issued in 1996 and 2005.

This nice and successful stamp series is really an invitation to visit Moldova ... without moderation !



THE INTERNATIONAL MOLDOVAN
PHILATELIC SOCIETY

CHIȘINĂU
LYON
SÃO PAULO

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Equality and Passion.**

On This Month...

10 Years Ago...

May 9, 2010 saw the release of the stamp with label "65th Anniversary of the Victory in the Second World War".

A 75th anniversary stamp was planned for 2020 but the issue was abandoned due to the current moratorium on the issuance of new stamps.



Full technical details at
https://www.moldovastamps.org/catalogue_stamps_issue.asp?issueID=236

20 Years Ago...

May 9, 2000 saw the release of the highly popular annual EUROPA stamps issue, "The Foundations of the European Union".

Although planned for release in March, the 2020 annual EUROPA stamps for Moldova have yet to appear. These are another victim of the moratorium of the issuance of the stamps.



Full technical details at
https://www.moldovastamps.org/catalogue_stamps_issue.asp?issueID=109

Next Month...

As we have said earlier, the leadership of Posta Moldovei placed a moratorium of the issuance of new postage stamps, which came into effect on February 1 2020, well before the beginning of the current COVID-19 crisis. There are no official indications from Posta Moldovei when any new postage stamps will be issued by the Republic of Moldova again.

On this basis, we cannot forecast the content of the June 2020 Newsletter. We will continue to monitor this situation on a weekly basis.

In the meantime. Our valuable time resources will continue be spent on research and development work on a virtual exhibition system.

Newsletters Archive...

The archive of previous IMPS newsletters is now on the site.

www.moldovastamps.org/info-newsletters.asp