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#Justice4Moldova

Strategy on ensuring the independence and integrity
of the justice sector for the years 2022 – 2025

Monitoring period: 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2025

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#Justice4Moldova

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ACRONYMS

AAIJ	Court Administration Agency
ADJAJ	Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration
ARIJ	Legal Information Resources Agency
AGE	Public Institution “e-Governance Agency”
AJGS	State-Guaranteed Legal Aid
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice
CNAJGS	National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid
CSM	Superior Council of Magistracy
CSP	Superior Council of Prosecutors
SCJ	Supreme Court of Justice
GEJ	Justice Experts Group
INJ	National Institute of Justice
MAI	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MJ	Ministry of Justice
PIGD	Integrated Case Management Programme
PNIJ	National Court Portal
PG	Prosecutor General’s Office
SIA	Automated Information System
SIJ	Judicial Information System
STISC	Public Institution “Information Technology and Cyber Security Service”

INTRODUCTION

The Strategy for Ensuring the Independence and Integrity of the Justice Sector for 2022–2025 was adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova through Law No. 211/2021. The Strategy represents a key step in the efforts to strengthen a modern, transparent, accountable, and independent justice sector. Chapter II of the Strategy sets out the strategic directions and specific objectives to be achieved in pursuit of its overall goal: establishing an efficient, accessible, and trustworthy justice system. The Strategy’s monitoring framework also encourages the preparation of alternative monitoring reports by civil society organisations.

This monitoring report is an alternative assessment prepared by the team of experts from the Justice Experts Group (GEJ) in collaboration with experts of the #Justice4Moldova project from the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE). Its primary purpose is to assess the progress achieved and the challenges encountered in the implementation of the Strategy, based on both qualitative and quantitative analysis and in accordance with the methodology described below. For each objective under the strategic directions, the report examines the actions planned and implemented during the monitoring period and identifies priorities to be considered in future justice-sector policy documents.

The report presents the main findings regarding **progress** achieved, implementation **challenges**, and **recommendations** related to each of the three strategic directions. It covers developments throughout the entire implementation period of the Strategy.

The conclusions of this report are based on a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the implementation of the planned actions. The assessment sought to determine the extent to which the measures and actions reported as implemented corresponded to the expected results and outcome indicators established in the Strategy’s Action Plan.

The preparation of this monitoring report was based on information contained in the monitoring reports on the degree of implementation of the measures set out in the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy, prepared by the Ministry of Justice, including information provided by the authorities responsible for implementing the actions envisaged in the Action Plan, as well as information from publicly available sources.

METHODOLOGY

This monitoring report on the implementation of the Strategy for Ensuring the Independence and Integrity of the Justice Sector for 2022–2025 has been prepared as part of an independent exercise to monitor the actions implemented during the Strategy’s implementation period.

The monitoring covers the implementation of the activities set out in the Strategy, under the following strategic directions:

- **Strategic Direction I** – Independence, accountability and integrity of justice sector actors;
- **Strategic Direction II** – Access to justice and the quality of the administration of justice;
- **Strategic Direction III** – Efficient and modern administration of the justice sector.

Each strategic direction has been monitored through both quantitative and qualitative assessments, based on the methodological approach described below.

The **quantitative assessment** involved evaluating progress in the implementation of all due and ongoing actions included in the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy, corresponding to the strategic objectives and directions. The quantitative assessment methodology applied in this Report is based on the approach for assessing the level of implementation of actions established by Order of the Minister of Justice No. 144 of 8 June 2022² on the establishment of a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy for Ensuring the Independence and Integrity of the Justice Sector for 2022–2025 and its Action Plan. The basic ratings provided for in Order No. 144/2022 (“achieved”, “partially achieved”, and “not achieved”) are further disaggregated in this Report into five levels of assessment of the degree of implementation of each action, with a corresponding score assigned to each level, as follows:

Assessment of the Degree of Implementation	Rating	Meaning
Implemented without shortcomings	4	The action was implemented in accordance with the established indicators and in compliance with the legal provisions governing the legislative procedure and transparency in decision-making. The action was implemented within the deadline set in the Action Plan or with a delay not exceeding six calendar months. The content of the adopted legislative act or the actions undertaken is consistent with the set objectives.
Implemented with minor shortcomings	3	The action was implemented with minor shortcomings related to deviations from compliance with the legal provisions governing the legislative procedure and transparency in decision-making and/or delays of up to six calendar months in relation to the deadline established in the Action Plan.
Implemented with substantial shortcomings	2	The action was implemented with substantial shortcomings, including cases where the content of the adopted act or the actions undertaken are not fully aligned with the set objectives and/or the outcome indicators established in the Action Plan, or where the legal provisions governing the legislative procedure and transparency in decision-making were not complied with.
Initiated	1	The action was initiated but had not been completed by the end of the Strategy’s implementation period.
Not initiated/Not implemented	0	No measures to implement the action were initiated.

² Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, Order of the Minister of Justice No. 144 of 8 June 2022 approving the methodology for monitoring implementation of the Strategy, available at: https://justice.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/metodologia_de_monitorizare.pdf.

The **qualitative assessment** involves analysing and evaluating the actions set out in the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy in relation to the strategic objectives and directions, and summarising the main findings regarding: (a) progress achieved, (b) constraints encountered, and (c) recommendations for the future policy framework in the field of justice.

In preparing this Report, information was drawn from the monitoring reports on the degree of implementation of the measures set out in the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy, prepared by the Ministry of Justice, including information provided by the authorities responsible for implementing the Strategy in accordance with the Action Plan approved by Law No. 211/2021, as well as information from publicly available sources.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of the monitoring exercise, we assess that, out of the total of **156 actions** envisaged for the implementation of the Strategy, **47 (30.1%) were implemented without shortcomings, 23 (14.7%) were implemented with minor shortcomings, 34 (21.8%) were implemented with substantial shortcomings, 24 (15.4%) were initiated, and 28 (17.9%) were not initiated/not implemented.**

It is important to note that, when interpreting these results from a quantitative perspective, due account should be taken of the fact that the Action Plan accompanying the Strategy was not updated during the implementation period. As a result, some of the actions included in the Plan have diminished in relevance or become partially outdated, particularly in the context of developments in relations with the European Union. In particular, the bilateral screening process, the granting of EU candidate country status, the adoption of the Rule of Law Roadmap, and the development and implementation of the National Accession Programme have generated new priorities and reshaped the reform agenda. Under these circumstances, certain actions initially envisaged in the Action Plan have either been incorporated into new strategic documents or no longer fully correspond to current realities and needs, which affects the assessment of their degree of implementation.

Strategic Direction I

For Strategic Direction I, 4 general objectives and 15 specific objectives were established, to be achieved through the implementation of 56 actions. Of these, 20 actions (35.71%) were implemented without shortcomings, 14 actions (25%) were implemented with minor shortcomings, 5 actions (8.93%) were implemented with substantial shortcomings, 4 actions (7.14%) were initiated, and 13 actions (23.21%) were not implemented.

The implementation of Strategic Direction I – “Independence, Accountability and Integrity of Justice Sector Actors” during the period 2022–2025 demonstrates substantial progress at the legislative and institutional levels, but limited and uneven progress in practical implementation, which has affected the systemic impact of the reforms.

In terms of **progress**, the most significant development was the sustained effort to reform the legislative framework, particularly through the alignment of ordinary legislation with the constitutional amendments relating to the justice system. New mechanisms for the selection, evaluation and promotion of judges and prosecutors were established, as well as mechanisms for judicial review of the acts of judicial self-governing bodies. The operationalisation of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors, including following the external evaluation processes (pre-vetting), contributed to the formal strengthening of institutional independence. Furthermore, the implementation of external integrity assessment mechanisms for judges of the Supreme Court of Justice and the courts of appeal, court presidents and deputy presidents, judges serving on the specialised anti-corruption panels of the Chisinau Court (Buiucani seat), prosecutors within the specialised prosecution offices and the Prosecutor General’s Office, as well as chief prosecutors of territorial prosecution offices, represented an essential step in the vetting of the professional corps of judges and prosecutors and in enhancing their accountability.

In parallel, progress was achieved in clarifying the competences of anti-corruption authorities, adjusting the disciplinary framework, and developing transparency and public communication tools, including through the public broadcasting of meetings of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors, the establishment of

information centres for litigants, and the expansion of the network of paralegals. At the same time, perception surveys on the justice system were launched and conducted, providing an empirical basis for assessing developments within the sector.

However, the progress achieved is offset by a number of **structural and functional challenges**. In particular, the implementation of reforms has been affected by systemic delays in the adoption of secondary legislation, which has generated operational difficulties in the application of the newly established mechanisms. The absence of independent evaluations of the reforms implemented limits the ability to assess their actual impact and to adjust policies accordingly. Significant deficiencies persist in institutional functionality, including with regard to the operational capacity of the Supreme Court of Justice and the courts of appeal. These deficiencies stem from the slow pace of external evaluation procedures for candidates for judicial office at the Supreme Court of Justice and the courts of appeal, the cumbersome conduct of competitions for vacant judicial positions, as well as insufficient human resources.

With regard to integrity, although the regulatory framework has been considerably strengthened, essential functional mechanisms remain absent, including mechanisms for reporting ex-parte communications. In addition, ethical and disciplinary instruments are not used effectively, as evidenced by the absence of systemic opinions and recommendations. Furthermore, because reforms concerning asset control and conflicts of interest were implemented with delay, the mechanisms for monitoring the assets of judges and prosecutors have not been independently evaluated.

As to transparency and public trust, although communication and information tools have been developed, they have not been integrated into a systemic approach. The lack of a unified methodology for perception surveys, combined with the insufficient use of their findings, limits the authorities' ability to respond adequately to public perceptions. Significant discrepancies persist between the perceptions of different professional groups, alongside a declining trend in public confidence in the reforms, pointing to broader concerns regarding the credibility and effectiveness of the interventions undertaken.

The most vulnerable area remains that of professions related to the justice system (judicial enforcement officers, judicial experts, notaries, lawyers, mediators, and authorised administrators), where implementation has been fragmented and a significant number of actions remain unimplemented. Coherent policies regarding the organisation, accountability, and quality standards of these professions are lacking, as are effective monitoring and regulatory mechanisms, which undermines the integrated functioning of the justice system.

In this context, a **strategic recalibration** should be a **priority** for the next justice sector policy document, focused not so much on the development of new rules as on strengthening effective implementation and systemic coherence. Priority should be given to establishing mechanisms for the independent evaluation of implemented reforms, including selection, evaluation, and disciplinary procedures. In addition, the operationalisation of institutions should be accelerated, as should, where necessary, the processes for filling vacant judicial and prosecutorial positions, particularly at the level of the Supreme Court of Justice and the courts of appeal.

Functional mechanisms to ensure integrity should be developed and implemented, including through the clear regulation of ex-parte communications and the activation of the role of ethics and disciplinary bodies. In parallel, the framework for monitoring assets and interests should be strengthened, including through the evaluation of the effectiveness of existing mechanisms.

With regard to transparency, it is essential to establish a unified methodology for assessing perceptions of the justice system and to integrate the findings of perception surveys into the decision-making process in order to inform adjustments to public policies. At the same time, an integrated communication strategy at the justice system level should be developed to reduce the current fragmentation and contribute to strengthening public trust.

Last but not least, it is imperative to develop a public policy dedicated to professions related to the justice system, aimed at standardising the quality of services, strengthening accountability mechanisms, and clarifying the regulatory framework, including in the fiscal and social spheres. Only through an integrated and coherent approach to these dimensions can the efficient and credible functioning of the justice system as a whole be ensured.

Strategic Direction II

For Strategic Direction II, 4 general objectives and 13 specific objectives were established, to be achieved through the implementation of 47 actions. Of these, 21 actions (44.68%) were implemented without shortcomings, 13 actions (27.66%) were implemented with substantial shortcomings, 6 actions (12.77%) were initiated, and 7 actions (14.89%) were not implemented.

The analysis of Strategic Direction II – “Access to Justice and the Quality of the Administration of Justice” reveals a moderate level of implementation, characterised by regulatory progress, but also by shortcomings in terms of operationalisation and impact. The overall degree of implementation confirms a partially effective implementation, with evident disparities across objectives.

In terms of achievements, a positive trend can be observed in strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework for access to justice, particularly for vulnerable groups. The alignment of legislation with international standards, the development of victim protection mechanisms (including for victims of domestic violence and sexual offences), the expansion of specialised legal aid, and the introduction of procedural facilitation measures (e.g. fee exemptions) indicate a consistent commitment to improving access to justice. In parallel, procedural modernisation measures, such as the use of videoconferencing and the development of probation services, have contributed to increasing the efficiency of judicial proceedings.

With regard to the quality of the administration of justice, the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice constitutes the main structural progress, through the redefinition of its role in ensuring the uniformity of judicial practice. The tools developed (thematic fact sheets, judicial errors bulletins, etc.) indicate the beginning of the institutionalisation of mechanisms aimed at promoting consistent judicial practice. As regards professional training, implementation has been completed in full, with notable progress in expanding interdisciplinary training, digitalising the training process, and strengthening the institutional capacities of the National Institute of Justice.

An important structural instrument for enhancing the quality of the administration of justice is the Regulation on Minimum Quality Standards for the Organisational and Administrative Activities of Courts and Courts of Appeal, approved by the Superior Council of Magistracy through Decision No. 457/29 of 18 October 2023. The Regulation provides a unified framework for assessing the organisational performance of courts. The CSM also contributes to the quality of the administration of justice through the regulation of the random allocation of cases, caseload management, the evaluation of judges’ professional

performance, and the organisation of continuous training through the National Institute of Justice.

In the area of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, the adoption of the regulatory framework on mediation and the launch of arbitration reform represent important areas of progress, complemented by measures aimed at promoting and expanding state-guaranteed mediation.

The **main challenges** relate to a systemic implementation deficit. A significant number of actions were implemented with delays, implemented only partially, or not implemented at all, thereby reducing the overall impact of the reforms. Critical gaps persist, including the absence of a functional mechanism for compensating victims of crime, delays in the reform of the enforcement of court judgments, and the failure to complete the progressive system for the execution of sentences. The digitalisation of access to justice remains fragmented and lacks integration.

In the area of the quality of the administration of justice, the main challenges relate to the lack of operational tools, including the failure to integrate standard judgment templates into the Integrated Case Management Programme (PIGD), the absence of guidelines for the individualisation of sanctions, and the lack of a systematic analysis of judicial practice. Platforms for professional dialogue continue to be used inconsistently and have not generated systemic effects.

With regard to professional training, although quantitative performance indicators have been fully achieved, no assessment has been conducted of their impact on judicial practice, which limits the relevance of the results. In the field of ADR, a gap persists between the regulatory framework and the actual use of the available mechanisms, particularly in cases involving minors, as well as delays in the reform of arbitration.

The **recommendations** for the next justice sector policy document focus on a strategic reorientation towards effectiveness. Priority should be given to establishing a functional mechanism for compensating victims of crime and developing an integrated system for the digitalisation of justice. It is also necessary to institutionalise a permanent mechanism for reviewing codified legislation and to accelerate reforms concerning the enforcement of judgments and the execution of sentences.

As to the quality of the administration of justice, priorities include standardising the drafting of judgments through the use of templates integrated into the PIGD and establishing a systematic mechanism for analysing judicial practice. In the area of professional training, impact indicators and ex-post evaluations should be introduced.

In the area of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, regulatory reforms should be complemented by operational measures, including monitoring the effective use of mediation and arbitration and assessing the impact of mandatory pre-mediation. Although the State Register of Mediators includes more than 200 registered mediators, a significant proportion are listed as having their activities suspended or do not actively provide mediation services, owing to the absence of a profitable, or at least viable, business model. The effectiveness of Law No. 9/2026 will depend on the consolidation of this professional market following the law's effective entry into force.

In conclusion, Strategic Direction II reflects significant regulatory progress that has not been sufficiently translated into operational results, highlighting the need for a recalibration of public policies towards effective implementation and measurable outcomes.

Strategic Direction III

For Strategic Direction III, 3 general objectives and 21 specific objectives were established, to be achieved through the implementation of 53 actions. Of these, 6 actions (11.3%) were implemented without shortcomings, 9 actions (17.0%) were implemented with minor shortcomings, 16 actions (30.2%) were implemented with substantial shortcomings, 14 actions (26.4%) remained under implementation, and 8 actions (15.1%) were not implemented.

The most significant **progress** was achieved in the reform of the judicial and prosecution service map, as well as in the development of the digital justice ecosystem. Following a prolonged period of stagnation, the adoption of Law No. 135/2024 on the revision of the judicial map, combined with the reorganisation of the Prosecutor's Office pursuant to Order of the Prosecutor General No. 12/3 of 24.01.2025, enabled the realignment of institutional structures with the new architecture of the sector. As a result, the number of territorial prosecutor's offices was reduced from 36 to 14, bringing them into line with the judicial map.

At the institutional level, a significant step was the establishment of the Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration, created through the merger of the Court Administration Agency (AAIJ) and the Legal Information Resources Agency (ARIJ) (Government Decision No. 748/2024). Through this reorganisation, court administration and the development of judicial information systems were brought under a single management structure, addressing the need for greater efficiency.

With regard to digitalisation, the formal designation of the Integrated Case Management Programme (PIGD) as an "implemented" system, after 16 years of piloting, represents a notable development. At the same time, interoperability with e-government platforms (MPass, MSign, MPay, MNotify, and MConnect) was strengthened, while the launch of the JUSTAT platform for judicial statistics contributes to the more effective use of available data. In addition, user training delivered through the National Institute of Justice, the Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration, and the Prosecutor General's Office was expanded considerably.

In parallel, minimum quality standards for courts were adopted through CSM Decision No. 457/29 of 18.10.2023. Within the Prosecutor's Office, the "Framework of Excellence" concept was developed and piloted in 3 territorial prosecutor's offices. However, the pilot was discontinued at the beginning of 2025 following the termination of external funding, and formal efficiency standards have yet to be established through a binding normative act.

In addition, the remuneration of court support staff was subject to annual legislative adjustments.

The **main challenges** identified relate to staff shortages within the courts and the Prosecutor's Office, which directly affect the operational capacity of the justice system. The situation has been exacerbated by the extraordinary evaluation process, which has resulted in significant departures from the system. Thus, of the total 524 judicial positions provided for by law, only approximately 388 were filled at the beginning of 2026, with the shortage being most acute at the level of the courts of appeal and the Supreme Court of Justice.

At the same time, capital investments in court infrastructure have lagged behind. As of 31 December 2025, none of the 5 new court buildings established as result indicators had been completed. Under these circumstances, the deadline for the physical consolidation of court premises was extended until 31 December 2035.

In the area of digitalisation, several key systems envisaged in earlier public policy documents, including the e-Executare information system as a unified state register of enforcement proceedings, e-Retinere, the online platform for auctioning confiscated assets, and the module for the random allocation of criminal cases within the Prosecutor's Office, had not been completed as state registers during the monitoring period. In the area of enforcement, partial solutions were provided through the information system managed by the National Union of Judicial Enforcement Officers, whose data is made available to citizens through the MCabinet portal. However, this system does not cover the full range of enforcement procedures (for example, those administered by the State Tax Service) and does not replace a unified state register institutionally managed by the competent public authority. In the same context, the use of the Russian videoconferencing software TrueConf remains an unresolved issue, despite concerns relating to national security.

Furthermore, the e-Dosar judiciar (electronic case file) system continues to operate under an extended pilot scheme, with the deadline prolonged until 31 December 2026, while access for lawyers remains limited. The reform of the judicial police has not yet progressed beyond the conceptual stage. As regards the information centres for litigants, these have been developed primarily through the installation of digital information kiosks, without the staffing arrangements expressly envisaged in the Action Plan.

In this context, a **priority** for the next justice sector policy document should be the development of a human resources strategy for the judiciary and the Prosecutor's Office, accompanied by an appropriate remuneration reform and the establishment of a functional mechanism for managing vacant positions.

Capital investments in court infrastructure should be supported by firm multi-annual budgetary commitments, including protection from reductions during budget revisions. At the same time, the inclusion in the new strategic framework of pending information systems, such as e-Executare, e-Retinere, and the online platform for auctioning confiscated assets, should be conditional upon the existence of concrete technical and financial plans, with clearly defined responsibilities and allocated budgetary resources.

The introduction of a system for the random allocation of criminal cases within the Prosecutor's Office is an urgent priority, given its direct impact on the integrity of the criminal justice system and the functional independence of prosecutors.

At the same time, the transition from the TrueConf solution to a European videoconferencing platform requires the allocation of adequate financial resources, including through the effective use of external funding available for the e-justice sector. During the pilot phase, the authorities opted for the Zoom application, developed by the U.S.-based company Zoom Communications, Inc. One option for the final selection process would be to assess European alternatives that are aligned with the digital sovereignty objectives assumed by the Republic of Moldova in the context of its EU accession process.

Objective	Progress
Strategic Direction I - Independence, accountability and integrity of justice sector actors	
<i>1.1 - Strengthening the independence of the judiciary and the Prosecutor's Office</i>	2.78
<i>1.2 - Strengthening integrity and accountability in the justice sector</i>	2.66
<i>1.3 - Increasing transparency and trust in justice</i>	2.87

<i>1.4 – Strengthening the capacities of professions related to the justice system</i>	1.65
Strategic Direction II – Access to justice and the quality of the administration of justice	
<i>2.1. Improving access to justice and the human rights protection system in the justice sector</i>	2.42
<i>2.2. Improving the quality of judicial acts and standardising judicial practice</i>	1.75
<i>2.3. Strengthening legal education and training</i>	4.00
<i>2.4. Strengthening alternative dispute resolution</i>	2.33
Strategic Direction III - Efficient and modern administration of the justice sector	
<i>3.1. Continuation of the process of optimisation of the judicial system and the Prosecutor's Office system</i>	1.40
<i>3.2. Strengthening administrative and managerial capacities in the justice sector</i>	2.16
<i>3.3. Development and implementation of judicial information systems</i>	1.69

STRATEGIC DIRECTION I - INDEPENDENCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND INTEGRITY OF JUSTICE SECTOR ACTORS

Strategic Direction I – Independence, Accountability and Integrity of Justice Sector Actors comprises 4 objectives:

Objective 1.1 – Strengthening the Independence of the Judiciary and the Prosecution Service;

Objective 1.2 – Strengthening Integrity and Accountability in the Justice Sector;

Objective 1.3 – Increasing Transparency and Public Confidence in the Justice System;

Objective 1.4 – Strengthening the Capacities of Professions Related to the Justice System.

To achieve these objectives, 15 specific objectives were established, to be pursued through the implementation of 56 actions.

Of the total **56 actions planned** for implementation during the period 2022–2025, there were implemented **20 actions (35.71%) without shortcomings**, **14 actions (25%) with minor shortcomings**, **5 actions (8.93%) with substantial shortcomings**, **4 actions (7.14%) were initiated**, and **13 actions (23.21%) were not implemented**.

Objective 1.1 – Strengthening the independence of the judiciary and the Prosecutor's Office

Overall assessment: **2.78 p out of 4.00 p**

The activities aimed at achieving Objective 1.1 were organised under 5 specific objectives:

- Specific Objective 1.1.1 – Strengthening the Independence of the Judiciary;
- Specific Objective 1.1.2 – Strengthening the Independence and Capacities of the Superior Council of Magistracy;
- Specific Objective 1.1.3 – Strengthening the Independence of the Prosecution Service and the Capacities of the Superior Council of Prosecutors;
- Specific Objective 1.1.4 – Improving the System for the Selection and Promotion of Judges and Prosecutors;
- Specific Objective 1.1.5 – Strengthening the Role of the Constitutional Court.

To achieve the outcome indicators established for these objectives, 19 actions were planned for implementation. Of these, 7 actions (36.84%) were implemented without shortcomings, 8 actions (42.10%) were implemented with minor shortcomings, 1 action (5.26%) was initiated, and 3 actions (15.79%) were not implemented.

PROGRESS

A major area of progress in achieving Objective 1.1 was the development and adoption of the regulatory framework necessary to strengthen the independence of the judiciary and the prosecution service, as well as to reinforce the role of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors.

Most legislative acts required as a result of the constitutional amendments were adopted during the period 2022–2023, ensuring the alignment of ordinary legislation with the new institutional standards.

In this context, Law No. 246/2022³ amending certain legislative acts introduced significant changes to the legislation governing the organisation of the judiciary and the status of judges, establishing clear rules on the appointment of judges until reaching the mandatory retirement age, the removal of the initial five-year appointment term, access to the office of judge of the Supreme Court of Justice, and the guarantee of functional immunity. At the same time, the law amended Law No. 947/1996⁴ on the Superior Council of Magistracy with regard to the composition of the Council and the duration of members' mandates, eliminating overlaps between a member's mandate and the term of office of the President of the Superior Council of Magistracy.

The adoption and entry into force of Law No. 246/2022 also established clear rules for the selection and appointment of court presidents and vice-presidents. In addition, Law No. 64/2023⁵ on the Supreme Court of Justice introduced a mechanism enabling judges of the Supreme Court of Justice to participate directly in the identification of candidates for the positions of President and Vice-President of the Court.

The adoption and entry into force of Law No. 147/2023⁶ on the Selection and Performance Evaluation of Judges established the necessary mechanisms and instruments for the selection and appointment of court presidents and vice-presidents, in accordance with the regulations approved by the Superior Council of Magistracy.

By the Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 165/14 of 8 April 2025⁷, the Regulation on the Register of Participants in Competitions for Vacant Positions of Judge, Court President, or Court Vice-President was approved.

In turn, Law No. 26/2022⁸ on Certain Measures Relating to the Selection of Candidates for Membership of the Self-Governing Bodies of Judges and Prosecutors established the procedures and criteria for the assessment of judicial and non-judicial candidates for membership of the Superior Council of Magistracy, as well as prosecutorial and non-prosecutorial candidates for membership of the Superior Council of Prosecutors, including candidates for membership of the specialised bodies operating within these institutions.

Following the completion of the external evaluation process for candidates for membership of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors, both institutions became fully operational during the second half of 2023. The specialised bodies and committees of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors, in their new composition, gradually became operational throughout 2024 and 2025, as members were appointed by the competent authorities (general assemblies, the CSM, the CSP, etc.). Law No. 228/2022⁹ amending certain legislative acts introduced amendments to Law No. 152/2006 on the National Institute of Justice (INJ), including the requirement for candidates seeking admission to the INJ to submit declarations of assets

³ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 246/2022, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=132980&lang=ro.

⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 947/1996, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152535&lang=ro.

⁵ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 64/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150416&lang=ro.

⁶ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 147/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150155&lang=ro.

⁷ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 165/14 of 8 April 2025, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/14/165-14.pdf>.

⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 26/2022, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150153&lang=ro.

⁹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 228/2022, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=141825&lang=ro.

and personal interests. Subsequently, Law No. 2/2024¹⁰ amending certain legislative acts, which entered into force on 13.02.2024, supplemented Article 15 of Law No. 152/2006¹¹ with paragraph (6), according to which the National Institute of Justice is required to request verification of candidates' asset declarations from the National Integrity Authority, as well as information on the integrity of candidates who have passed the first stage of the admission competition from the National Anti-Corruption Centre and the Intelligence and Security Service. These authorities are required to communicate their findings within 45 days.

The adoption of Law No. 147/2023¹² on the Selection and Performance Evaluation of Judges established a clear framework governing the principles and procedures for the selection of candidates for judicial office, the performance evaluation of judges, and the organisation and functioning of the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Judges. The law also established the procedure for the selection and appointment of court presidents and vice-presidents.

According to the Report on the Activity of the Superior Council of Magistracy¹³ and the Courts for 2025, the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Judges commenced its activity in its new composition during 2025, conducting the selection process for candidates for judicial office and initiating the regular evaluation of judges' performance. In accordance with the Evaluation Plan¹⁴ approved by the CSM Decision No. 55/3 of 28.01.2025¹⁵, a total of 218 judges were scheduled to undergo regular performance evaluation during 2025. At the same time, following the effective operationalisation of the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Judges and the adoption of its internal procedures, the College assessed 120 candidates for judicial office, thereby enabling the organisation of admission competitions to the profession. It also evaluated 13 judges and notified more than 100 judges for the purpose of initiating evaluation procedures. These figures confirm that the mechanism established by Law No. 147/2023 has begun to produce tangible effects within the judicial system.

Law No. 200/2023¹⁶ amending certain legislative acts introduced substantial amendments to Law No. 3/2016¹⁷ on the Prosecutor's Office, particularly with regard to the mechanisms for the selection, evaluation, and disciplinary liability of prosecutors. The law entrusted the Superior Council of Prosecutors with the task of adapting the secondary regulatory framework and creating the conditions necessary to ensure the effective functioning of the new system for the selection, evaluation, and disciplinary liability of prosecutors.

This legislative intervention strengthened the role of the Superior Council of Prosecutors in the management of prosecutors' careers and disciplinary liability, while also enhancing

¹⁰ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 2/2024, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=141808&lang=ro.

¹¹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 152/2006, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=144946&lang=ro.

¹² Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 147/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150155&lang=ro.

¹³ Superior Council of Magistracy, Report on the Activity of the Superior Council of Magistracy, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2026/08/125-8-Raport.pdf>.

¹⁴ Superior Council of Magistracy, Evaluation Plan, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/03/55-3-anexa.pdf>.

¹⁵ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 55/3 of 28.01.2025, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/03/55-3.pdf>.

¹⁶ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 200/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152537&lang=ro.

¹⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 3/2016, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152558&lang=ro.

guarantees of prosecutors' institutional independence. At the same time, the transfer of the Prosecutors' Inspectorate under the authority of the Superior Council of Prosecutors reduced the influence of the Prosecutor General's Office over disciplinary proceedings and contributed to a clearer separation between the administrative and procedural functions within the prosecution service.

Furthermore, Law No. 246/2023¹⁸ amending certain legislative acts, adopted as part of the legislative framework accompanying the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice, introduced amendments to the Administrative Code establishing the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Justice to examine administrative disputes concerning the legality of decisions adopted by the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors.

CHALLENGES

The implementation of the planned actions was marked by significant delays, with most measures being implemented after the established deadlines. This resulted in the late adoption of secondary legislation and affected the effective functioning of the newly established institutional mechanisms.

Although amendments to the internal regulations of the Superior Council of Magistracy concerning the selection, evaluation, and promotion of judges were expected to be developed during 2022–2023, the Regulation¹⁹ on the Selection and Evaluation of Judges was approved only by the Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 274/19 of 28.05.2024²⁰ and entered into force on 28.11.2024. The Regulation was subsequently amended by the CSM Decision No. 551/41 of 21.10.2025.²¹

Similarly, the Superior Council of Prosecutors was expected to develop and approve its own criteria and procedures for the selection and evaluation of prosecutors during the period 2022–2023. However, given that Law No. 3/2016 on the Prosecutor's Office was amended only in 2023, the Superior Council of Prosecutors approved, through Decision No. 1-16/2024 of 19.01.2024, the Regulation²² on the Procedure for the Selection of Prosecutors, the Procedure for the Evaluation of Prosecutors' Performance, and the Functioning of the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Prosecutors. This Regulation was subsequently repealed by the Superior Council of Prosecutors Decision²³ No. 1-361/2025 of 09.10.2025 and replaced by a new Regulation on the Procedure for the Selection and Evaluation of Prosecutors and the Functioning of the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Prosecutors.

The repeal of the 2024 Regulation and the adoption of a new Regulation on the Procedure for the Selection and Evaluation of Prosecutors in 2025 were necessitated by the entry into force of Law No. 241/2025²⁴ on 12.08.2025, which introduced amendments to Law No.

¹⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 246/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=140328&lang=ro.

¹⁹ Superior Council of Magistracy, Regulation annexed to Decision No. 274/19 of 28.05.2024, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2024/19/274-19-anexa.pdf>.

²⁰ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 274/19 of 28.05.2024, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2024/19/274-19.pdf>.

²¹ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 551/41 of 21.10.2025, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/41/551-41.pdf>.

²² Superior Council of Prosecutors, Regulation approved by Decision No. 1-16/2024 of 19.01.2024, available at: https://csp.md/sites/default/files/inline-files/regulament_csep_modificari_10.12.2024_0.pdf.

²³ Superior Council of Prosecutors, Decision No. 361/2025 approving the Regulation of the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Prosecutors, available at: https://csp.md/sites/default/files/2025-10/361_hot_aprobare_regulament_csep_2.pdf.

²⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 241/2025, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150133&lang=ro.

3/2016 strengthening the framework for the assessment of prosecutors' professional performance and the verification of their ethical and financial integrity. The revised approach to performance evaluation and integrity verification justified the adoption of the new Regulation through CSP Decision No. 1-361/2025 of 09.10.2025.

The delineation of the responsibilities of the Superior Council of Prosecutors as the body representing prosecutors and safeguarding their independence, including matters relating to prosecutors' careers, from the responsibilities of the General Prosecutor's Office in procedural, administrative, and criminal policy matters, was scheduled to be completed during the period 2022–2023.

However, legislative amendments to Law No. 3/2016 adopted during the period 2023–2025 delayed the clear delineation of competences between the Superior Council of Prosecutors and the General Prosecutor's Office, prolonging institutional overlaps and functional uncertainties.

The delayed implementation of this measure postponed the achievement of the envisaged institutional reform objectives, maintained overlapping and unclear competences between the two institutions, and temporarily reduced the effectiveness of mechanisms for the administration of the prosecution service and the safeguarding of prosecutors' independence. At the same time, these delays affected the pace of strengthening the institutional and regulatory framework necessary for the coherent and predictable functioning of the prosecution service.

Although the Prosecutors' Inspectorate was reorganised and transferred under the authority of the Superior Council of Prosecutors, as confirmed by the Decision of the Chief Inspector of the Prosecutors' Inspectorate of 6 September 2024, it became fully operational only on 9 September 2024.

The delayed operationalisation of the Prosecutors' Inspectorate is explained by the fact that Law No. 200/2023 provided only for its transfer from the authority of the General Prosecutor's Office to that of the Superior Council of Prosecutors. It was only the subsequent amendments introduced by Law No. 226/2024, which entered into force on 05.09.2024, that enabled the effective functioning of the Prosecutors' Inspectorate. As a result, the late adoption of the necessary legislative framework limited the application of disciplinary mechanisms during a significant part of the Strategy's implementation period.

At the same time, institutional capacity remains constrained. The large number of requests for prosecutors' performance evaluations, compared with the resources available, affects both the pace and the efficiency of the evaluation process. As of 16.02.2026, the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Prosecutors had 83 pending requests for extraordinary performance evaluations submitted by prosecutors seeking to compete for the positions of chief prosecutor or deputy chief prosecutor of territorial prosecutor's offices. Although these evaluations must be conducted as a matter of priority pursuant to Article XIII(3)(a) of Law No. 241/2025²⁵ amending certain legislative acts (evaluation of the performance of judges and prosecutors), the Superior Council of Prosecutors Decision²⁶ No. 1-34/2026 of 21.01.2026 approved the 2026 Prosecutors' Evaluation Plan, which includes 53 prosecutors scheduled to undergo extraordinary performance evaluations.

²⁵ Government of the Republic of Moldova, No. 241/2025, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150133&lang=ro.

²⁶ Superior Council of Prosecutors, draft Decision No. 34 approving the Plan for the Evaluation of Prosecutors' Performance for 2026, available at: https://csp.md/sites/default/files/2026-01/34_proiect_hot_plan_de_evaluare_a_performantelor_procurorilor_2026_0.pdf.

Although Law No. 228/2022²⁷ amending certain legislative acts introduced amendments to Law No. 152/2006²⁸ on the National Institute of Justice requiring candidates to attach declarations of assets and personal interests for both the year preceding the application and the year in which the application is submitted to their application for admission to the National Institute of Justice, these amendments did not establish a mechanism for verifying candidates' assets and integrity by the Admissions File Evaluation Committee. As a result, the legislative intervention proved ineffective. It was only with the adoption of Law No. 2/2024²⁹ amending certain legislative acts that the National Institute of Justice was required to request the National Integrity Authority to verify the declarations of assets and personal interests submitted by candidates as part of their application for admission to the National Institute of Justice.

Furthermore, certain structural reforms remain incomplete. The analysis of the feasibility of granting prosecutors the status of magistrates was initiated, but did not result in any concrete legislative proposals. Nevertheless, the Superior Council of Prosecutors' Annual Action Plan³⁰ for 2026 includes, as a separate action (Action 1.3), the initiation and promotion of legislative measures concerning the magistrate status of prosecutors.

Although the Superior Council of Magistracy did not approve a separate methodology for conducting interviews in the process of appointment to judicial office, the interview procedure was regulated through Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 274/19³¹ of 28.05.2024, which establishes the organisation of interviews, assessment criteria, the scoring system, and the evaluation forms used by the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Judges.

Given the delays in drafting and approving the regulatory framework necessary for the operationalisation and functioning of the Colleges responsible for the selection and performance evaluation of judges and prosecutors, no independent evaluation has been carried out of the implementation of the new procedures and criteria for the selection and evaluation of judges and prosecutors.

Similarly, the constitutional reform concerning the composition of the Constitutional Court and the duration of constitutional judges' terms of office has not been implemented, as it depends on the existence of broad political consensus.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- Strengthening the capacities of the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Superior Council of Prosecutors, and their specialised colleges to ensure the effective implementation of procedures for the selection, evaluation, and promotion of judges and prosecutors.
- Establishing mechanisms for the independent evaluation of procedures for the selection, evaluation, and promotion of judges and prosecutors, with a view to identifying shortcomings and adjusting the regulatory framework where necessary.

²⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 228/2022, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=141825&lang=ro.

²⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 152/2006, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=144946&lang=ro.

²⁹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 2/2024, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=141808&lang=ro.

³⁰ Superior Council of Prosecutors, Annual Action Plan of the Superior Council of Prosecutors for 2026, available at:

https://www.csp.md/sites/default/files/2026-02/2026_planul_anual_de_actiuni_csp.pdf.

³¹ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 274/19, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2024/19/274-19.pdf>.

- Resuming and completing constitutional-level reforms, particularly with regard to the appointment of constitutional judges, the composition of the Constitutional Court, and the duration of constitutional judges' terms of office, in order to ensure the coherence of the institutional architecture.

These interventions should be accompanied by measures aimed at strengthening institutional capacity and ensuring the stability of the regulatory framework, so that the reforms initiated produce tangible and sustainable effects on the functioning of the justice system.

Objective 1.2 – Strengthening integrity and accountability in the justice sector

Overall assessment: **2.66 p out of 4.00 p**

The activities aimed at achieving Objective 1.2 were organised under 4 specific objectives:

- Specific Objective 1.2.1. Improving the effectiveness of authorities with responsibilities in the field of integrity and anti-corruption;
- Specific Objective 1.2.2. Ensuring a professional and integrity-based corps of judges and prosecutors;
- Specific Objective 1.2.3. Strengthening the capacities of the judiciary and the prosecution service to manage integrity issues and conflicts of interest;
- Specific Objective 1.2.4. Improving the disciplinary liability framework for judges and prosecutors.

To achieve this objective, 12 actions were planned for implementation. Of these, 6 actions (50%) were implemented without shortcomings, 2 actions (16.66%) were implemented with minor shortcomings, 1 action (8.33%) was implemented with substantial shortcomings, and 3 actions (25%) were not implemented.

PROGRESS

The implementation of measures under Objective 1.2 demonstrates important progress in strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework in the fields of integrity and anti-corruption, as well as in establishing mechanisms for the external evaluation of judges and prosecutors.

A first significant area of progress was the clarification of institutional competences in the investigation of corruption offences. Through Law No. 83/2023³² amending certain legislative acts, the substantive and procedural competences of the National Anti-Corruption Centre, the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, and the Prosecutor's Office for Combating Organised Crime and Special Cases were delineated, reducing institutional overlaps and increasing the predictability of institutional interventions. Subsequently, Law No. 99/2024³³ introduced the necessary amendments to Law No. 1104/2002³⁴ on the National Anti-Corruption Centre. As a result, the CNA was restructured and granted full functional autonomy, thereby strengthening its position within the anti-corruption institutional framework.

Another central pillar of the reform was the establishment of mechanisms for the external evaluation of the integrity of judges and prosecutors. In this regard, Law No. 65/2023³⁵ on the External Evaluation of Judges and Candidates for the Position of Judge of the Supreme Court of Justice, which entered into force on 06.04.2023, established the primary legal framework for the vetting procedure. The establishment of the Evaluation Commission on 15.06.2023 enabled the operationalisation of this mechanism.

³² Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 83/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=138762&lang=ro.

³³ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 99/2024, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=143083&lang=ro.

³⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 1104/2002, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=147835&lang=ro.

³⁵ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 65/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153357&lang=ro.

Law No. 252/2023³⁶ extended the external evaluation procedure to a broad range of positions within the judiciary and the prosecution service, including judges of the courts of appeal, presidents and vice-presidents of first-instance courts, the Prosecutor General and Deputy Prosecutors General, prosecutors from the specialised units of the General Prosecutor's Office, and chief prosecutors of territorial prosecutor's offices. Under this law, judges subject to evaluation are assessed by the commission established pursuant to Law No. 65/2023³⁷, while prosecutors subject to evaluation under Law No. 252/2023 are assessed by a separate Prosecutors' Evaluation Commission established specifically for this purpose.

By Law No. 333/2025³⁸ amending certain legislative acts, the scope of persons subject to evaluation under Law No. 252/2023 was expanded to include judges and candidates assigned to the specialised anti-corruption panels of the Chisinau Court (Buiucani seat), as well as judges involved in the examination of corruption cases after 2017. This expansion reflects the alignment of the reform with the recommendations³⁹ of the European Commission issued in the context of the accession process and reflected in the Republic of Moldova 2025 Report under the EU Enlargement Package.

The aggregate results of the pre-vetting exercise (Law No. 26/2022) and the external evaluation (vetting) conducted under Law No. 65/2023 and Law No. 252/2023 provide an overview of the effects of the external integrity assessment mechanism on the corps of judges and prosecutors.

At the pre-vetting stage, out of a total of 138 candidates assessed (85 for the self-governing bodies of judges and 53 for those of prosecutors), 59 passed the evaluation (34 – CSM and 25 – CSP), while 72 candidates did not pass (44 – CSM and 28 – CSP). At the vetting stage, out of 166 judges evaluated, only 51 passed (30.7%), 29 did not pass, and 65 withdrew from the process or resigned (39.2%) – a cumulative exit rate from the system that illustrates the scale of the staffing crisis discussed under Objective 3.2.

In the case of prosecutors, the evaluation process remains largely ongoing. According to data provided by the Superior Council of Prosecutors, the lists submitted to the Prosecutors' Evaluation Commission included a total of 157 prosecutors from the General Prosecutor's Office, the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, the PCCOCS, and prosecutors holding managerial positions within territorial prosecutor's offices. Within the statutory 20-day period following notification, 8 prosecutors from the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office and 15 prosecutors from the PCCOCS resigned from office. At the same time, according to data published by the Prosecutors' Evaluation Commission, of the 130 prosecutors included on the lists and subject to evaluation under Law No. 252/2023, 22 passed, 7 did not pass, and 101 remain under evaluation, including the entire staff of the PCCOCS (63 prosecutors, including prosecutors seconded to the PCCOCS and suspended prosecutors).

Detailed data published by the judges' and prosecutors' evaluation commissions are presented in the tables below.

³⁶ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 252/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153358&lang=ro.

³⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 65/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152367&lang=ro.

³⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 333/2025, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152367&lang=ro.

³⁹ European Commission, Republic of Moldova 2025 Report under the EU Enlargement Package, available at: https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/23fa6af0-89b3-4532-a3d9-d1638727d14c_en?filename=moldova-report-2025.pdf.

Table 1. Pre-vetting (Law No. 26/2022) – consolidated results as of 15.05.2026

Categories	No. of candidates	Passed	Did not pass	Withdrawn from the process	Under evaluation
CSM pre-vetting (Law No. 26/2022 – CSM and specialised bodies)					
CSM Members	55	17	36	2	0
College for the Selection and Evaluation of Judges	14 (incl. 5 from civil society)	11	2	1	0
Disciplinary College	16 (incl. 6 from civil society)	6	6	3	1
Total CSM	85	34	44	6	1
CSP pre-vetting (Law No. 26/2022 – CSP and specialised bodies)					
CSP Members	20	9	11	–	–
College for the Selection and Evaluation of Prosecutors	22 (incl. 6 from civil society)	12	10	–	–
Discipline and Ethics College	11	4	7	–	–
Total CSP	53	25	28	–	–

Table 2. Vetting (Law No. 65/2023 and Law No. 252/2023) – consolidated results as of 15.05.2026.

Categories	No. of persons	Passed	Did not pass	Withdrawn from the process / resigned	Under evaluation
Vetting – Judges (Law No. 65/2023 and Law No. 252/2023)					
SCJ	48 (incl. 19 judges and 7 prosecutors)	21 (incl.3 who passed pre-vetting)	12	13 (incl.2 who resigned)	2
Courts of Appeal	75 (incl. 13 candidates)	22 (incl.9 candidates, of whom 1 passed the SCJ vetting)	12	36 resignations + 3 withdrawals	2
Court presidents and vice-presidents	24	7	5	10 resignations	2
Specialised anti-corruption panels	19	1 passed vetting at the SCJ	0	3 resignations	15 (incl. 2 as court president/vice-president)
Total Judges	166	51	29	65	21
Vetting – Prosecutors (Law no. 252/2023)					
Prosecutor General's Office	11	2	–	–	9
Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office	56	20 (incl.2 who passed pre-vetting)	7 (incl. 1 who did not pass the SCJ vetting)	–	29
PCCOCS	63	–	–	–	63
Territorial prosecutor's offices	–	–	–	–	–
Total Prosecutors	130	22	7	–	101

Source: Commission for the Evaluation of the Ethical and Financial Integrity of Judges⁴⁰ / Commission for the Evaluation of Prosecutors⁴¹

⁴⁰ Commission for the Evaluation of the Ethical and Financial Integrity of Judges, official website, available at: <https://www.vettingmd.eu/ro>.

⁴¹ Commission for the Evaluation of Prosecutors, list of candidates, available at: <https://vettingmd.org/activitatea-comisiei/candidati/>.

In parallel, the regulatory framework governing disciplinary liability was strengthened through Law No. 5/2023⁴² amending certain legislative acts (disciplinary liability of judges and the activity of the Judicial Inspection), which introduced amendments to the legislation governing the status of judges, the Superior Council of Magistracy, and disciplinary liability, establishing clearer criteria and more predictable procedures. The implementation of these amendments was supported by the approval of the Regulation on the Activity of the Disciplinary College through the Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 87/8 of 27.02.2024⁴³ and the Regulation on the Organisation and Functioning of the Judicial Inspection through the Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 120/11 of 19.03.2024⁴⁴. These regulations define the powers, functioning, and competences of the Disciplinary College and the Judicial Inspection. Subsequently, both regulations were amended through the Superior Council of Magistracy Decisions No. 571/42 of 04.11.2025⁴⁵ and No. 677/48 of 16.12.2025⁴⁶ to address issues identified in their practical application.

At the same time, Law No. 200/2023⁴⁷ amended Law No. 3/2016 on the Prosecutor's Office by transferring the Prosecutors' Inspectorate under the authority of the Superior Council of Prosecutors, thereby strengthening the independence of disciplinary mechanisms. The effective operationalisation of this structure was confirmed on 9 September 2024, following the Decision of 06.09.2024, from which date disciplinary proceedings were resumed.

The verification of the assets and personal interests of judges, prosecutors, members of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors, as well as members of the specialised bodies operating within these institutions, is carried out by the National Integrity Authority in accordance with Law No. 133/2016 on the Declaration of Assets and Personal Interests. The results of these verifications are published on the National Integrity Authority's website (<https://www.ani.md>⁴⁸). According to data contained in the Ministry of Justice's annual reports⁴⁹ on the implementation of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy, the following trends can be observed:

Subjects	2022		2023		2024	
	No.	Rate (%)	No.	Rate (%)	No.	Rate (%)
Judges	440	91	402	104	363	97.6
Prosecutors	634	99	364	61	592	93
CSM Members	9	22	6	100	5	41.7
CSP Members	10	30	-	-	2	20

⁴² Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 5/2023, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=135622&lang=ro.

⁴³ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 87/8 of 27.02.2024, available at:

<https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2024/08/87-8.pdf>.

⁴⁴ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 120/11 of 19.03.2024, available at:

<https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2024/11/120-11.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 571/42 of 04.11.2025, available at:

<https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/42/571-42.pdf>.

⁴⁶ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 677/48 of 16.12.2025, available at:

<https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/48/677-48.pdf>.

⁴⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 200/2023, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152537&lang=ro.

⁴⁸ National Integrity Authority, official website, available at: <https://www.ani.md>.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, monitoring reports on implementation of the Strategy, available at:

<https://www.justice.gov.md/ro/content/rapoarte-de-monitorizare-strategiei-0>.

The Ministry of Justice's monitoring report for 2025⁵⁰ does not contain data on the number of judges, prosecutors, and members of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors whose declarations of assets and personal interests were verified by the National Integrity Authority during 2025. According to the report, following complaints submitted to the National Integrity Authority, 14 records initiating control proceedings were issued in 2025, concerning 10 judges, 2 former judges, and 2 prosecutors. In the same period, 26 records refusing the initiation of control proceedings were issued, of which 16 concerned judges and 10 concerned prosecutors.

CHALLENGES

Despite the progress achieved, the implementation of the reforms has been affected by a number of structural and functional challenges.

First, the assessment of the effectiveness of the regulatory framework governing the verification of assets and personal interests was not carried out within the planned timeframe. Although Law No. 34/2025 introduced relevant amendments to Laws No. 132/2016 and No. 133/2016, these interventions were adopted at a late stage and were not accompanied by a systematic assessment of the impact of the reforms on the activity of the National Integrity Authority.

Significant gaps persist in the mechanisms for preventing integrity risks. Within the judiciary, no mechanism has been established for reporting ex-parte communications involving judges. Similarly, within the prosecution service, although the Superior Council of Prosecutors Decision No. 1-438/2025 of 23.12.2025⁵¹ approved a regulation on internal disclosures by employees of the Superior Council of Prosecutors, the regulation does not cover ex-parte communications involving prosecutors. As a result, an essential mechanism for preventing undue influence remains non-operational.

Ethics and disciplinary mechanisms have not been used effectively. The absence of opinions and recommendations issued by the Commission on Ethics and Professional Conduct of Judges and by the Discipline and Ethics College is contrary to the outcome indicators established in the Action Plan and suggests that these structures have functioned largely in a formal manner.

Institutional capacity represents another major challenge. The mass resignations from the Supreme Court of Justice in 2023 severely affected the court's operational capacity, while the transitional mechanisms established by Law No. 65/2023 proved insufficient to compensate for the resulting shortage of human resources. The activity of the Supreme Court of Justice continues to be affected by an insufficient number of judges relative to its workload. As of 04.05.2026, only 10 of the 20 judicial positions within the Supreme Court of Justice were filled, including 7 career judges and 3 judges appointed from outside the judiciary, while the other 10 positions remained vacant.

This situation can be explained by the fact that the procedures for the evaluation and appointment of judges to the Supreme Court of Justice are complex and lengthy, as appointment depends both on successfully passing the external evaluation and on winning the competition organised by the Superior Council of Magistracy, which delays the filling of vacant positions.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, monitoring report for 2025, available at: https://www.iustice.gov.md/sites/default/files/raport_de_monitorizare_pentru_anul_2025.pdf.

⁵¹ Superior Council of Prosecutors, Decision No. 1-438/2025 of 23.12.2025, available at: https://csp.md/sites/default/files/2026-01/438_hot_aprobare_regulament_avertizori_de_integritate_mk.pdf.

An equally challenging situation can be observed at the level of the courts of appeal. Following the launch of the external evaluation process (vetting) under Law No. 252/2023, 36 of the 63 judges serving in the courts of appeal resigned within the statutory 20-day period following notification by the Judges Evaluation (Vetting) Commission. Of the 27 judges who remained in office, 10 passed the external evaluation, 1 had previously passed the pre-vetting process, and 16 did not pass the evaluation and were dismissed from judicial office.

At the same time, in order to address vacancies at the courts of appeal on a temporary basis, the Superior Council of Magistracy organised several competitions during 2025 for the temporary transfer of judges from the courts of first instance to the courts of appeal. These measures, however, only partially mitigated the staffing shortage. Of the 93 judicial positions at the courts of appeal, only 61 are currently occupied (including through temporary transfers), while 32 positions remain vacant.

The external evaluation of the ethical and financial integrity of judges is an ongoing reform that forms part of the broader process of institutional consolidation of the judiciary. The difficulties encountered in filling vacancies at the courts of appeal and the Supreme Court of Justice must be viewed in the context of this complex institutional transition and the implementation of the external evaluation mechanism, as they are largely attributable to the nature and duration of the procedures associated with the reform.

No independent evaluation of the disciplinary mechanisms or of the activity of the Prosecutors' Inspectorate has been conducted. This situation is attributable to the delayed operationalisation of these institutions, including the relatively recent approval of the regulatory framework governing the organisation and functioning of the Discipline and Ethics College through the Superior Council of Prosecutors Decision No. 1-437/2025 of 23.12.2025.⁵²

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- Identifying mechanisms to streamline procedures for filling vacant judicial positions at the Supreme Court of Justice and the courts of appeal.
- Developing procedures for reporting *ex-parte* communications involving judges and prosecutors.
- Developing and publishing opinions and recommendations on specific issues relating to the professional ethics and conduct of judges and prosecutors.

The implementation of these recommendations will contribute to strengthening the functionality and credibility of the judiciary and the prosecution service by enhancing institutional capacity to fill vacancies at higher courts more efficiently, reducing vulnerabilities that may affect the independence and impartiality of the administration of justice, and promoting clear and predictable standards of professional ethics and conduct. At the same time, the establishment of transparent mechanisms for reporting *ex-parte* communications and the development of practical guidance on professional ethics will contribute to greater professional accountability, more consistent institutional practice, and increased public confidence in the integrity and independence of the justice system.

⁵² Superior Council of Prosecutors, Decision No. 1-437/2025 of 23.12.2025, available at: https://csp.md/sites/default/files/2026-01/437_hot_aprobare_regulament_cde-mk.pdf.

Objective 1.3 – Increasing transparency and trust in justice

Overall assessment: 2.87 p out of 4.00 p

The activities aimed at achieving Objective 1.3 were organised under 2 specific objectives:

- Specific Objective 1.3.1. Developing mechanisms and programmes to inform and educate the public about access to justice and the competences of justice sector authorities;
- Specific Objective 1.3.2. Implementing a mechanism for the regular conduct of surveys within the justice system.

To achieve this objective, 8 actions were planned, of which 5 actions (62.5%) were completed without shortcomings, 1 action (12.5%) was completed with minor shortcomings, and 2 actions (25%) were not completed.

PROGRESS

Under General Objective 1.3, efforts focused on enhancing transparency and increasing public confidence in the justice system through the development of legal information and education mechanisms, as well as through the regular monitoring of public perceptions of the justice system.

Significant progress has been achieved in the area of public communication by the judiciary and the prosecution authorities. Most courts have adopted their own communication strategies during the period 2018–2023, demonstrating a sustained commitment to strengthening dialogue with the public. This process was further consolidated at the system level through the adoption of the Communication Strategy of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the Courts, approved by the Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 599/43 of 11.11.2025. The strategy was developed with the support of the Council of Europe project “Support for Justice Reform in the Republic of Moldova”, funded by the European Union. It establishes a framework for coherent and monitored communication across the judiciary.

In parallel, mechanisms for the direct provision of information to litigants were developed through the establishment of information centres and information offices within courts, including under the USAID-supported “Model Courts” project. These structures operate in most main court premises and facilitate access to information while assisting litigants in navigating judicial procedures. Some courts have further strengthened their communication practices through the regular publication of press releases and public information notices on their websites.

Public information and education regarding access to justice have also been consistently supported through the work of paralegals within the state-guaranteed legal aid system. According to data provided by the National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid, paralegals delivered the majority of primary legal aid services, contributing to the dissemination of legal information, conflict mediation, and the referral of cases for qualified legal assistance. Between 2024 and 2025, the number of active paralegals increased from 87 to 89, while the volume of assisted cases grew steadily, accounting for approximately 77% of all primary legal aid services.

During the same period, the National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme Moldova, implemented innovative initiatives aimed at expanding access to justice, including the establishment of

multidisciplinary mobile teams and the piloting of mechanisms for the remote provision of primary legal aid to persons deprived of liberty. These interventions helped address territorial disparities and improve access to justice for vulnerable groups.

At the same time, under the project “Improving Access to Justice for a Life with Dignity”, the CNAJGS and UNDP Moldova designed and piloted a mechanism for the remote provision of primary legal aid to persons deprived of their liberty, concluding a cooperation agreement with the National Administration of Penitentiaries. Through the use of videoconferencing systems, the mechanism was piloted in three prisons (No. 4 Cricova, No. 7 Rusca and No. 9 Pruncul). Since January 2025, legal aid lawyers have been providing weekly primary legal consultations to convicted persons under an additional legal consultation programme. In 2025, primary legal aid was provided to detainees in 109 cases. For public information purposes, the website www.parajurist.md⁵³ was created.

To develop mechanisms and programmes for informing and educating the public about access to justice and the competences of justice sector authorities, measures were planned to create a new official website for the Prosecutor General’s Office and dedicated websites for the specialised prosecution offices. In this regard, a modernised version of the official website www.procuratura.md⁵⁴ was launched on 31 March 2023, with links to the websites of the Anti-Corruption Prosecutor’s Office⁵⁵ and the Prosecutor’s Office for Combating Organised Crime and Special Cases (PCCOCS⁵⁶). All decisions adopted during the meetings are published promptly on the website of the Superior Council of Prosecutors⁵⁷.

With regard to the monitoring of perceptions, several relevant surveys were conducted between 2022 and 2025 by independent organisations, including the Legal Resources Centre from Moldova (July 2023 and April 2025) and the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (February 2024 and February 2026). These studies provide an important empirical basis for assessing developments in the sector.

An analysis of the surveys on the perceptions of judges, prosecutors and lawyers regarding the justice system and corruption, conducted by the Legal Resources Centre from Moldova in July 2023⁵⁸ and April 2025⁵⁹, reveals a complex evolution characterised less by significant structural changes than by a tendency towards stagnation in perceptions and the consolidation of existing systemic shortcomings.

In 2023, the data indicated an upward trend in perceptions of judicial independence, particularly among judges and prosecutors, reflecting the momentum of reforms initiated in the preceding period. This development suggested a certain strengthening of internal confidence in the system, including confidence that judicial decisions are taken free from external influence and that judicial actors are able to act independently and in accordance with the law.

⁵³ National Network of Paralegals, official website, available at: <http://www.parajurist.md>.

⁵⁴ Prosecutor General’s Office, official website, available at: <http://www.procuratura.md>.

⁵⁵ Anti-Corruption Prosecutor’s Office, official website, available at: <https://procuratura.md/anticoruptie/>.

⁵⁶ Prosecutor’s Office for Combating Organised Crime and Special Cases (PCCOCS), official website, available at: <https://procuratura.md/pccocs/>.

⁵⁷ Superior Council of Prosecutors, decisions (hotarari) published on the official website, available at: <https://csp.md/consiliu/consiliul-superior-al-procurorilor/hotarari>.

⁵⁸ Legal Resources Centre from Moldova, Survey on the perceptions of justice professionals, July 2023, available at: https://crjm.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/sondaj_Perceptia-profesionistilor-din-Justitie.pdf.

⁵⁹ Legal Resources Centre from Moldova, Survey on the perceptions of justice professionals, April 2025, available at: https://crjm.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/2025-CRJM_Sondaj-privind-perceptia-profesionistilor-din-justitie-despre-justitie-si-coruptie-event-draft-1.pdf.

However, an analysis of the 2025 data indicates a stagnation of these perceptions, with no significant further progress. In particular, a structural divide persists among the different professional groups: judges and prosecutors continue to express a high level of confidence in the system, whereas lawyers remain consistently the most critical regarding the independence, quality and fairness of the administration of justice. This persistent divergence points to differing perceptions of the realities of the system and affects its internal cohesion.

A particularly noteworthy development concerns perceptions of prosecutors' independence. While a moderate increase in confidence was observed in 2023, the picture became more uneven in 2025: judges and lawyers reported a somewhat improved perception of prosecutorial independence, whereas prosecutors themselves reported declining confidence in the absence of external influence over their activity.

We can therefore conclude that the perception data indicate an uneven evolution in confidence in the independence of prosecutors, which warrants further analysis in relation to statutory guarantees, working conditions, workload, and the institutional stability of the prosecution service.

As regards the quality of the administration of justice and compliance with the standards of the European Convention on Human Rights, the data from both surveys reveal stable perceptions but also a pronounced divergence among the different professional groups. Judges and prosecutors continue to assess positively the quality of their own work and the degree of compliance with European standards, whereas lawyers express a considerably more reserved view. This discrepancy points to a possible gap between perceptions and the actual quality of the administration of justice and suggests the need for objective external evaluation mechanisms.

A particularly important aspect concerns perceptions of justice sector reforms. Whereas in 2023 there was a high level of support for reform measures, by 2025 this support had declined significantly across all professional groups. This trend may reflect a degree of "reform fatigue", as well as diminishing confidence in the effectiveness and tangible impact of the measures implemented.

At the same time, a persistent tendency can be observed to attribute the low level of public confidence in the justice system to factors external to the system itself. Judges and prosecutors continue to identify external factors, such as political influence or the role of the media, as the principal causes of this situation, without any significant increase in the acknowledgement of internal shortcomings. In contrast, lawyers are considerably more likely to identify internal causes, such as unlawful decisions or the failure to sanction them, highlighting a fundamental difference in perspective regarding the system's problems.

In conclusion, the comparative analysis of the two surveys conducted by the Legal Resources Centre from Moldova indicates that the period 2023–2025 marks a transition from a phase of moderate optimism, driven by the momentum of reforms, to a period of stagnation characterised by the persistence of structural shortcomings and declining support for change. The continued divergence in perceptions among justice sector actors and the decline in confidence in reforms suggest the need to recalibrate the reform process, with a stronger focus on tangible results, greater transparency, and enhanced confidence within the system itself.

A comparative analysis of the two national public opinion surveys conducted by the Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE) in February 2024⁶⁰ and February 2026⁶¹ reveals a trend characterised primarily by stagnation in public perceptions of the justice system, despite the continuation of structural reforms in the sector.

The 2024 survey data already indicated low levels of public confidence in justice sector institutions, together with a widespread perception of corruption within those institutions. At the same time, the majority of respondents considered that developments within the justice system during the period 2021–2023 had not resulted in significant improvements, suggesting limited public recognition of the effects of the reforms undertaken.

The analysis of the data from the 2026 survey, which assessed developments during the period 2023–2025, confirms the persistence of these trends. Public perceptions of developments within the justice system remain predominantly negative or neutral, with no significant improvement in levels of confidence or in the public image of judicial institutions.

A central element of the analysis is the level of public confidence in justice sector institutions. In both years under review, this remained low, indicating a persistent vulnerability that affects perceptions of the legitimacy of the justice system. The absence of positive developments in this regard suggests that the reforms implemented have not yet produced results that are visible to the public or have not been communicated effectively enough to bring about changes in public perceptions.

Perceptions of corruption within the justice system constitute another important indicator confirming the persistent nature of perceived shortcomings. In 2024, corruption was regarded as widespread across judicial institutions, and the 2026 data indicate that this perception remains high. In the absence of any visible reduction in this indicator, it may be concluded that anti-corruption measures, including the vetting process, have not yet produced tangible effects at the level of public opinion.

As regards perceptions of judicial independence, the results of the two surveys reveal stability in assessments, albeit at a relatively low level. The public does not clearly perceive a strengthening of the independence of the justice system, indicating either the persistence of underlying vulnerabilities or, at the very least, a failure of the reforms to generate a noticeable shift in public perceptions.

A particularly important aspect concerns the level of public awareness of justice sector reform. Although the 2026 survey indicates a slight increase in awareness, this remains insufficient to bring about a significant change in public perceptions. In this context, shortcomings in the strategic communication of reforms become apparent and directly affect levels of public confidence in the system.

At the same time, the data reveal a broad consensus among the population regarding the importance of justice reform for the Republic of Moldova's European integration process. However, this strategic consensus is not accompanied by a corresponding level of confidence in the effectiveness of the reforms implemented or in the capacity of the system to undergo genuine transformation.

⁶⁰ Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), National public opinion survey on integrity in the justice sector, February 2024, available at: https://ipre.md/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Raport_Sondaj_Justitie4Moldova_05.02.2024_RO_Final.pdf.

⁶¹ Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), Second national public opinion survey on integrity in the justice sector, February 2026, available at: <https://ipre.md/2026/02/06/al-doilea-sondaj-national-de-opinie-publica-integritatea-in-sectorul-justitiei/>.

Assessments of the results of the reforms implemented during the period 2022–2025 remain, overall, cautious or critical, indicating a discrepancy between institutional efforts and their perceived impact on society. This discrepancy suggests that, although reforms have been implemented at the regulatory and institutional levels, they have not yet been fully reflected in public perceptions.

CHALLENGES

Despite the progress made, the development of information and communication mechanisms in the justice sector continues to be affected by a number of structural shortcomings.

Firstly, the implementation of communication strategies is not uniform across the system. Although the Communication Strategy of the Superior Council of Magistracy and the courts was approved by CSM Decision No. 599/43 of 11.11.2025, there is no clear record of which courts have their own strategies, nor is there a unified framework for monitoring their implementation.

Secondly, the activities of the information centres for litigants are not governed by regulations approved by the Superior Council of Magistracy, and the absence of a centralised record prevents any meaningful assessment of their functionality and impact.

Furthermore, the Superior Council of Magistracy has not established a system for collecting and analysing data on the public communication activities of the courts, including published press releases, which limits the ability to assess the effectiveness of information campaigns.

Another major shortcoming is the failure to make use of the results of surveys on perceptions of the justice system. As early as 2017, the Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 854/37 of 19.12.2017 approved 17 performance indicators for the implementation of the spreadsheet for the collection and analysis of judicial statistics developed on the basis of CEPEJ indicators, one of these being user satisfaction with court services. This indicator is integrated into the Integrated Case Management Programme (PIGD), and the first satisfaction survey was piloted between November and December 2022 among 48 litigants and 20 lawyers served by the courts of Balti, Ungheni and Edinet. Since April 2023, the assessment of court users' satisfaction levels by the courts has become mandatory; however, no studies and analyses of the surveys' results, nor any recommendations based on those findings, have been produced.

Although independent organisations regularly conduct opinion surveys on the justice system, their findings are not systematically analysed by the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Superior Council of Prosecutors or the Ministry of Justice, nor are they used to formulate public policies or corrective measures.

In addition, no single national methodology has been developed for the regular conduct of surveys within the justice sector, which undermines the comparability of data and limits the ability to monitor developments over time.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- Developing and implementing communication strategies across the courts;
- Developing and implementing mechanisms for involving law students and volunteers in activities aimed at informing litigants and improving public legal awareness;
- Developing a single nationwide methodology for the regular conduct of surveys within the justice sector.

To strengthen transparency and increase public confidence in the justice system, it is necessary to establish a coherent and integrated framework for communication and evaluation. Such a framework should contribute to enhancing institutional transparency, improving the quality of public communication and, ultimately, strengthening public confidence in the justice system.

Objective 1.4 – Strengthening the capacities of professions related to the justice system

Overall assessment: 1.65 p out of 4.00 p

To achieve General Objective 1.4, 4 specific objectives were established, namely:

- Specific Objective 1.4.1. Strengthening the mechanisms ensuring the independence and organisation of professions related to the justice system and improving the quality of services provided;
- Specific Objective 1.4.2. Strengthening mechanisms for entry into the profession and the accountability of members of professions related to the justice system;
- Specific Objective 1.4.3. Improving the contributory social security system;
- Specific Objective 1.4.4. Establishing clear rules for setting fees for services provided.

To achieve General Objective 1.4, 17 actions were planned, of which 2 actions (11.76%) were completed without shortcomings, 3 actions (17.64%) were completed with minor shortcomings, 4 actions (23.52%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, 3 actions (17.64%) were initiated, and 5 actions (29.41%) were not completed.

This objective ranks second in terms of the number of actions planned under Strategic Direction I and, at the same time, records the highest number of unimplemented actions among the general objectives.

PROGRESS

Under General Objective 1.4, the progress achieved relates primarily to strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework governing professions related to the justice system, with a particular focus on accountability, standardisation and improving the quality of legal services.

A significant step forward was the introduction of sanctions for interference in the professional activity of lawyers. Thus, Law No. 136/2024⁶² amending certain legislative acts (amendments to the Criminal Code and the Contravention Code) introduced amendments to the Criminal Code by adding Article 303¹, which criminalises interference in the activities of lawyers and trainee lawyers. This legislative intervention strengthens the guarantees of independence of the legal profession.

In the field of state-guaranteed legal aid, quality standards for lawyers' activities in specific areas were developed and approved. By CNAJGS Decision No. 16 of 22.11.2022, standards applicable to cases involving persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities were approved, while CNAJGS Decision No. 30 of 01.11.2023 approved standards for asylum cases. Subsequently, CNAJGS Decision No. 10 of 26.01.2024 approved quality standards for assistance provided to victims of crime and victims of domestic violence, and training sessions were organised nationwide to support their implementation.

Accordingly, during 2024, 5 training sessions were conducted throughout the country (through the territorial offices in Chisinau, Balti, Cahul and Comrat) on the application of quality standards by lawyers providing state-guaranteed legal aid to victims of crime.

In parallel, the institutional framework for monitoring the quality of legal services was strengthened. The Regulation on Monitoring the Quality of Legal Aid Provided by Lawyers

⁶² Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 136/2024, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=144652&lang=ro.

was registered with the Ministry of Justice on 20.05.2022, and in 2023 the composition of the Selection Commission for Members of the External Quality Monitoring Commission for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid was approved. Although the external monitoring mechanism has not yet been applied in practice, the necessary preconditions for its operationalisation have been established, including through the revision of the regulatory framework, the establishment of selection criteria and the launch, in 2025, of a competition for the selection of external monitors.

Another significant development was the inclusion of state-guaranteed mediation within the state-guaranteed legal aid system, effective from 29 July 2024. In this regard, 31 mediators were accredited to provide such services, and the first requests for state-guaranteed mediation were recorded during the period 2024–2025, marking the institutionalisation of this mechanism.

Law No. 379/2022⁶³ and, subsequently, Law No. 367/2023⁶⁴ introduced substantial amendments to Law No. 113/2010⁶⁵ on judicial enforcement officers, strengthening mechanisms for their accountability. In particular, Law No. 367/2023 established more robust rules governing disciplinary proceedings against judicial enforcement officers, including a mechanism for monitoring their professional activity. Although adopted only on 21.12.2023, the law entered into force on 17.01.2024.

In addition, by Order⁶⁶ of the Minister of Justice No. 168 of 13.06.2024, the Regulation on the recording, preparation, storage and destruction of the archives of judicial enforcement officers was approved. This regulation replaced the previous procedures governing the management of archival records by judicial enforcement officers.

Law No. 6/2023⁶⁷ amending certain legislative acts introduced amendments to the Enforcement Code and to Law No. 198/2007⁶⁸ on State-Guaranteed Legal Aid. These amendments were intended to improve the mechanisms for recovering the costs incurred in providing state-guaranteed legal aid. The CNAJGS was also granted access to the relevant database for verifying the financial means of applicants for state-guaranteed legal aid.

In 2022, under the auspices of the National Union of Judicial Enforcement Officers, a Methodological Guide on Improving the Enforcement of Court Decisions Relating to Child Residence or Contact Rights was developed. No other guidelines or commentaries on the enforcement of judicial decisions were developed during the period 2022–2025.

With regard to the development and strengthening of the paralegal network, it is important to note the legislative amendments introduced in 2023 to Law No. 198/2007⁶⁹ on State-Guaranteed Legal Aid concerning the conditions for appointment to the position of

⁶³ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 379/2022, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=134990&lang=ro.

⁶⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 367/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=141250&lang=ro.

⁶⁵ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 113/2010, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152603&lang=ro.

⁶⁶ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Order published in the State Register of Legal Acts, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=143683&lang=ro.

⁶⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 6/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=135534&lang=ro.

⁶⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 198/2007, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=149213&lang=ro.

⁶⁹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 198/2007, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=149213&lang=ro.

paralegal, as well as the amendments made to Law No. 270/2018⁷⁰ on the Unified Remuneration System in the Budgetary Sector concerning the remuneration of paralegals. These amendments facilitated an increase in the number of positions allocated to paralegals. The total number of paralegal positions reached 82 in 2023, 87 in 2024 and 97 in 2025. As of 31.12.2025, 89 paralegals were employed, while 8 positions remained vacant.

At the same time, in order to support the professional development of paralegals during the implementation of the Strategy, two online training platforms were developed, one for initial training and one for continuing professional development, available in both Romanian and Russian. These training platforms are hosted on the Government e-learning platform administered by the e-Governance Agency (www.elearning.gov.md⁷¹).

CHALLENGES

Despite the progress made, the implementation of actions under General Objective 1.4 is characterised by a low level of achievement, with most outcome indicators not having been met.

A first set of challenges relates to delays in, or the non-completion of, regulatory reforms. Although the Ministry of Justice initiated, on 21.02.2025, the process of drafting a bill to amend the Enforcement Code No. 443/2004, this draft had not been finalised by the end of 2025. Similarly, quality standards for notarial and mediation services were not developed within the timeframe set (2022–2023). In the case of mediation, the authorities opted to promote a new Law on Mediation⁷² and the Status of Mediators, adopted on 12.02.2026 and due to enter into force in September 2026, which resulted in the postponement of the drafting of quality standards.

In the case of the notarial profession, quality standards were approved by Decision No. 3 of the Council of the Notarial Chamber of 29.10.2025, with a significant delay compared to the planned deadline. At the same time, the regulatory framework governing notarial fees has not been finalised. Although a working group was established for this purpose by Order of the Minister of Justice No. 140 of 06.06.2022, and the Council of the Notarial Chamber initiated the preparation of an impact assessment, while the draft law on notarial fees⁷³ was submitted for public consultations during the period 15.08–28.08.2023, Action 1.4.4(a) was not completed within the established timeframe.

Significant gaps also persist in the area of transparency and the regulation of professions related to the justice system. No measures have been taken to ensure the publication in the State Register of Legal Acts of acts adopted by the self-governing bodies of the legal professions, while the actions concerning the standardisation of methodologies for conducting judicial expert examinations have remained at the initiation stage.

With regard to the publication in the State Register of Legal Acts of acts adopted by the self-governing bodies of the legal professions, it should be noted that the list of authorities whose acts are subject to publication includes the Moldovan Bar Association, the National Union of Judicial Enforcement Officers and the Mediation Council, whilst the Notarial Chamber and the Union of Authorised Administrators are not included. However, the acts

⁷⁰ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 270/2018, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153622&lang=ro.

⁷¹ e-Governance Agency, Government e-learning platform, available at: <http://www.elearning.gov.md>.

⁷² Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law on Mediation, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153389&lang=ro.

⁷³ Government of the Republic of Moldova, draft Government Decision on notarial fees (public consultation), available at: <https://particip.gov.md/ro/document/stages/proiectul-hotararii-guvernului-cu-privire-la-aprobarea-proiectului-de-lege-cu-privire-la-platile-notariale/10982>.

adopted by the self-governing bodies that are included in that list are not published in the State Register. This situation may be explained by the fact that Law No. 92/2004⁷⁴ on the procedure for the publication and republication of normative acts and amendments thereto does not recognise the self-governing bodies of the legal professions as entities entitled to publish in the State Register of Legal Acts their own acts containing rules governing the legal professions. Consequently, the formal inclusion of the Moldovan Bar Association, the National Union of Judicial Enforcement Officers and the Mediation Council among the authorities issuing acts subject to publication in the State Register of Legal Acts does not, in itself, ensure achievement of the outcome indicator established under Action 1.4.1 of the Action Plan.

With regard to the legal profession, the necessary amendments to Law No. 1260/2002 on the legal profession have not been adopted with a view to establishing clear criteria for entry into the profession and strengthening disciplinary accountability mechanisms. Although Law No. 138/2024 and Law No. 284/2024 introduced certain amendments, these did not address those essential aspects.

Another critical area is the absence of an evaluation of the social security and health insurance mechanisms applicable to professions related to the justice system. Although the Action Plan provided for such evaluations to be carried out in 2022, they were not conducted. The research prepared in 2026 within the framework of the European Union and Council of Europe project cannot be regarded as a substitute for the envisaged evaluation, as it was not followed by concrete regulatory amendments.

Similarly, no evaluation of the tax regime applicable to these professions has been carried out, and the mechanisms for setting tariffs for services provided by authorised interpreters and translators have not been developed, despite the establishment of a working group in 2023 and the Ministry of Justice's announcement of 12.03.2024 regarding the initiation of the process of drafting a bill⁷⁵ to amend the regulatory framework governing the status, authorisation and organisation of the activity of interpreters and translators in the justice sector. That process was not completed within the timeframe of the Strategy.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

To address the identified shortcomings and strengthen professions related to the justice system, future interventions should focus on completing the reforms already initiated and establishing functional and coherent mechanisms.

- Drafting and adopting amendments to Law No. 1260/2002 on the legal profession with a view to establishing clear and transparent criteria for entry into the profession and strengthening the disciplinary accountability mechanism for lawyers;
- Evaluating the social security and compulsory health insurance mechanisms applicable to representatives of professions related to the justice system;
- Evaluating the tax regime applicable to representatives of professions related to the justice system;
- Developing and implementing a mechanism for the publication in the State Register of Legal Acts of official acts adopted by the self-governing bodies of the legal professions;
- Developing and approving quality standards for services provided by mediators;

⁷⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 92/2004, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152536&lang=ro.

⁷⁵ Government of the Republic of Moldova, draft law on authorised interpreters and translators (public consultation), available at: <https://particip.gov.md/index.php/ro/document/stages/proiect/12175>.

- Amending Law No. 68/2016 on judicial expertise and the status of judicial experts;
- Developing methodologies for conducting forensic examinations;
- Analysing and, where necessary, revising the mechanism for setting fees for services provided by authorised interpreters and translators.

CONCLUSIONS AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON STRATEGIC DIRECTION I

An analysis of the implementation of Strategic Direction I under the Strategy on Ensuring the Independence and Integrity of the Justice Sector for 2022–2025 reveals that, despite a considerable volume of regulatory and institutional interventions, the level of achievement of the objectives set remains moderate, while the impact of the reforms on the effective functioning of the justice system remains limited.

In this context, there is a need to recalibrate the approach to public policy in the field of justice by shifting from a predominantly regulatory approach to one focused on results and impact. Future reforms should be based on clear mechanisms for evaluating effectiveness, enhanced institutional accountability, and the effective and coherent implementation of the measures undertaken.

In this regard, it is recommended, first and foremost, to establish mandatory mechanisms for the ex-post evaluation of reforms, enabling the effective measurement of their impact on the functioning of the justice system. The implementation of an action should not be assessed solely through the adoption of the regulatory framework, but should also be contingent upon its effective application and the achievement of concrete and verifiable results.

Secondly, mechanisms for the independent evaluation of justice sector institutions should be strengthened through the introduction of periodic audits of selection, evaluation and disciplinary practices, conducted with the participation of independent experts. Such evaluations are essential for enhancing the transparency and credibility of the system.

There is also a need to improve discipline in the implementation of reforms through the strict alignment of deadlines for the adoption of primary and secondary legislation and the establishment of accountability mechanisms for delays. The absence of a complete regulatory framework should be regarded as a genuine impediment to implementation and cannot justify the formal reporting of actions as completed.

Similarly, integrity mechanisms should be strengthened through the development of effective tools for preventing and sanctioning misconduct, including the establishment of effective mechanisms for reporting ex-parte communications and the standardisation of disciplinary practice. The integrity of the system must be ensured not only at the regulatory level, but also through mechanisms that are operational and verifiable in practice.

It is recommended that available data be used systematically, including the results of public opinion surveys and analyses conducted by civil society organisations. These should be integrated into the decision-making process and used to support public policy measures, including through the development of institutional action plans based on their findings.

Priority intervention is required in the area of professions related to the justice system, which recorded the lowest level of implementation. The development of effective disciplinary mechanisms, the establishment of quality standards and the coherent regulation of these professions are essential for the effective functioning of the justice system as a whole.

Last but not least, a central mechanism for coordinating justice reform should be established to ensure the coherence of interventions, monitor progress and strengthen the accountability of the institutions involved. The absence of effective coordination reduces the impact of reforms and generates delays and inconsistencies in implementation.

Overall, the conclusions of the report on the progress achieved in implementing the objectives of Strategic Direction I highlight the need for a change in the approach to the development and implementation of public policies in the field of justice, with a stronger focus on efficiency, accountability and tangible results, with a view to genuinely strengthening the independence, integrity and credibility of the justice system.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION II - ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND THE QUALITY OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Strategic Direction II. Access to justice and the quality of the administration of justice includes 4 objectives:

Objective 2.1. Improving access to justice and the human rights protection system in the justice sector;

Objective 2.2. Improving the quality of judicial acts and standardising judicial practice;

Objective 2.3. Strengthening legal education and training;

Objective 2.4. Strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

In order to achieve each of the general objectives of this strategic direction, 13 specific objectives were outlined, which were to be achieved through the undertaking and implementation of 47 actions.

An analysis of the degree of implementation of the actions planned for achieving the objectives of Strategic Direction II shows that, of the 47 actions scheduled for implementation during the period 2022–2025, 21 actions (44.68%) were completed without shortcomings, 13 actions (27.66%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, 6 actions (12.77%) were initiated, and 7 actions (14.89%) were not completed.

Objective 2.1. Improving access to justice and the human rights protection system in the justice sector

Overall assessment: 2.42 p out of 4.00 p

The activities aimed at achieving General Objective 2.1 were organised into 6 specific objectives, namely:

- Specific Objective 2.1.1. Facilitating access to justice, particularly for vulnerable and underrepresented groups;
- Specific Objective 2.1.2. Ensuring the stability and clarity of criminal law;
- Specific Objective 2.1.3. Simplifying and streamlining judicial procedures;
- Specific Objective 2.1.4. Improving the efficiency of mechanisms for the enforcement of court decisions;
- Specific Objective 2.1.5. Improving mechanisms for the enforcement of criminal sentences and detention conditions;
- Specific Objective 2.1.6. Preserving the stability of the regulatory framework and involving justice sector stakeholders in the assessment and formulation of proposed amendments.

In order to achieve the projected outcome indicators for these objectives, 19 actions were planned, of which 8 actions (42.10%) were completed without shortcomings, 5 actions (26.31%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, 4 actions (21.05%) were initiated, and 2 actions (10.53%) were not completed.

PROGRESS

The most significant progress towards achieving General Objective 2.1 was made through measures aimed at strengthening the regulatory framework to facilitate access to justice, particularly for vulnerable groups and victims of certain categories of highly sensitive offences.

By Law No. 144/2021⁷⁶, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, while the National Programme on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence for 2023–2027 was approved by Government Decision No. 332/2023.⁷⁷

Also in 2023, Government Decision No. 926/2023⁷⁸ established the National Agency for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, a central administrative authority subordinated to the Government, while Law No. 231/2024⁷⁹ introduced amendments to Law No. 45/2007⁸⁰ on the prevention and combating of domestic violence, ensuring its alignment with the Istanbul Convention.

In 2024, Government Decision No. 822/2024⁸¹ established the SIA Register of Offenders in Cases of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, while Government Decision No. 449/2024⁸² established the National Coordinating Council for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. The Council is an advisory body operating under the National Agency for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and was established to monitor the implementation of state policy in the field of preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

Following the adoption and entry into force of the Law No. 213/2023⁸³ on State Duty, Law No. 114/2025⁸⁴ introduced exemptions, in certain cases, for victims of domestic violence from the obligation to pay the state duty and stamp duty when filing court actions, thereby implementing the recommendations set out in Constitutional Court Judgment No. 20/2024⁸⁵.

At the institutional level, Order No. 355/2025 of the Ministry of Internal Affairs established an inter-institutional mechanism for the review of cases of femicide and domestic violence resulting in the death of the victim or serious bodily injury or damage to health, while

⁷⁶ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 144/2021, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=128240&lang=ro.

⁷⁷ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 332/2023, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=138005&lang=ro.

⁷⁸ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 926/2023, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=140357&lang=ro.

⁷⁹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 231/2024, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=144562&lang=ro.

⁸⁰ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 45/2007, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=150772&lang=ro.

⁸¹ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 822/2024, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=146258&lang=ro.

⁸² Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 449/2024, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=144134&lang=ro.

⁸³ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 213/2023, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152741&lang=ro.

⁸⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 114/2025, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=148988&lang=ro.

⁸⁵ Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova, Judgment No. 20/2024, available at:

https://www.constcourt.md/public/ccdoc/hotariri/h_20_2024_269a_2023_rou.pdf.

Government Decision No. 798/2025 strengthened the social rehabilitation service for victims of domestic violence.

During the reporting period, efforts were undertaken to align the national legal framework with the requirements for ensuring the rights of victims of sexual offences and domestic violence, resulting in substantial amendments to the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Contravention Code.

To support the implementation of these amendments, the Methodology for the Work of the Intervention Team in Cases of Sexual Violence and the Instructions for the Work of the Intervention Team in Cases of Sexual Violence were approved, alongside the pilot implementation of the Integrated Regional Service for Victims of Sexual Violence, based in Ungheni. The service will provide assistance to beneficiaries from the following administrative-territorial units: Ungheni, Nisporeni, Calarasi, Falesti, Telenesti and Singerei.

Government Order No. 206/2024⁸⁶ approved a set of measures for the implementation of the recommendations of the Lanzarote Committee concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention) for the period 2025–2026. In addition, Government Decision No. 836/2025⁸⁷ approved the Framework Regulation on the Organisation and Functioning of Support Services for Victims of Sexual Violence and the Minimum Quality Standards for Support Services for Victims of Sexual Violence.

With a view to transposing Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA, a draft law amending certain legislative acts was prepared during 2025. The draft proposed amendments to the Criminal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code and Law No. 370/2023⁸⁸ on the Rights of the Child, with the aim of preventing and combating the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children. All these amendments were subsequently adopted through Law No. 5/2026.⁸⁹

In order to implement the electronic monitoring mechanism for persons who commit acts of domestic violence during the application of victim protection measures, Government Decision No. 637/2024⁹⁰ introduced amendments to a number of government decisions. These amendments were necessary to strengthen the activity of the probation authorities and to revise the Regulation on the Electronic Monitoring of Persons. The table below presents the outcome indicators relating to electronic monitoring.

Year	No. of offenders monitored (total)	Domestic offenders	Equipment procured	Equipment donated
2022	1230	735	865	48

⁸⁶ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Order No. 206/2024, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=145866&lang=ro.

⁸⁷ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 836/2025, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=152382&lang=ro.

⁸⁸ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 370/2023, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153186&lang=ro.

⁸⁹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 5/2026, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153156&lang=ro.

⁹⁰ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 637/2024, available at:

https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=145014&lang=ro.

2023	-	764	-	-
2024	1104	878	100	-
2025	960	838	-	-

With regard to expanding the number of legal aid lawyers specialised in providing state-guaranteed legal aid to vulnerable groups (victims of domestic violence, victims of trafficking in human beings, victims of torture and inhuman treatment, children, etc.), including the continuous updating of the list of specialised lawyers, it should be noted that the overall number of specialised lawyers increased during the period 2022–2025.

According to data from the National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid:

- in 2022: 45 lawyers specialised in cases involving children; 14 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid in asylum cases; 14 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities; and 20 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to victims of crime;
- in 2023: 47 lawyers specialised in cases involving children; 19 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid in asylum cases; 10 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities; and 20 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to victims of crime;
- in 2024: 46 lawyers specialised in cases involving children; 18 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to asylum seekers, refugees, beneficiaries of humanitarian protection, stateless persons and applicants for recognition as stateless persons; 11 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities; and 21 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to victims of crime;
- in 2025: 51 lawyers specialised in cases involving children; 16 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to asylum seekers, refugees, beneficiaries of humanitarian protection, stateless persons and applicants for recognition as stateless persons; 11 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities; and 25 lawyers specialised in providing qualified legal aid to victims of crime.

Law No. 136/2024 amending certain legislative acts (amending the Criminal Code and the Contravention Code)⁹¹ introduced a number of amendments to the Criminal Code, including:

- extending the applicability of alternatives to imprisonment to additional categories of offences;
- reconceptualising the rules governing limitation periods for criminal liability;
- revising and expanding the catalogue of environmental offences;
- introducing new criminal offences aimed at protecting personal identity;
- revising and improving the provisions governing corruption offences in light of findings of the Constitutional Court;
- extending limitation periods for criminal liability and providing for the interruption of

⁹¹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 136/2024 amending certain legislative acts (amending the Criminal Code and the Contravention Code), available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=144652&lang=ro.

those periods once a case is referred to a court, in order to prevent offenders from escaping criminal liability solely because the limitation period expired, including as a result of delays in the examination of the case;

- ensuring equitable treatment between persons who commit a single offence and those who commit multiple offences;
- introducing the possibility of parole for persons serving life imprisonment after the effective completion of 25 years of imprisonment, instead of the current 30-year requirement;
- facilitating the legal classification of acts affecting the proper functioning of public administration through the removal or amendment of provisions previously declared unconstitutional;
- criminalising unlawful acts that cause harm to the environment and public health and for which criminal liability had not previously been established;
- criminalising identity theft and unlawful transactions involving non-cash payment instruments, thereby strengthening the protection of personal identity, privacy and assets, including those held in electronic or digital form; and
- establishing a fair and proportionate system of penalties for a number of offences, consistent with the objectives of criminal law.

Consequently, these reforms sought to establish the foundations of a coherent and sustainable criminal policy capable of responding both to existing challenges and to the continuing and rapid evolution of societal relations.

With a view to simplifying and streamlining judicial procedures, Law No. 245/2023 amending certain legislative acts (amending the Criminal Procedure Code and the Contravention Code)⁹² revised criminal procedural legislation. The amendments introduced were aimed at streamlining criminal proceedings, strengthening procedural safeguards and accelerating the examination of criminal cases, particularly those involving corruption and serious crime.

The amendments also strengthen the rights of participants in criminal proceedings, particularly the right to defence, by redefining the cases in which the participation of a lawyer is mandatory, providing clearer regulation of state-guaranteed legal aid, expanding the rights of defence counsel and introducing additional safeguards for persons who are detained or held in custody. At the same time, modern mechanisms for conducting proceedings have been developed, including the use of videoconferencing, the mandatory audio-video recording of hearings and the electronic transmission of procedural documents.

With regard to the expansion of videoconferencing, Law No. 245/2023 introduced a significant shift in the conduct of criminal proceedings by transforming videoconferencing from an exceptional mechanism into a procedural tool that may be used across a substantially broader range of cases and procedural stages. Thus, the amendments introduced by Law No. 245/2023 permit the use of videoconferencing for:

- the trial of criminal cases involving detained persons;
- the questioning of suspects, accused persons and defendants held in detention;

⁹² Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 245/2023 amending certain legislative acts (amending the Criminal Procedure Code and the Contravention Code), available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=140327&lang=ro.

- the participation of interpreters and translators located in other localities;
- the examination of witnesses and minors; and
- the conduct of procedural acts both during the criminal investigation stage and before the courts.

At the same time, the law seeks to preserve the guarantees of a fair trial by introducing mandatory audio-video recording of hearings, verification of the identity of participants and the presence of defence counsel in the cases provided for by law. Following the entry into force of the amendments introduced by Law No. 245/2023, videoconferencing has become a procedural efficiency tool that remains compatible with the requirements of the right to defence and the right to a fair trial.

By the Superior Council of Magistracy Decision No. 495/31 of 02.11.2023⁹³, a Working Group was established to expand the use of videoconferencing in civil, criminal and contravention cases, while by Decision No. 553/41 of 21.10.2025,⁹⁴ the Council recommended allowing the participation of lawyers by videoconference in civil proceedings, including administrative litigation and insolvency proceedings. According to data provided by the Superior Council of Magistracy, in 2022, 26,585 of the 434,342 hearings conducted were held by videoconference; in 2023, 22,926 of 424,361 hearings were held by videoconference; in 2024, 316,796 of 381,299 hearings were conducted by videoconference; and in 2025, 16,287 of 412,952 hearings were conducted through this mechanism.

Participation by videoconference in both criminal and civil cases helps to avoid delays caused by the inability of parties, lawyers, witnesses, experts or interpreters to travel, particularly in cases where participants are located in other localities or abroad. This contributes to ensuring compliance with the reasonable-time requirement and to reducing the workload of the courts.

The use of videoconferencing significantly reduces the costs associated with participation in judicial proceedings, both for litigants and for the judiciary. It reduces expenses related to travel, escort arrangements, the organisation of hearings and the time required for physical attendance before the courts. The benefits are particularly evident in commercial disputes, cases involving foreign elements, insolvency proceedings and complex administrative litigation, where participants frequently originate from different jurisdictions.

Year	No. of programmes	No. of people
2022	19	2795 (including 95 minors)
2023 ⁹⁵	-	-
2024	9	1427 (including 179 minors)
2025	2	901

⁹³ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 495/31 of 02.11.2023, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotarile/2023/31/495-31.pdf>.

⁹⁴ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 553/41 of 21.10.2025, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotarile/2025/41/553-41.pdf>.

⁹⁵ For 2023 there are no data.

CHALLENGES

Analysis of the progress of the activities and actions undertaken to achieve the outcome indicators for General Objective 2.1 shows that a significant proportion of the actions planned under this objective were implemented with considerable delays, were only initiated, or were not implemented.

Among the actions implemented with substantial delay was the drafting and adoption of Law No. 258/2025⁹⁶ amending certain legislative acts (implementation of certain Constitutional Court judgments and improvement of the mechanism for the voluntary execution of enforcement documents), an action linked to the objective of improving the efficiency of mechanisms for the enforcement of court judgments. Although planned for implementation in 2022, it was completed only in 2025.

Under the objective concerning the improvement of mechanisms for the enforcement of criminal sentences and detention conditions, only limited progress was recorded during the implementation period. In 2024, Government Decision No. 684/2024⁹⁷ amended Government Decision No. 746/2015 on the establishment of the National Coordination Council for the Social Reintegration of Persons Released from Detention. These amendments were intended to reactivate the Council's work and update its membership. Also in 2024, an Information Programme on the conditions and procedures for the employment of persons deprived of their liberty was developed.

According to the Ministry of Justice's 2023 report, the drafting of a law amending certain legislative acts aimed at facilitating the creation of employment opportunities for convicted persons was initiated. However, this action was not completed during the implementation period of the Strategy. The draft law⁹⁸ amending certain legislative acts (facilitating the creation of employment opportunities for convicted persons) was approved by the Government only on 8 April 2026 and adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova at first reading on 30 April 2026.

In 2024, under the Council of Europe project "Strengthening the Human Rights-Compliant Criminal Justice System in the Republic of Moldova", an assessment of Law No. 137/2016⁹⁹ on the Rehabilitation of Victims of Crime was carried out. In parallel, under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and within the framework of an international technical assistance project, the same law was analysed from the perspective of the rights of refugees and foreign nationals. The recommendations resulting from these assessments were subsequently reflected in a draft law amending, inter alia, Law No. 137/2016, which was prepared only in 2025 and published for public consultation on 23.07.2025.

Despite these assessments of the existing legislative framework, including Law No. 137/2016, the recommendations have not yet been translated into concrete legislative and institutional solutions, thereby perpetuating significant shortcomings in the effective protection of victims. Access to justice cannot be regarded as fully achieved in the absence of an effective mechanism for compensation, particularly where the offender is insolvent or remains unidentified. The establishment of a functional compensation scheme, supported by

⁹⁶ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 258/2025, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=151009&lang=ro.

⁹⁷ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 684/2024, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=145230&lang=ro.

⁹⁸ Government of the Republic of Moldova, draft law facilitating employment opportunities for convicted persons, available at: <https://gov.md/sites/default/files/media/documents/sedinte-de-guvern/2026-04/NU-480-MJ-2024.pdf>.

⁹⁹ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 137/2016, available at: <https://justice.gov.md/ro/content/proiectul-de-lege-pentru-modificarea-unor-acte-normative-imbunatatirea-mecanismului-de-1>.

a dedicated fund and simplified procedures, constitutes not only an obligation arising from European standards but also an essential prerequisite for ensuring that the right of access to justice is practical and effective rather than theoretical or illusory.

The analysis reveals that, although certain targeted measures have been undertaken (e.g. videoconferencing), these do not constitute a coherent system of digital access to justice. In the absence of integrated digital tools, such as online submission of applications, electronic access to case files and automated notifications, access to justice remains constrained by geographical, administrative and financial barriers. Digitalisation is not merely a tool for improving efficiency but also a guarantor of equal access, particularly for vulnerable persons and those living outside urban centres. It also contributes to reducing the length of proceedings and enhancing transparency.

Although, as early as 2023, the Legal Affairs, Appointments and Immunities Committee of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova established a working group to draft amendments to the Administrative Code, the draft law¹⁰⁰ amending the Administrative Code was registered in Parliament on 02.11.2023 as a legislative initiative submitted by a group of Members of Parliament. It was adopted at first reading on 09.11.2023 and at second reading on 18.07.2024. The draft law was scheduled for final reading at the parliamentary sitting of 25.07.2024; however, it was not put to a vote during that sitting. Draft Law No. 390 of 02.11.2023 remains on the parliamentary agenda.

With regard to the revision of the legal framework governing the enforcement of court judgments through the simplification of enforcement procedures and the strengthening of mechanisms for tracing debtors' assets and the sale of such assets, it should be noted that, although the Ministry of Justice published a notice on 19.01.2024¹⁰¹ announcing the initiation of the drafting process for amendments to the Enforcement Code, and a working group was established for this purpose by Order of the Minister of Justice No. 147/2024, this action has not been completed, as the draft law prepared by the working group has not yet been advanced.

The effective enforcement of court judgments is an essential component of the right of access to justice, as a judgment that remains unenforced or is enforced with delay loses both its legal purpose and practical value. The report highlights significant delays in advancing the necessary legislative framework, which continue to affect procedures for tracing debtors' assets and realising such assets. In this context, finalising and advancing the amendments to the Enforcement Code is indispensable for simplifying enforcement procedures, reducing enforcement delays and increasing the effectiveness of the administration of justice. A similar situation can be observed with regard to the action aimed at establishing and implementing a progressive system for the execution of criminal sentences. By Order of the Minister of Justice No. 308/2022, a working group was established for this purpose. However, it was only on 13.01.2023 that the concept¹⁰² for the introduction of a progressive system for the execution of custodial sentences was

¹⁰⁰ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, draft law amending the Administrative Code (Legislative File No. 6720), available at: <https://old.parlament.md/ProcesullEgislativ/Proiectedeactenormative/tabid/61/LegislativId/6720/language/ro-RO/Default.aspx>.

¹⁰¹ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, notice on initiating the drafting process, 19.01.2024, available at: <https://particip.gov.md/ro/document/stages/anunt-privind-initierea-procesului-de-elaborare-a-proiectului-de-lege-cu-privire-la-modificarea-codului-de-executare-nr4432004/11878>.

¹⁰² Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, Concept for a progressive system for the execution of criminal sentences, available at: https://justice.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/concept_sistemul_progresiv_de_executare_a_pedepsei_rev.2023_final.pdf.

presented and discussed within the working group. According to the Ministry of Justice's reports for 2024 and 2025, the last meeting of the working group took place on 11.10.2023, during which the final version of the draft law was reportedly presented. No evidence of any subsequent progress or continuation of these activities has been identified.

The implementation of a progressive system for the execution of criminal sentences is an essential instrument for individualising the execution of sanctions and facilitating the social reintegration of convicted persons. Although the concept has been developed, the lack of continuity and the failure to finalise the legislative framework have prevented the operationalisation of this mechanism. Advancing the draft law is necessary to align the penitentiary system with European standards, reduce recidivism and ensure an appropriate balance between the punitive and rehabilitative functions of criminal punishment.

Within this objective, no measures were undertaken to develop the concept for amending criminal legislation, as envisaged under Action 2.1.2, aimed at establishing a coherent long-term criminal policy based on an analysis of shortcomings within the institutions of the Criminal Code, the identification of remedial measures, an assessment of criminogenic trends in relation to the gravity of offences and applicable penalties, and the identification, including through the analysis of case law, of provisions that give rise to inconsistent interpretation.

Nor were any measures undertaken to enable the Ministry of Justice to assume the role of the primary promoter of amendments to codified legislation (the Civil Code, Criminal Code, Contravention Code, Administrative Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Code of Criminal Procedure and Enforcement Code) and legislation governing the judiciary and the prosecution service, with a view to ensuring legislative stability through the involvement and consultation of public authorities and representatives of the justice sector at various stages of the legislative process.

The failure of the Ministry of Justice to assume a coordinating role in ensuring the stability of the legislative framework, coupled with the absence of a systemic mechanism for the review and adjustment of codified legislation, contributes to legislative instability, divergent interpretations and reduced legal certainty. The institutionalisation of a permanent review mechanism, based on case-law analysis, statistical data and inter-institutional consultation, is indispensable for ensuring legislative coherence and preventing fragmented and reactive legislative interventions.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- Establishing a functional mechanism for compensating victims of crime;
- Digitalising access to justice for litigants (court users) and vulnerable groups;
- Institutionalising a permanent mechanism for the review of codified legislation;
- Finalising and advancing the draft law amending the Enforcement Code with a view to simplifying and streamlining the procedures for the enforcement of civil court judgments;
- Finalising and advancing the draft law on the establishment and implementation of a progressive system for the execution of custodial sentences.

The implementation of these recommendations will contribute to the development of a more accessible, efficient and rights-oriented justice system. The establishment of a functional mechanism for compensating victims of crime and the digitalisation of access to justice will strengthen the effective protection of vulnerable persons and facilitate the exercise of the right of access to justice under faster and more predictable conditions. At the same time,

the institutionalisation of a permanent mechanism for reviewing codified legislation will ensure the continuous adaptation of the legislative framework to social, jurisprudential and European developments, thereby contributing to greater legislative coherence and quality.

At the same time, the simplification and streamlining of procedures for the enforcement of civil court judgments will strengthen the effectiveness of the administration of justice and public confidence in the enforcement process, while the implementation of a progressive system for the execution of custodial sentences will support the development of a modern criminal justice policy focused on the social reintegration of convicted persons, the reduction of reoffending and compliance with European standards on detention and sentence execution.

Objective 2.2. Improving the quality of judicial acts and standardising judicial practice

Overall assessment: 1.75 p out of 4.00 p

To achieve General Objective 2.2, 2 specific objectives were established, namely:

- Specific Objective 2.2.1. Establishing mechanisms to improve the quality and clarity of judicial decisions;
- Specific Objective 2.2.2. Improving and developing mechanisms to ensure the uniformity of judicial practice.

To achieve these specific objectives, 12 actions were planned, of which 4 actions (33.33%) were completed without shortcomings, 2 actions (16.66%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, 1 action (8.33%) was initiated, and 5 actions (41.66%) were not implemented.

PROGRESS

The most significant achievements under this objective relate primarily to the effects of the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice on the quality of the administration of justice. In particular, Law No. 246/2023¹⁰³ introduced the necessary amendments to a number of legislative acts, thereby creating the foundations for transforming the Supreme Court of Justice into a court of cassation, the primary role of which is to ensure the uniformity of judicial practice.

The same Law No. 246/2023 revised all grounds for appeal on points of law provided for in the Code of Civil Procedure, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Administrative Code, so that the appellate court becomes a genuine court of cassation with exclusive jurisdiction to determine issues of law, while the instruments available to the Supreme Court of Justice for ensuring coherent and uniform case law were revised simultaneously.

Given that the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice is still ongoing, once the Court became operational and resumed the examination of pending appeals and newly filed appeals, it ensured the preparation and publication of thematic factsheets and judicial error bulletins, all of which are accessible to legal professionals and the general public on the Court's website (www.csj.md¹⁰⁴).

Statistics show that, in 2024, 6 new thematic factsheets were prepared and published in civil and commercial matters and 4 existing factsheets were updated. In administrative litigation, 1 new factsheet was prepared, and 3 existing factsheets were updated, while in criminal matters 3 factsheets were updated. In 2025, 2 new factsheets were prepared in the field of administrative litigation and 2 in criminal matters, while a further 2 criminal-law factsheets were updated. Between 2023 and 2025, a total of 221 judicial error bulletins were prepared and published on the Supreme Court of Justice's website.

The approval by the Superior Council of Magistracy of the Regulation¹⁰⁵ on the Specialisation of Judges, through Decision No. 632/44 of 18.11.2025¹⁰⁶, contributed to enhancing the quality of the administration of justice by establishing the internal regulatory framework necessary for organising the specialisation of judges within district courts, with a view to

¹⁰³ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 246/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=140328&lang=ro.

¹⁰⁴ Supreme Court of Justice, official website, available at: <http://www.csj.md>.

¹⁰⁵ Superior Council of Magistracy, Regulation on the Specialisation of Judges (annex to Decision No. 632/44 of 18.11.2025), available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/44/632-44-regulament.pdf>.

¹⁰⁶ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 632/44 of 18.11.2025, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/44/632-44.pdf>.

ensuring a more efficient and higher-quality administration of justice. The Regulation allows for the specialisation of judges by subject matter, upon the proposal of the court president, taking into account the number of judges serving in the court, the categories of cases, the workload and the complexity of the cases examined. Through this regulatory intervention, the Superior Council of Magistracy has created the conditions for the development of a more coherent judicial practice, greater consistency in judicial approaches, and a higher degree of professionalisation in the examination of specialised cases, thereby contributing to strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judiciary.

CHALLENGES

Although actions were planned under General Objective 2.2 to establish a coherent framework of tools and practices aimed at ensuring that judicial decisions are drafted in a clear, predictable and well-reasoned manner, with a view to improving the quality of the administration of justice, ensuring the uniformity of judicial practice and strengthening public confidence in the judiciary, it is evident that the vast majority of the actions capable of achieving the envisaged outcome indicators were either not implemented or only partially initiated. Although the drafting and adoption of a legislative framework aimed at facilitating better reasoning of judicial decisions was envisaged, this action cannot be considered completed through the adoption of Law No. 245/2023¹⁰⁷, which introduced amendments to the Criminal Code and the Contravention Code concerning the obligation to pronounce reasoned decisions. This legislative intervention does not correspond to the purpose of the action, namely improving the quality of judicial reasoning, but rather concerns the timeframe and manner in which decisions are delivered.

It was only on 09.12.2025 that the Superior Council of Magistracy approved, through Decision No. 660/47¹⁰⁸, the Guide on Ensuring Quality Standards for Judicial Decisions, which establishes minimum requirements for the structure of judicial decisions.

Despite the recognised need to standardise the structure of judicial decisions, standard templates have not been developed and integrated into the Integrated Case Management Programme (PIGD). This omission hinders the effective standardisation of practice and maintains excessive variability in the drafting of judicial decisions. The integration of standard templates into the PIGD would facilitate not only formal consistency but also practical guidance for judges in drafting decisions, thereby contributing to greater efficiency and a reduction in errors.

Although inter-institutional discussion platforms involving judges, lawyers, prosecutors, judicial enforcement officers and probation counsellors were established during the period 2024–2025, these initiatives were implemented only within the Ungheni, Balti, Edinet, Hincesti, Criuleni and Drochia Courts, with support from the “Model Courts” project.

However, in order to achieve the envisaged outcome indicators for this action, these discussion platforms should facilitate a genuine analysis of emerging trends and developments in case law with a view to resolving issues that are susceptible to multiple interpretations and generate inconsistent practice. Such platforms should operate on a permanent rather than on ad hoc basis.

With regard to the analysis of case law relating to appeals in the interest of the law and the identification of measures to improve their effectiveness, no study or proposals for

¹⁰⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 245/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=140327&lang=ro.

¹⁰⁸ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 660/47, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/47/660-47.pdf>.

improving the legislative framework have been produced. Likewise, no guidelines have been developed on the individualisation of sanctions by categories of criminal offences and contraventions. The absence of a systematic analysis of case law, including in relation to appeals in the interest of the law, limits the capacity of the system to address divergences and prevent inconsistent judicial practice. The establishment of a permanent mechanism for analysis and feedback through periodic reports, guidelines and analytical summaries is essential for transforming the Supreme Court of Justice into a genuine guarantor of the uniformity of judicial practice, not only formally but also in practical terms.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- Developing and integrating standard templates for judicial decisions into the PIGD;
- Establishing a systematic mechanism for the analysis of case law and institutional feedback.

Objective 2.3. Strengthening legal education and training

Overall assessment: 4.00 p out of 4.00 p

Under Objective 2.3, all 7 monitored actions were assessed as completed without shortcomings (100%), both in respect of actions with deadlines falling within the period 2024–2025 and ongoing actions assessed as at 31 December 2025 for the entire implementation period 2021–2025. The overall score for the objective is 4.00 out of 4.00, confirming the positive performance already recorded in the first Shadow Monitoring Report (2022–2023).

PROGRESS

The action concerning amendments to the legislative framework aimed at improving the quality of initial and continuous training provided to beneficiaries of the National Institute of Justice (INJ) was completed during the first monitoring cycle through the adoption of Law No. 228 of 28.07.2022¹⁰⁹, which amended Law No. 152/2006 on the National Institute of Justice with regard to the composition of the INJ Council. During the period 2024–2025, no further amendments to this framework were required, and Action 2.3.1(a) therefore remained fully implemented.

In practice, the most significant developments during the reporting period occurred in the area of continuous training for mixed groups of judges, prosecutors and other justice-sector professionals. According to the Ministry of Justice’s Monitoring Report for 2024¹¹⁰, the INJ organised 97 continuous training activities in areas of common interest, attended by 2,127 participants, including 708 judges, 783 prosecutors, 192 criminal investigation officers, 145 lawyers and representatives of other professional categories. Compared to 2022–2023, the range of beneficiaries expanded and now includes staff of the National Anti-Corruption Centre (CNA), the Office for Prevention and Fight against Money Laundering (SPCSB), representatives of the Government and other institutions. In the area of training of trainers, and with the support of GIZ, 40 new trainers were prepared in specialised fields, including the investigation of high-level corruption, organised crime and illicit enrichment offences, reflecting efforts to ensure the sustainability of training capacities.

According to the Ministry of Justice’s monitoring report for the first half of 2025¹¹¹, the INJ delivered 14 training activities involving 304 participants, in addition to launching 23 e-learning courses with 1,192 participations. During the second half of 2025, the INJ organised 37 training activities involving 796 participants and launched a further 24 e-learning courses with 1,374 participations. Overall, the data for 2025 confirm the consolidation of the INJ’s training platform, which now operates effectively through both traditional and digital learning formats.

With regard to training on the use of judicial information systems, the most notable development during 2024–2025 was the nationwide roll-out of the e-Dosar judiciar application, which expanded from a pilot initiative implemented in selected courts to full deployment across the judiciary from 2025 onwards. This development is expected to bring

¹⁰⁹ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 228 of 28.07.2022, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=132705&lang=ro.

¹¹⁰ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, Monitoring Report for 2024, available at: https://justice.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/raport_de_monitorizare_pentru_anul_2024.pdf.

¹¹¹ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, monitoring report for the first half of 2025, available at: https://justice.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/raport_gradul_de_realizare_a_strategiei_in_sectorul_justitiei_sem.i_2025.pdf.

about a significant change in working methods throughout the judicial system. In 2024, the Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration (ADJAJ) established a Help Centre for users of the e-Dosar judicial system¹¹², targeted primarily at lawyers, and provided training to 357 lawyers during 2025. In addition, the INJ organised training courses on the Judicial Information System (SIJ), attended by 505 participants during the first half of 2025 and 79 participants during the second half of the year. The Institute also introduced a new training course on CEPEJ–PIGD tools, attended by 54 participants.

Training for Prosecution Service staff in the use of the Criminal Investigation e-Dosar system followed a similar pattern: 6 training activities involving 122 participants in 2024 and 4 courses attended by approximately 80 participants in 2025, according to Ministry of Justice monitoring reports. By Decision No. 1-115/2024 of 30.04.2024, the Superior Council of Prosecutors approved the continuing training programme for 2025, which explicitly includes the use of information technology applications, according to information provided by the Prosecutor General's Office.¹¹³

The most significant expansion compared to the first monitoring cycle occurred in the area of institutional management and leadership. During the first half of 2025, the INJ organised 24 training courses attended by 937 participants, while in the second half of the year it delivered 16 courses attended by 269 participants. This corresponds to approximately 1,200 individuals trained during 2025, compared to approximately 1,157 participants during the entire period 2022–2023. The outcome indicator establishing a target of 30% of staff trained was therefore clearly exceeded. In addition, ADJAJ organised a dedicated training session on 29 November 2024 for 39 operational court managers.

Training activities on communication and conflict management in interactions with litigants also recorded consistent participation. In 2024, seven training activities were delivered to 173 participants. During the first half of 2025, 16 courses were attended by 153 participants, while a further 7 courses were attended by 122 participants during the second half of the year. With the support of the INJ, the Prosecutor General's Office organised 6 training courses attended by 92 participants in 2024 and 2 courses attended by 24 participants in 2025.

CHALLENGES

Although all actions received the maximum rating, the qualitative assessment of the 2024–2025 period highlights several issues that should be considered in the preparation of the next justice-sector policy document.

Official reporting on continuing training remains focused almost exclusively on quantitative indicators, such as the number of courses delivered and the number of participants trained, without being accompanied by an assessment of the actual impact of training activities on judicial practice or on the quality of the administration of justice. No public reports were identified concerning ex-post evaluations of INJ training programmes, the extent to which acquired skills have been applied in practice, or the correlation between participation in training activities and judicial performance indicators. Furthermore, during 2024–2025 the INJ did not publish a systematic assessment of training needs based on data derived from judicial or prosecutorial practice.

¹¹² Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration (ADJAJ), launch of the Help Centre for users of the e-Dosar judicial system, available at: <https://adjaj.justice.md/lansarea-centrului-de-asistenta-a-utilizatorilor-solutiei-informatic-e-dosar-judiciar/?lang=ru>.

¹¹³ According to letter No. 3-11d/26-30 of 29.01.2026 from the Prosecutor General's Office

A degree of inconsistency is also apparent in the reporting of training activities related to the Judicial Information System (SIJ). While ADJAJ reported having trained 357 lawyers in 2025, INJ data for the second half of 2025 indicate only 79 participants trained in this area. This suggests that a substantial part of the training activity is delivered through ADJAJ and is not fully reflected in INJ statistics. Although this discrepancy is not problematic in itself, it may create gaps in the consolidated reporting of progress and limit the ability to assess comprehensively the level of capacity-building achieved across the justice sector.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- The new post-SRSJ strategic framework should, in the area of professional training, include outcome and impact indicators rather than focusing solely on output indicators. An ex-post evaluation mechanism should be introduced, either through surveys conducted 3–6 months after the completion of training programmes or through the analysis of performance indicators linked to the institutions whose staff participated in the training. This would provide greater substance to the assessment of outcomes and enable a more meaningful evaluation of training effectiveness.
- The future strategy should clearly define the division of training responsibilities between the National Institute of Justice (INJ) and the Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration (ADJAJ) with regard to judicial information systems and should provide for a consolidated reporting mechanism. Given that the e-Dosar system has already reached the stage of system-wide implementation, the strategic focus could shift from basic user training towards advanced training on specific functionalities and the use of judicial data for analytical purposes. One option for improving efficiency would be to centralise all legal training activities within the National Institute of Justice, while allowing ADJAJ to second specialised trainers for technical training modules where necessary. This would optimise resources and ensure a uniform standard for assessing the impact of training activities.
- The monitoring mechanism under the future strategy should provide for differentiated reporting at the institutional level, in accordance with the distribution of responsibilities established by Law No. 3/2016. The National Institute of Justice and the Prosecutor General's Office (which, pursuant to Article 32(2) of Law No. 3/2016, are responsible for the continuing training of prosecutors) should report on the impact of training activities on prosecutorial practice, going beyond the mere recording of the number of training sessions delivered. The Superior Council of Prosecutors, as the authority responsible for approving training strategies and training topics pursuant to Article 70(k) of the same law, should report on the extent to which the approved training programmes correspond to the actual needs identified within the prosecution system.

Objective 2.4. Strengthening alternative dispute resolution

Overall assessment: **2.33 p out of 4.00 p**

Of the 9 actions monitored under Objective 2.4 as at 31.12.2025, 6 were rated as “*achieved with substantial shortcomings*” (67%), 1 action (11%) - Action 2.4.2(b) concerning the amendment of the regulatory framework for arbitration - was rated as “*initiated*”, and 2 actions (22%), both under Specific Objective 2.4.3, were rated as “*achieved without shortcomings*”. The overall score is 2.33 out of 4.00, compared to 2.80 in the first Alternative Monitoring Report. The slight decline reflects the fact that, although the period 2024–2025 brought legislative progress, in particular the adoption of Law No. 9/2026¹¹⁴ on Mediation and the Status of Mediators, several actions with a 2022–2025 deadline remained incompletely achieved in terms of the planned outcome indicators, a situation already foreshadowed in the Interim Report.

PROGRESS

The most significant legislative development during the monitoring period in the area of mediation is the adoption of Law No. 9/2026¹¹⁵ on Mediation and the Status of Mediators, which transposed Directive 2008/52/EC on certain aspects of mediation in civil and commercial matters. The draft law was approved by the Government on 18.06.2025 and adopted by Parliament in two readings, the first on 27.06.2025 and the second on 29.12.2025. The law was subsequently returned to Parliament’s agenda in February 2026 for technical and drafting amendments¹¹⁶.

The accelerated pace of the legislative process was not without criticism, particularly from the business community, which pointed out that the process, although it included public consultations and an international conference, was not accompanied by a quantified impact assessment and did not substantially address objections concerning the broad scope of the obligation and its effects on access to justice for vulnerable groups. The law introduces the requirement to attend at least one mediation session for certain categories of civil, family and labour disputes before bringing proceedings before a court, establishing this requirement as a condition for the admissibility of the claim. Mediation itself remains voluntary; however, making access to the courts conditional upon participation in such a session constitutes, in functional terms, a form of mandatory participation in mediation. The law also regulates the enforceability of mediation settlement agreements, thereby formally covering the outcome indicators set out under Actions 2.4.1(b) and 2.4.1(e) of the Action Plan.

With regard to state-guaranteed mediation, legislative progress had previously been achieved through Law No. 395/2023¹¹⁷, which integrated state-guaranteed mediation into the state-guaranteed legal aid system and extended it to criminal, administrative offence and civil cases, including through the introduction of free mediation for minors in conflict with the law. These provisions entered into force on 29.07.2024. According to CNAJGS Reply No. 29 of 06.02.2026, 31 mediators were admitted to the system in 2024, while the

¹¹⁴ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 9/2026, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153389&lang=ro.

¹¹⁵ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 9/2026, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=153389&lang=ro.

¹¹⁶ BizLaw, news article on the draft Law on Mediation, available at: <https://www.bizlaw.md/proiectul-de-lege-privind-mediarea-si-statutul-mediatorului-din-nou-in-parlament>.

¹¹⁷ Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 395/2023, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=140995&lang=ro.

CNAJGS Action Plan for 2025¹¹⁸ included measures aimed at expanding the service. The CNAJGS Annual Activity Report for 2024¹¹⁹ provides additional data on the development of the system.

The promotion of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms saw its most active cycle of awareness-raising activities during 2024–2025 across the entire implementation period of the Strategy. The flagship event was the International Conference on the Promotion of Mediation, organised by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with the European Union, the Council of Europe (CEPEJ), Sweden, the EBRD, UNDP and UNICEF on 28–29 May 2025. The conference brought together experts from more than ten countries and addressed the gap identified in the first Alternative Monitoring Report concerning the absence of international conferences organised by the national authorities. In addition, during the fourth quarter of 2025, information seminars were organised in four districts (Donduseni, Comrat, Cahul and Stefan-Voda), attracting approximately 85 participants, while the Chamber of Commerce and Industry organised a public consultation on the new Law on Mediation, attended by more than 80 companies.

With regard to arbitration, the Ministry of Justice established, by Order No. 184/2025, a working group to review the regulatory framework, comprising representatives of academia, arbitrators and lawyers. The working group held several meetings and prepared the initial version of the draft law. According to Ministry of Justice Letter No. 02/3442 of 26.01.2026, the draft was published on the Ministry’s website¹²⁰ on 17.02.2026 for interministerial consultation, representing the first concrete step towards reforming an area in which progress had been stalled for several years

CHALLENGES

Although Law No. 9/2026 represents a significant legislative achievement, its adoption highlighted a procedural shortcoming in relation to the requirements of the Action Plan. Action 2.4.1(b) explicitly provided for the preparation of a feasibility study or impact assessment as the first outcome indicator, prior to the promotion of any legislative amendments concerning the mandatory use of mediation. A preliminary study was nevertheless carried out. The study “The Opportunity to Introduce Mandatory Mediation for Certain Categories of Disputes Prior to Referral to Court”, prepared by a team of national and international experts from ADR Centre Romania/Italy within the framework of the EBRD–IDLO project “Moldova – Commercial Mediation and Arbitration” (Phase IV), with the support of USAID, was publicly presented on 25 May 2023 and published on the Ministry of Justice website. The document examines models from 8 comparative jurisdictions (England and Wales, Azerbaijan, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Serbia and Türkiye) and formulates a number of specific recommendations. However, the document remains, in formal terms, a comparative policy study containing recommendations rather than a quantified Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) capable of modelling the socio-economic effects of mandatory mediation on court users and the courts. This shortcoming was also highlighted by representatives of the business community during the public consultations on the draft law.

An even more pronounced shortcoming is evident in Action 2.4.1(c), concerning mediation in

¹¹⁸ National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid (CNAJGS), CNAJGS Action Plan for 2025, available at: https://cnaigs.md/uploads/asset/file/ro/2799/Planul_de_actiuni_pentru_anul_2025.pdf.

¹¹⁹ National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid (CNAJGS), CNAJGS Annual Activity Report for 2024, available at: https://cnaigs.md/uploads/asset/file/ro/2805/Raport_anual_de_activitate_al_CNAJGS_2024_final.pdf.

¹²⁰ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, draft Law on Arbitration published for consultation, available at: <https://www.justice.gov.md/ro/content/proiectul-de-lege-cu-privire-la-arbitraj>.

cases involving minors. Although the legal framework was established through Law No. 395/2023 and the Regulation on the Provision of State-Guaranteed Mediation was adopted by the CNAJGS, the actual use of state-guaranteed mediation for minors has remained virtually non-existent: in 2024, only one application was registered and it was rejected, while in 2025 only 3 applications were submitted. In practical terms, the impact has been negligible. The other outcome indicators associated with this action, such as the analysis of judicial practice, the development of a cooperation mechanism between prosecutors and mediators, and the implementation of concrete awareness-raising measures, were likewise not achieved. The General Prosecutor's Office reported that a draft inter-institutional agreement in this area had been prepared; however, its signing was postponed in light of the revision of the regulatory framework through Law No. 9/2026 on Mediation and the Status of Mediators, which is scheduled to enter into force in 2026. While this explanation may partly justify the delay in signing the agreement, it does not account for the failure to achieve the remaining indicators, namely the analysis of judicial practice and the implementation of concrete promotional measures, neither of which was dependent on the adoption of Law No. 9/2026.

A related structural issue concerns the very viability of the mediation profession in the Republic of Moldova. Although the State Register of Mediators includes more than 200 registered professionals, data published by the Ministry of Justice and the Mediation Council indicate that, in 2025, 2,600 mediation requests were registered and 2,477 mediation agreements were concluded, with a reported success rate of 98.9%. These figures suggest that mediation activity is concentrated within a relatively small group of mediators, averaging approximately 10-12 cases per mediator annually, which is insufficient to ensure a sustainable economic model for the profession. This structural financial fragility partly explains the legislative amendments and the adoption of Law No. 9/2026; however, the actual effects of the reform can only be assessed after the law enters into force.

The Mediation Council's Annual Report for 2023¹²¹ contains no data on mediation cases involving minors concluded within the state-guaranteed legal aid system, suggesting that the responsible institutions did not treat this dimension as an operational priority. The same issue of regulatory reform lacking effective operational implementation can be observed in relation to Action 2.4.1(e) concerning the enforcement of mediation settlements. Rather than conducting a separate analysis of enforcement practices and formulating distinct recommendations, as envisaged by the three outcome indicators, the approach adopted was to incorporate the relevant provisions directly into Law No. 9/2026. Formally, this approach does not satisfy the requirements of the indicators, which envisaged a distinct analytical stage preceding legislative intervention.

The reform of the regulatory framework governing arbitration (Action 2.4.2(b)) remains one of the most significant outstanding actions of the monitoring period. The Action Plan established a deadline of 2023-2024; however, as of 31.12.2025, the draft law was still undergoing internal drafting, while the stages of public consultation and inter-ministerial coordination were scheduled for 2026. The delay therefore exceeds the maximum timeframe established by the Action Plan by more than one year. One contributing factor appears to have been the late initiation of the reform process, given that the assessment study of the arbitration framework prepared by the EBRD and IDLO in October 2021 was not translated into legislative action for an extended period. The relevant WG was established in July 2024.

¹²¹ Mediation Council of the Republic of Moldova, Annual Report for 2023, available at: https://mediere.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/raport_2023_narativ_final.pdf.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- The new post-SRSJ strategy should explicitly address the phenomenon of regulatory reform without effective implementation, which characterises several actions under Objective 2.4. The adoption of a modern legal framework on mediation will not produce the intended results unless it is accompanied by an adequately resourced implementation mechanism and awareness-raising campaigns targeting both the general public and legal professionals. An outcome indicator tracking the evolution of the number of cases actually resolved through mediation, rather than merely the number of authorised mediators or legislative acts adopted, would provide a more accurate picture of real progress.
- With regard to the mandatory pre-mediation requirement introduced by Law No. 9/2026, the new strategic framework should provide for a mechanism to periodically assess the impact of this reform, with the possibility of adjusting the categories of cases covered in light of the results achieved. Comparative European experience demonstrates that mandatory mediation, if introduced without adequate preparation of the system, may lead to formalism and mediation sessions attended merely as a procedural requirement, rather than contributing to the effective resolution of disputes.
- In the area of arbitration, the future strategy should avoid establishing implementation deadlines that are incompatible with the actual complexity of the reform process. A comprehensive reform of the arbitration framework requires extensive consultation with the business community, professional associations, academia and international experts, a process that realistically requires at least two years from the effective commencement of reform activities. Setting unrealistic deadlines leads to predictable delays and undermines the credibility of the monitoring framework.
- Last but not least, the new strategy should provide for the systematic collection of data on the actual use of ADR mechanisms, including the number of cases resolved through mediation or arbitration, success rates, the duration of proceedings and the most common categories of disputes. Such data, which is currently absent from official reporting, is essential both for the evaluation of public policies and for the evidence-based promotion of alternatives to litigation.

CONCLUSIONS AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON STRATEGIC DIRECTION II

An analysis of the implementation of actions under Strategic Direction II reveals a partially effective level of implementation, characterised by visible regulatory progress but limited functional impact, resulting from structural deficiencies in implementation, coordination and evaluation.

Overall, Strategic Direction II has made notable progress in terms of legislative and institutional development, particularly in the areas of human rights protection, access to justice for vulnerable groups and the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice. The period was marked by greater alignment with European standards, the strengthening of the legal framework in sensitive areas such as domestic violence, sexual offences and children's rights, as well as by continued investment in professional training.

However, legislative progress has not been matched by corresponding operational implementation, resulting in a significant gap between regulatory reforms and their practical effects on the justice system. Many reforms remain largely formal in nature, lacking effective mechanisms for implementation, monitoring and impact assessment. This phenomenon is cross-cutting and affects most objectives, particularly those related to effective access to justice, the quality of justice and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms.

One of the main imbalances within Strategic Direction II is the disparity in performance among its components. While professional training (Objective 2.3) achieved full implementation, other components, particularly the quality of justice (Objective 2.2) and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (Objective 2.4), continue to exhibit significant shortcomings, while access to justice (Objective 2.1) remains affected by systemic deficiencies. This uneven performance suggests that strategic planning was not sufficiently aligned with institutional implementation capacities.

The structural deficiencies identified are recurrent and systemic. They include delays in advancing reforms, the absence of integrated mechanisms (particularly in the field of digitalisation), a lack of operational tools (such as standard templates, guidelines and case-law analyses), as well as insufficient assessment of public policy impact. Particularly notable is the absence of mechanisms essential to ensuring the effectiveness of the right of access to justice, such as victim compensation schemes and efficient mechanisms for the enforcement of court judgments.

The analysis also reveals an insufficient focus on outcomes and impact, given that monitoring has concentrated predominantly on output indicators without assessing the actual changes generated within the justice system. This approach limits the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of reforms and to adjust public policies in a timely and evidence-based manner.

A major cross-cutting challenge is the fragmentation of interventions, both at the legislative and institutional levels. The absence of a centralised mechanism for coordinating legislative reforms, combined with the lack of a systemic approach, particularly in the areas of digitalisation and the standardisation of judicial practice, has contributed to inconsistencies and reduced effectiveness.

Overall, Strategic Direction II reflects a transitional phase from legislative reform towards the need for functional reform, in which the focus must shift from the adoption of legal and regulatory frameworks to effective implementation, the integration of mechanisms and the assessment of their impact.

The overall conclusion is that Strategic Direction II has established the legislative and institutional foundations for a more accessible and higher-quality justice system; however, these foundations have yet to be fully translated into practical results. The future strategic framework should place greater emphasis on effectiveness, coherence and measurable outcomes by strengthening implementation capacity and institutionalising mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION III - EFFICIENT AND MODERN ADMINISTRATION OF THE JUSTICE SECTOR

Strategic Direction III. The efficient and modern administration of the justice sector has 3 objectives:

- 3.1. Continuation of the process of optimisation of the judicial system and the Prosecutor's Office system;
- 3.2. Strengthening administrative and managerial capacities in the justice sector;
- 3.3. Development and implementation of judicial information systems.

In order to achieve the 3 objectives, 21 specific objectives were set, to be achieved through 53 actions.

Of the 53 monitored actions, 6 actions (11.3%) were completed without shortcomings, 9 actions (17.0%) were completed with minor shortcomings, 16 actions (30.2%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, 14 actions (26.4%) remained at the initiation stage, and 8 actions (15.1%) were not implemented.

Objective 3.1. Continuation of the process of optimisation of the judicial system and the Prosecutor's Office system

The activities aimed at achieving General Objective 3.1 were structured around 2 specific objectives:

- Specific Objective 3.1.1. Continuing the process of court reorganisation;
- Specific Objective 3.1.2. Reorganisation of the prosecution service.

Overall assessment: 1.40 p out of 4.00 p

To achieve this General Objective, 5 actions were planned for implementation. Of these, 2 actions (40%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, while 3 actions (60%) remained at the initiation stage. None of the actions under this Objective were completed without shortcomings or with only minor shortcomings, placing Objective 3.1 at the lower end of the partial implementation range.

PROGRESS

The most significant legislative development of the period was the adoption of Law No. 135¹²² of 13 June 2024, which amended Law No. 76/2016 on the reorganisation of the courts, reducing the number of district courts from 15 to 14 and renaming the courts of appeal as the Central Court of Appeal, the Northern Court of Appeal and the Southern Court of Appeal, the latter operating from seats in Cahul and Comrat. Although the amendment was necessary for the implementation of the judicial map, it was adopted with a significant delay compared to the original deadline. The law entered into force on 27.12.2024, almost 2 years after the deadline initially envisaged (Q3–Q4 2022), which explains the rating of 2 assigned to Action 3.1.1(a). The legislative process followed the standard stages: publication of the draft law for public consultation in December 2023, Government approval on 03.04.2024, adoption at first reading on 12.04.2024, and final adoption on 30.05.2024. IPRE submitted a

¹²² Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, Law No. 135, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=143818&lang=ro.

position paper¹²³ on the draft in December 2023, and a substantial proportion of its recommendations were taken into account by the Ministry of Justice. In parallel with the adoption of the legislative framework, the Superior Council of Magistracy undertook concrete measures to prepare for implementation. By CSM Decision No. 439/28¹²⁴ of 30.07.2024, the Action Plan for the implementation of Law No. 135/2024 was approved, and by CSM Decision No. 458/29¹²⁵ of 04.09.2024, 6 separate working groups were established to manage the operational aspects of the reorganisations: one for each transfer or merger (Glodeni→Balti, Leova→Hincesti, Donduseni→Drochia, the merger of Anenii Noi and Causeni, Vulcanesti→Cahul, and the merger of the Comrat Court of Appeal and the Cahul Court of Appeal to form the Southern Court of Appeal). The working groups, chaired by the acting presidents of the receiving courts, were given a firm deadline of 01.10.2024 to submit proposals concerning the number of judges, their allocation among court locations, secretariat staffing, the transfer of archives and budget management. These substantial administrative measures preceded the entry into force of the law and enabled the operational reorganisation process to begin immediately after 27.12.2024.

As regards the prosecution service, territorial reorganisation progressed at a faster pace than the corresponding legislative process. On 12.11.2024, the General Prosecutor's Office approved the Reorganisation Concept (Order No. 137/3), followed by the approval of the Superior Council of Prosecutors through Decision No. 1-391/2024 of 02.12.2024. By Order No. 12/3 of 24.01.2025, the new structure entered into force on 01.04.2025, reducing the number of territorial prosecutor's offices from 36 to 14 units aligned with the judicial map. The former offices (seats) were retained as secondary offices, thereby preserving a physical presence throughout the country. Information published on the Prosecutor's Office website¹²⁶ confirms that the order entered into force on the scheduled date. The European Commission's Enlargement Report¹²⁷ of November 2025 notes that "the new judicial and prosecution maps have entered into force, and their implementation is ongoing."

CHALLENGES

Action 3.1.1(b), concerning the implementation of the Plan for the construction and renovation of court buildings, reflects the gap between strategic commitments and institutional reality. The issues highlighted in the first Alternative Report have not yet been resolved. As of 31.12.2025, none of the 5 new buildings envisaged as an outcome indicator had been completed or commissioned, which justifies the rating of 1. The status of each project reveals different bottlenecks: for the Cahul Court, the land was transferred to the ADJAJ on 25.03.2025, and the feasibility study was delivered in December 2025, estimating a construction period of 37 months; for the Hincesti Court, the land was transferred in August 2025, while funding for the feasibility study is only planned for 2026; for the Balti, Soroca and Criuleni Courts, the process remains stalled at the stage of identifying and carrying out the cadastral delimitation of the land, due to inadequate communication with local authorities. The shortcomings in strategic planning are largely structural in nature,

¹²³ Institute for European Policies and Reforms (IPRE), Position paper on the draft law amending certain normative acts, 29.12.2023, available at: <https://ipre.md/2023/12/29/nota-de-pozitie-cu-privire-la-proiectul-de-lege-pentru-modificarea-unor-acte-normative-revizuirea-hartii-judiciare/>.

¹²⁴ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 439/28, available at: <https://www.csm.md/ro/>.

¹²⁵ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 458/29, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2024/29/458-29.pdf>.

¹²⁶ Prosecutor General's Office, announcement on the Order of the Prosecutor General reorganising the prosecution map, available at: <https://procuratura.md/stiri-si-mass-media/anunturi/ordinul-procurorului-general-privind-reorganizarea-hartii>.

¹²⁷ European Commission, Republic of Moldova 2025 Report under the EU Enlargement Package, available at: https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/moldova-report-2025_en.

having developed over time and resulting in bottlenecks at various stages of the construction process.

Parliamentary Decision No. 218/2025 amended the Construction Plan in order to align it with Law No. 135/2024 and extend the implementation deadlines, thereby officially confirming that the original target cannot be achieved, at least in its current form. The deadline for the physical consolidation of court premises has been extended until 31.12.2035. Participants in the focus group organised by IPRE on 26.02.2026 reported that the funds allocated in 2023 for feasibility studies were withdrawn during the budget revision process, triggering a chain of delays.

The study on the location of prosecutor's offices, Action 3.1.2(a), was carried out by the General Prosecutor's Office within the prescribed timeframe. However, the assessment contained in the first Alternative Report identified serious methodological shortcomings, including the use of sources dating back 10-15 years, the absence of public consultations, the lack of optimisation options supported by a strengths-and-weaknesses analysis, and the failure to address issues relating to cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. No public sources identified for the period 2024-2025 indicate that these shortcomings have been remedied or that the study has been updated. The rating of 2 reflects precisely this situation: while the formal deliverable exists, the second outcome indicator has not been achieved.

Action 3.1.2(b) envisaged the adoption of a regulatory framework for optimising the prosecution map through a draft law to be prepared and adopted by Parliament. The reorganisation was instead carried out through administrative acts of the Prosecutor General and a decision of the Superior Council of Prosecutors, legal instruments of a lower hierarchical rank than the parliamentary law envisaged by the indicator. However, Article 7(3) of Law No. 3/2016 on the Prosecution Service grants the Prosecutor General the authority to establish and amend the structure of territorial prosecutor's offices, subject to the written consent of the Superior Council of Prosecutors. In this context, the reorganisation carried out through Prosecutor General Order No. 12/3 of 24.01.2025 and CSP Decision No. 1-391/2024 does not, in itself, raise any question as to the legality of the reorganisation, as it is consistent with the mechanism provided for by law. The difficulty arises, however, in relation to the Action Plan. The latter explicitly provided for the drafting and adoption of a law by Parliament, whereas the reorganisation was implemented through a different type of normative instrument. In this context, the issue appears to stem from the unclear formulation of the indicator rather than from any deficiency in the legality of the reorganisation. The second indicator: an action plan for the relocation, construction or renovation of prosecutor's office buildings has not been identified as an adopted public document. The "Rule of Law" Roadmap, approved by Government Decision No. 276/2025, contains at Point 8.2 only a general reference to "advancing the implementation of the prosecution map", with a deadline of December 2027, without providing for a detailed investment plan. This shortcoming does not diminish the practical value of the reorganisation, but it highlights a mismatch between the instruments employed and the requirements of the indicators set out in the Action Plan.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- The experience of Objective 3.1 demonstrates that capital investment projects cannot be treated as public policy commitments independently of the medium-term budgetary framework. Including the construction of justice complexes in a future strategy, without guaranteed financial allocations under the Medium-Term

Budgetary Framework and safeguards against reallocation during budget revisions, would reproduce the conditions that generated the current delays.

- The new strategic document should make the adoption of construction projects conditional upon the existence of a firm multiannual budgetary commitment or a guaranteed external financing mechanism, in accordance with Article 41 of Law No. 181/2014 on Public Finance and Budgetary-Fiscal Responsibility, which regulates public capital investments, read together with Article 48 of the same law concerning the Medium-Term Budgetary Framework. An intermediate indicator relating to the completion of cadastral procedures and land transfer, preceding indicators relating to construction works, would create a clearer link between the responsibilities of local authorities and those of the Ministry of Justice or the ADJAJ.
- With regard to the reorganisation of the Prosecution Service, the future strategy should explicitly identify the normative instrument to be used (parliamentary legislation or administrative acts), thereby avoiding situations in which the outcome indicator envisages the adoption of a law while implementation takes place through an order of the Prosecutor General. Article 7(3) of Law No. 3/2016 already provides a sufficient legal basis for reorganisation through administrative acts. If this approach is considered more efficient and expedient, the indicator should be drafted accordingly from the outset.

Objective 3.2. Strengthening administrative and managerial capacities in the justice sector

The activities to achieve General Objective 3.2 have been systematised under 7 specific objectives, namely:

- Specific objective 3.2.1. Strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Justice as a promoter of policies in the justice sector;
- Specific objective 3.2.2. Increasing the organisational capacities of the National Institute of Justice;
- Specific objective 3.2.3. Increasing staff capacities in the courts;
- Specific objective 3.2.4. Increasing the efficiency of institutional management within the courts;
- Specific objective 3.2.5. Implementation of electronic judicial statistical reporting;
- Specific objective 3.2.6. Increasing the efficiency of institutional management within prosecutors' offices;
- Specific objective 3.2.7. Ensuring order and security in the courts.

Overall assessment: 2.16 p out of 4.00 p

To achieve this General Objective, 19 actions were planned for implementation, of which 2 actions (10.53%) were completed without shortcomings, 6 actions (31.58%) were completed with minor shortcomings, 7 actions (36.84%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, 1 action (5.26%) remained at the initiation stage, and 3 actions (15.79%) were not implemented.

PROGRESS

The most significant institutional development of the period was the establishment of the Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration (ADJAJ) through Government Decision No. 748/2024¹²⁸, resulting from the merger of the Court Administration Agency (AAIJ) and the Legal Information Resources Agency (ARIJ). ADJAJ, with an approved staffing complement of 63 posts, was officially launched on 04.03.2025 and brings together, under a single institutional structure, court administration, the development of judicial information systems and the integration of new technologies. The merger was generally perceived as a pragmatic optimisation measure, attracting no significant public criticism, and Action 3.2.1(c) received a rating of 2 due to shortcomings relating to staffing levels compared with identified institutional needs.

With regard to the capacity of the Ministry of Justice (Actions 3.2.1(a) and (b), both rated 3), the Ministry's organisational structure was revised on several occasions: the approved staffing complement increased from 94 to approximately 122 posts through amendments introduced by Government Decision No. 871/2022, Government Decision No. 888/2023 and the Government Decision of 30.10.2024. Through Government Decision No. 827/2025¹²⁹, the transfer of the State Agency on Intellectual Property (AGEPI) to the Ministry of Justice resulted in the creation of the Intellectual Property Policy Section and an increase in the number of State Secretaries from 3 to 5. The Ministry of Justice coordinates Chapter 23 of

¹²⁸ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 748/2024, available at: https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=144820&lang=ro.

¹²⁹ Government of the Republic of Moldova, Decision No. 827/2025, available at: <https://gov.md/sites/default/files/media/documents/sedinte-de-guvern/2025-12/983-MJ-AGEPI-2025.pdf>.

the European Union accession negotiations and has developed the Roadmaps on the Rule of Law and Democratic Institutions (Government Decisions Nos. 275 and 276/2025). The Consultative Council¹³⁰ of the Ministry of Justice, launched on 04.04.2023, continued to operate throughout the reporting period, with at least 11 publicly documented meetings, including discussions on topics such as the judicial map and the reform of arbitration procedures. The limitations of the mechanism remain linked to the absence of formally approved rules of procedure, a lower frequency of meetings than the initial commitment of one meeting per month, and insufficient transparency regarding meeting records and outcomes.

Action 3.2.2 on strengthening the organisational capacities of the National Institute of Justice (INJ) essentially achieved the objectives set out in the Action Plan. Law No. 2/2024 introduced rules governing the workload of judges and prosecutors acting as trainers, providing for a proportional reduction in their workload by decision of the CSM or the CSP. In addition, Law No. 226/2024 introduced adjustments concerning the categories of training beneficiaries, the minimum passing grade and the management of admission procedures. On 14.02.2025, the INJ Council appointed a permanent Director of the institution following a period of interim leadership. From 01.01.2025, salaries of INJ staff were increased, and the network of trainers reached 197 professionals, according to the INJ Annual Activity Report for 2024. The rating of 3 reflects the phased completion of the legislative package, with some components being adopted only in the third quarter of 2024, beyond the planned deadline. Overall, however, the reform trajectory has remained consistent.

Action 3.2.3(c), concerning salary increases for court support staff, received a rating of 4. The general reference value used for salary calculation increased progressively to MDL 2,100 for 2024 under Law No. 418/2023 and to MDL 2,200 for 2025 under Law No. 310/2024. During 2025, Law No. 78/2025, which amended the annexes to the 2025 State Budget Law, introduced differentiated reference values for staff employed within the courts and the Prosecution Service, applicable from 1 July 2025: MDL 2,500 for staff of the courts of appeal, courts, the General Prosecutor's Office, and territorial and specialised prosecutor's offices (an increase of approximately 30% compared with the previous reference value of MDL 1,900), and MDL 2,850 for staff of the Supreme Court of Justice (an increase of approximately 50%). These increases effectively responded to the principles established by Constitutional Court Judgment No. 17 of 10 October 2023, which declared unconstitutional the failure to adjust annually the reference values applicable to civil servants within the judiciary at least in line with average annual inflation.

A significant regulatory development in the area of the quality of justice was the approval, by CSM Decision No. 457/29 of 18 October 2023, of the Regulation on Minimum Quality Standards for the Organisational and Administrative Activity of Courts and Courts of Appeal. The Regulation was developed on the basis of experience gained in the pilot model courts of Balti, Ungheni and Edinet under the USAID Model Courts Project and draws extensively on CEPEJ tools, in particular the Handbook for Court Dashboards (2021), the Handbook for Measuring the Quality of Justice (2016) and the Handbook for Conducting Satisfaction Surveys (2010). The Regulation establishes 13 minimum standards grouped into 5 areas: court performance, online services, infrastructure, quality management, and communication with the media and the public. Each standard is accompanied by measurable indicators and predefined sources of verification. With regard to efficiency standards within the Prosecution Service (Actions 3.2.6(a) and (b)), the concept of a Framework of Excellence for

¹³⁰ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, Consultative Council of the Ministry of Justice, available at: <https://www.justice.gov.md/ro/advanced-page-tipe/consiliul-consultativ-al-ministerului-justitiei>.

the Prosecution Service was developed and piloted by the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI Moldova), with financial support from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the United States Department of State, under the Criminal Justice Reform and Anti-Corruption Support Programme. The framework defines 9 areas of excellence and was piloted from November 2023 in 3 territorial prosecutor's offices (Ocnita, Edinet and Ungheni). The pilot phase was discontinued at the beginning of 2025 following the suspension of external funding in the context of the reconfiguration of United States assistance under Executive Order No. 14169 of 20 January 2025. At the level of the General Prosecutor's Office, Order No. 2/3 of 06.01.2025 established an internal working group tasked with developing efficiency standards. However, these standards have not yet been approved through a binding normative act. Consequently, the outcome indicators for Actions 3.2.6(a) and (b) cannot be regarded as having been substantially achieved. The Framework of Excellence therefore remains at the stage of a piloted concept and has not been formalised as a set of mandatory standards applicable across the entire Prosecution Service.

The Instruction on Electronic Judicial Statistics and the training of court staff in the use of electronic statistical reporting templates (Actions 3.2.5(a) and (b)) received ratings of 2 and 4, respectively. With regard to training, progress is evident: in 2024, 2 training courses were organised for 123 court staff members, in addition to sessions integrated into INJ programmes on the use of the Judicial Information System (SIJ) and a working session organised by ADJAJ on 29.11.2024 for 39 court employees. With regard to the regulatory framework, by CSM Decision No. 457/35¹³¹ of 19 August 2025, the CSM amended and republished the Instruction on Electronic Statistical Reporting in Courts, originally approved by CSM Decision No. 835/27 of 14.10.2014 and subsequently amended by Decisions No. 85/8/2020 and No. 190/20/2021. The consolidated version regulates both the Electronic Statistical Reporting Module (MRSE) and the BI Reporting Module, which includes 17 performance indicators, and explicitly incorporates the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) reporting template, enabling the generation of reports in accordance with CEPEJ methodology. Point 6³ of the Instruction provides for the quarterly extraction of BI reports for the 5 indicators established by the Regulation approved through CSM Decision No. 457/29 of 18.10.2023: the variation rate of the pending caseload, disposition time, case processing time, compliance with established timeframes, and the rate of adjourned hearings. Government Decision No. 743/2025 approved the concept of the JUSTAT Information System only in December 2025, 2 years after the platform had become operational, revealing a significant lag between implementation and the adoption of the corresponding regulatory framework.

CHALLENGES

The staffing shortage within the courts, reflected in Action 3.2.3(a) (rated 1), represents the challenge with the greatest systemic impact across Objective 3.2. Data presented at the General Assembly of Judges on 27 March 2026 indicate an average workload of 103.7 cases per judge per month in 2025, representing an increase of 24.3% compared to 2024. Of the 524 judicial posts provided for by law, only approximately 388 were filled at that date, leaving a deficit of 136 posts (26%). The disparities between courts remain significant. The Central Court of Appeal handles approximately 85% of all appellate cases while operating with less than half of its approved complement of judges. The principal driver of the staffing crisis has been the extraordinary external evaluation process (vetting). According to data

¹³¹ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 457/35, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/35/457-35.pdf>.

published by vettingmd.eu¹³², fewer than 50% of the evaluated judges successfully passed the assessment, while more than 100 judges and prosecutors left the system during 2023–2024.

The relevant outcome indicator - the establishment of a formal mechanism for filling temporarily vacant positions - has not been achieved. The CSM has relied on temporary secondments under Article 20 of Law No. 544/1995, some lasting for more than 2 years, as well as ad hoc legislative derogations. However, no systemic mechanism for managing judicial vacancies has been established. The European Commission’s 2025 Report (SWD (2025) 758) explicitly recommends the development of “human resources strategies for both the judiciary and the Prosecution Service, including a comprehensive reform of remuneration policies.”

Action 3.2.3(b), concerning the analysis and review of the workload of judges and prosecutors, benefited from a solid legislative framework established through Laws No. 246/2022, No. 147/2023 and No. 200/2023. However, operational implementation was significantly delayed during the initial years of application. The working group established by CSM Decision No. 233/17 of 08.11.2022 held only 2 meetings in 2022 and recorded no publicly documented activity during 2023–2024. At the level of the CSP, the relevant colleges could not be constituted during 2024 due to the pre-vetting process for candidates.

During 2025, however, the CSM partially addressed the accumulated delays by adopting, in December 2025, the Study on the Workload of Judges¹³³ for the Period 2017–2024 through CSM Decision No. 676/48¹³⁴ of 16.12.2025. The study was prepared with the support of the Council of Europe under the project “Support to Further Modernisation of Court Management in the Republic of Moldova”. Spanning more than 85 pages and containing data disaggregated by individual court and court location, the study formulates 7 concrete recommendations concerning: the organisation of competitions for vacant judicial posts; periodic workload assessments by area of specialisation; revision of the number of judges allocated to courts; establishment of an annual monitoring mechanism; engagement with the Ministry of Justice regarding the regulation of overtime remuneration; the introduction of workload norms; and revision of the Regulation on the Establishment of Uniform Complexity Grades. With regard to the workload of members of the judicial colleges, CSM Decision No. 504/37 of 16.09.2025¹³⁵ maintained a reduced workload of 25% for members of the Disciplinary College and the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Judges. Subsequently, CSM Decision No. 694/50 of 30.12.2025¹³⁶ introduced a differentiated approach, applicable until 1 July 2026, establishing a workload reduction of 50% for the Chair of the Disciplinary College and for the Chair and members of the College for the Selection and Evaluation of Judges, and 25% for members of the Disciplinary College.

Actions 3.2.7(a) and (b), concerning the establishment of a judicial police service and the provision of security personnel for courts, both received a rating of 0. By Letter No. 02/3442 of 26.01.2026, the Ministry of Justice indicated that no final position had yet been reached

¹³² Independent Evaluation Commission (Vetting), press release on the results of the judges’ vetting in 2024, available at: <https://www.vettingmd.eu/en/comunicate-de-presa/vettingul-judecatorilor-rezultate-in-2024-si-obiective-pentru-2025>.

¹³³ Superior Council of Magistracy, Study on the Workload of Judges, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/48/676-48-studiu.pdf>.

¹³⁴ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 676/48, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/48/676-48.pdf>.

¹³⁵ Superior Council of Magistracy, 504/37 of 16.09.2025, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/37/504-37.pdf>.

¹³⁶ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 694/50 of 30.12.2025, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/50/694-50.pdf>.

regarding the concept of a judicial police service. During 2025, a number of working meetings were held with representatives of the CSM, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Finance; however, these did not result in the adoption of any regulatory framework. Courts continue to rely on private security services providers, generating recurring budgetary expenditure, in the absence of a unified legal framework regulating the status, hierarchy, powers and equipment of personnel responsible for court security. The absence of concrete progress towards the establishment of a judicial police service constitutes a significant systemic shortcoming, with direct implications for the security of participants in judicial proceedings and for the functional independence of the courts.

Action 3.2.3(d), concerning the expansion of staffing for court user information centres (rating 0), did not result in any changes to court staffing establishments. The CSM informed, by Letter No. 598m/i of 04.03.2026, that “no amendments were made to court staffing establishments to ensure the operation of the information centres” and that no separate regulatory act had been developed. ADJAJ stated, in Letter No. 01.4/642 of 09.03.2026, that it had prepared a model regulation for recommendation purposes and that 56 digital information kiosks had been installed in court premises. While the existing information kiosks and one-stop service desks constitute a functional digital alternative, they do not replace the dedicated staffing explicitly envisaged by the Plan, particularly for citizens with limited access to technology.

Actions 3.2.4(a) and (d) (both rated 2), concerning the review of the powers of court presidents and the implementation of efficiency standards, recorded important regulatory progress in 2025, although this has not yet translated into systematic operational effects. As regards the powers of court presidents, CSM Decision No. 632/44¹³⁷ of 18.11.2025 approved the Regulation on the Specialisation of Judges¹³⁸, which establishes objective criteria (the judge’s preference, professional experience, training activity at the INJ, the complexity of previously examined cases, relevant training and evaluation results) and provides court presidents with a regulatory instrument for organising judicial activity by area of specialisation. With regard to efficiency standards, CSM Decision No. 457/35¹³⁹ of 19.08.2025 republished the Instruction on Electronic Statistical Reporting, which now includes the BI Reports Module, a dynamic tool enabling the automatic generation of 17 performance indicators for each court and judge. However, no public documents were identified demonstrating the systematic application of the standards approved by CSM Decision No. 457/29¹⁴⁰ of 18.10.2023 in a manner affecting the redistribution of judges or budget allocations.

In addition, the Regulation on the Specialisation of Judges was adopted only at the end of the monitoring period, and its impact will need to be assessed during the next monitoring cycle. The verification mechanism is twofold: the Judicial Inspection is responsible for assessing performance, online services and infrastructure, while the former Court Administration Agency (AAIJ), subsequently ADJAJ, is responsible for quality management and communication, with evaluation cycles taking place every 3 years. Consequently, by the end of the monitoring period, no publicly available inspection findings or audit reports

¹³⁷ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 632/44, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/44/632-44.pdf>.

¹³⁸ Superior Council of Magistracy, Regulation on the Specialisation of Judges, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/44/632-44-regulament.pdf>.

¹³⁹ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 457/35, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/35/457-35.pdf>.

¹⁴⁰ Superior Council of Magistracy, Decision No. 457/29, available at: <https://www.csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2025/35/457-35.pdf>.

had been produced. The standards remain descriptive and non-binding, without enforceable performance requirements, which considerably limits their practical impact. It should nevertheless be noted that point 50 of the Regulation expressly provides that the first evaluation may not take place earlier than 2 years after its entry into force.

The judicial statistical reporting mechanism (Action 3.2.5(c), rated 2) made significant progress in both regulatory and technical terms during the reporting period. The JUSTAT platform, launched in May 2023 with EU and Council of Europe support, covers approximately 85% of the 22 CEPEJ-recommended indicators. Furthermore, CSM Decision No. 457/35 of 19.08.2025 integrated into the Indicators section of the BI Reports Module a dedicated CEPEJ reporting template, enabling the generation of court performance reports in accordance with the methodology used by CEPEJ for evaluating judicial systems across Europe. However, CEPEJ EaP 2024 data places Moldova below the regional average in terms of the clearance rate for criminal appeal cases (75% compared with 95%). Moreover, the effective use of these indicators for evidence-based policy-making remains below its potential, as methodological alignment has not yet been accompanied by a structured monitoring and corrective-action framework through which the data generated systematically informs remedial measures and policy adjustments.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- The staffing crisis in the courts should be treated as an absolute priority in the new strategic framework, through the adoption of a comprehensive human resources strategy that includes judicial salary reform, given that judges' remuneration remains among the lowest in Council of Europe member States according to CEPEJ assessments, a phased recruitment plan, and a transparent vacancy management system. The Rule of Law Roadmap (Government Decision No. 275/2025) provides for the filling of vacant judicial posts by December 2027, but does not establish a sufficiently granular monitoring mechanism.
- The judicial police should be included in the future strategy as a dedicated reform measure, with a clear implementation deadline, a clearly identified regulatory instrument (law or Government Decision), and a designated lead institution. Three years of conceptual discussions without the adoption of a regulatory framework suggest that inter-institutional disagreements (between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Finance) have not been resolved at the political level. The new policy document should therefore provide for a decision-making phase on the preferred organisational model before setting an implementation deadline.
- Litigants' information centres should be supported through dedicated budget allocations and approved staffing establishments. While digital solutions provide a valuable alternative, they cannot replace direct assistance for citizens with limited digital literacy, restricted access to technology, or particularly complex legal needs.
- ADJAJ and the Judicial Inspection should publish annual consolidated national reports on compliance with the minimum quality standards applicable to district courts and courts of appeal, covering all five regulated areas. At the same time, a transparent CSM coordination mechanism for the implementation and follow-up of these standards should be operationalised.

Objective 3.3. Development and implementation of judicial information systems

The activities to achieve General Objective 3.3 have been systematised under 12 specific objectives, namely:

- Specific objective 3.3.1. Ensuring the continuous improvement of the functionality of the Integrated Case Management Programme (PIGD);
- Specific objective 3.3.2. Implementation of the e-Dosar judicial application;
- Specific objective 3.3.3. Extension of the videoconferencing application within the courts;
- Specific objective 3.3.4. Facilitating people's access to justice through the application of information technologies;
- Specific objective 3.3.5. Ensuring the continuous improvement of the functionality of the Automated Information System “Criminal Investigation: e-Dosar” and achieving the interconnection with other information systems;
- Specific objective 3.3.6. Application of analytical software to carry out criminal prosecution on complex cases;
- Specific objective 3.3.7. Development and implementation of the e-Executare Information System;
- Specific objective 3.3.8. Development and implementation of the e-Retinere Information System;
- Specific objective 3.3.9. Optimising the performance of the data information system within the state-guaranteed legal aid system;
- Specific objective 3.3.10. Improving the mechanism for providing translation services in the justice sector;
- Specific objective 3.3.11. Implementing policies to strengthen cybersecurity in correlation with ensuring transparent justice;
- Specific objective 3.3.12. Providing the courts with the necessary equipment for the use of the Judicial Information System.

Overall assessment: 1.69 p out of 4.00 p

To achieve this general objective, 29 actions were planned for implementation, of which 4 actions (13.79%) were completed without shortcomings, 3 actions (10.34%) were completed with minor shortcomings, 7 actions (24.14%) were completed with substantial shortcomings, 10 actions (34.48%) remained at the initiation stage, and 5 actions (17.24%) were not implemented.

PROGRESS

During the monitoring period, the Integrated Case Management Programme (PIGD) was formally declared an implemented system by the CSM Decision of 04.11.2025, subsequently confirmed by Decision No. 575/42¹⁴¹ of 04.1.2025. This decision formally brought to an end a 16-year pilot phase, as explicitly acknowledged in the Ministry of Justice’s 2025 report. Action 3.3.1(a) (rating 4), concerning the monitoring of the PIGD’s functionality, has been

¹⁴¹ Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration (ADJAJ), Decision No. 575/42, available at: <https://adjaj.justice.md/programului-integrat-de-gestionare-a-dosarelor-pigd-implementat/>.

completed: annual monitoring reports are produced on a systematic basis, and the 2024 user satisfaction survey collected responses from 1,313 PIGD users. Interoperability with e-government platforms (MPass, MSign, MPay, MNotify and MConnect) has been strengthened, with the Chisinau Court gaining access, in May 2024, to data from the State Population Register and the Real Estate Register¹⁴² through the date.gov.md platform.

With regard to the development of new functionalities (Action 3.3.1(c), rating 4), 11 system modifications were implemented in 2024 and a further 12 development projects were contracted to Alfa Soft SRL, in addition to 15 modifications carried out directly by the AAIJ. During 2025, six new reports on the disaggregated electronic collection of judicial statistics were introduced, covering extended confiscation, victim compensation and hate crimes. The JUSTAT system, launched in May 2023 with EU–Council¹⁴³ of Europe support, provides performance dashboards and key performance indicators. Its technical concept was approved by the Government in December 2025¹⁴⁴, two years after the platform became operational.

Regarding the *e-Dosar judiciar* application (Action 3.3.2(a), rating 3), the pilot was extended to all 15 courts and their corresponding courts of appeal. The cooperation agreement signed on 27.09.2024¹⁴⁵ with the Bar Association of the Chisinau Court of Appeal district represents the most significant institutional development, given that the Chisinau Court handles approximately 40% of all cases nationwide. The first e-Sala de judecata¹⁴⁶ (courtroom) was inaugurated on 16.06.2025 at the Balti Court, with the support of the Embassy of Sweden, and is fully equipped for digital proceedings. The assessment conducted by EU expert Karl Laas during his October 2024 mission recommended improvements to the system's accessibility, interoperability and efficiency.

Training for videoconferencing users (Action 3.3.3(c), rated 4) comprised seven INJ courses delivered in 2025 for 206 participants, in addition to training sessions organised by ADJAJ. The number of videoconferencing units increased from 74 in 2024 to 91 by the end of 2025, while MDL 5.5 million was allocated in the 2026 budget for further expansion, according to information published by realitatea.md.¹⁴⁷ A notable innovation during the period was the testing of the Zoom platform at the Balti Court from November 2025, with more than 15 hearings conducted by January 2026. The platform provides functionalities unavailable in TrueConf, including simultaneous interpretation and automatic transcription.

The configuration of the IBM i2 analytical software (Action 3.3.6(a), rated 4) was completed within the prescribed timeframe, with the Prosecutor's Office confirming that its IT Department manages and uses these tools in its day-to-day operations. According to information provided by the Prosecutor General's Office in Letter No. 3-11d/26-30 of 29

¹⁴² Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration (ADJAJ), announcement on the interconnection of State registers with the PIGD, available at: <https://adjaj.justice.md/interconectarea-datelor-din-registrela-de-stat-cu-pigd-un-pas-important-in-modernizarea-sistemului-judiciar/>.

¹⁴³ Council of Europe, launch of JUSTAT, the national tool for publishing judicial statistics, available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cepej/-/launching-of-the-justat-ais-the-national-tool-for-publishing-judicial-statistics-in-the-republic-of-moldova>.

¹⁴⁴ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, Government approval of the JUSTAT concept, December 2025, available at: <https://justice.gov.md/ro/content/guvernul-aprobat-conceptul-si-justat-o-platforma-care-arata-cifre-si-grafice-cum>.

¹⁴⁵ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, cooperation agreement signed on 27.09.2024, available at: <https://www.justice.gov.md/ro/content/semnarea-unui-acord-de-colaborare-privind-eficientizarea-procesului-de-pilotare-sistemului>.

¹⁴⁶ Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, launch of the first e-Sala de judecata (e-courtroom), available at: <https://justice.gov.md/ro/content/justitie-la-un-click-distanta-prima-e-sala-de-judecata-din-moldova-fost-deschisa-la-balti>.

¹⁴⁷ Realitatea, news article on the 2026 budget allocation for videoconferencing, available at: <https://realitatea.md/pentru-2026-ministerul-justitiei-a-alocat-55-milioane-lei-pentru-videoconferintele-utilizate-in-instante/>.

January 2026, the system was used throughout 2025 in complex criminal cases handled by the PCCOCS.

The digitalisation of reporting within the state-guaranteed legal aid system (Action 3.3.9(b), rating 3) has also progressed significantly. The CNAJGS Strategy 2024–2026 provides for the electronic submission of reports using digital signatures, while CNAJGS Decision No. 28 of 20 October 2025¹⁴⁸ institutionalised the exclusive electronic signing of paralegals' reports, effective from 1 January 2026.

CHALLENGES

The absence of a random case allocation system for criminal cases within the Prosecutor's Office (Action 3.3.5(c), rating 0) represents the most significant systemic constraint under Objective 3.3. Criminal cases continue to be assigned at the discretion of the Chief Prosecutor, with no random allocation module incorporated into the Automated Information System "Criminal Investigation: e-Dosar". The absence of random allocation constitutes an integrity risk for the criminal investigation system and undermines the guarantees of procedural independence of the prosecutor assigned to the case, as provided for in Article 3(4) of Law No. 3/2016 on the Prosecutor's Office. The 2022 APOD study, based on 240 questionnaires completed by prosecutors, found that case allocation "is not random" and that the possibility of withdrawing and reallocating cases "creates a corruption risk." The European Commission Report¹⁴⁹ SWD (2025) 758 included, for the first time, an explicit recommendation to introduce a system of random case allocation within the Prosecutor's Office based on strict and objective criteria, confirming that the issue has been placed on the agenda of Chapter 23.

The absence of a random allocation module should, however, be viewed within a broader systemic context. The Automated Criminal Investigation Information System: e-Dosar, launched in 2015 with UNDP support and last substantially upgraded in 2020 under the Esempla Systems contract (MDL 1,500,000), did not undergo any major systemic upgrades during the monitoring period. This is compounded by a shortage of qualified IT personnel within the Prosecutor's Office and fragmented interoperability with the information systems of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (e-Dosar GECPC), the courts (PIGD/e-Dosar) and investigative authorities. Addressing random case allocation in isolation, without a broader modernisation of the Prosecutor's Office's digital infrastructure, risks producing only partial results.

The implementation of the e-Dosar application (Action 3.3.2(b), rated 1) remains stalled at the pilot stage. The CSM officially extended the pilot until 31.12.2026 through the same decision that declared the PIGD an implemented system. Access remains limited exclusively to lawyers who have signed cooperation agreements with ADJAJ, while litigants, whether natural or legal persons, are not yet included. Actual usage remained minimal at the end of 2025. The ADJAJ evaluation report on the e-Dosar application (June 2025) identifies persistent technical limitations, including restricted file sizes (maximum 20 MB), the inability to preview documents and the absence of advanced filtering functions. On 27.03.2026, European Commissioner Michael McGrath announced the allocation of EUR 4 million for a new e-Justice project, which could support the resolution of these technical shortcomings.

Public criticism has focused on the risks associated with the use of TrueConf. Cybersecurity

¹⁴⁸ National Council for State-Guaranteed Legal Aid (CNAJGS), Decision No. 28 of 20 October 2025, available at: <https://cnaigs.md/ro/>.

¹⁴⁹ European Commission, Republic of Moldova 2025 Report, SWD(2025) 758, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025SC0758>.

experts (WatchDog.MD and Cybercor) have highlighted the opacity of the software architecture and the risk that information exchanged during court hearings, including classified information, could be exposed to the Russian developer. ADJAJ's official position is that TrueConf operates on STISC infrastructure, independently of the parent platform; however, the absence of an independent security audit remains an unresolved vulnerability. The transition to Zoom is included in the Rule of Law Roadmap, with a target date of December 2027. According to ADJAJ's publicly available estimates, replacing the existing licences with an alternative platform would cost approximately USD 952,198. It should be noted that Zoom is a product of the US company Zoom Communications, Inc. (listed on NASDAQ and headquartered in San Jose, California), rather than a European solution. Although it offers EU data residency through regional data centres, the company remains subject to US jurisdiction. In light of the Republic of Moldova's digital sovereignty objectives within the EU accession process, the final selection should include a comparative assessment of available European alternatives.

The review of the CSM Regulations governing the PIGD (Action 3.3.1(d), rated 1) has not resulted in a conceptually revised version. CSM member Livia Mitrofan stated explicitly during the meeting of 30 December 2025: "The Regulation was approved in 2013 and requires a conceptual review."¹⁵⁰ The only amendment adopted at that meeting introduced temporary provisions reducing the workload of pregnant judges, carers of persons with disabilities and other special categories. ADJAJ's monthly reports on random case allocation (published on adjaj.justice.md/reports¹⁵¹) document inconsistent practices, including the incomplete recording of reasons for excluding judges from random allocation across several courts, demonstrating that the objective of ensuring the uniform use of PIGD functionalities (Action 3.3.1(b), rated 0) has not yet been achieved.

The e-Executare system (Actions 3.3.7(a)-(c), all rated 0) and the e-Retinere system (Actions 3.3.8(a) and (b), both rated 1) represent the longest-standing outstanding commitments under the Strategy, having appeared in public policy documents since 2012 and 2018 respectively without being implemented. The Ministry of Justice stated, in Letter No. 02/3442 of 26.01.2026, that the development of an online auction platform for confiscated assets requires a holistic approach involving banking institutions and tax authorities. While this may be justified, it does not explain why the conceptual development of the project has failed to progress beyond the initial stage over several years. The Ministry of Internal Affairs confirmed, in Letter No. 30/313 of 30.01.2026, that the mandatory regulatory framework for the e-Retinere system had not yet been finalised, preventing both the assessment of technical complexity and the launch of the procurement process. The National Union of Judicial Enforcement Officers informed, on 12.01.2026, that the assessment study prepared with Council of Europe support had not been translated into draft legislative amendments due to a lack of financial resources.

The mechanism for providing interpretation and translation services through videoconferencing (Action 3.3.10, rated 1) remained at the stage of a publicly presented concept as of 18.12.2024, with no legislative amendments adopted by 31.12.2025. The effective implementation of this action extends beyond the exclusive competence of the CSM, requiring amendments to Law No. 264/2008 on Interpreters and Translators, procurement procedures, the adaptation of facilities and the organisation of interpretation

¹⁵⁰ UNIMEDIA, live coverage of the CSM meeting of 30 December 2025, available at:

<https://unimedia.info/ro/news/13f4934a42843843/live-csm-in-sedinta-consiliul-a-aprobat-ajustarea-sarcinii-de-munca-pentru-judecatoarea-marina-rusu.html>.

¹⁵¹ Agency for Digitalisation in Justice and Court Administration (ADJAJ), monthly reports on random case allocation, available at: <https://adjaj.justice.md/reports/>.

and translation services, responsibilities shared between the Ministry of Justice, ADJAJ and the authorities responsible for the budgetary framework. The CSM has established the necessary technical preconditions by expanding the use of videoconferencing in the courts; however, the dedicated mechanism for interpretation and translation through videoconferencing remains dependent on inter-institutional coordination, which was not ensured during the monitoring period. The digitisation of applications for state-guaranteed legal aid (Action 3.3.9(a), rated 2) is operational through the CNAJGS platform, but the technical documentation of the information system is not sufficiently accessible to the public to enable an independent assessment of its compliance with the requirements of Law No. 467/2003 on Informatisation and State Information Resources.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT JUSTICE SECTOR POLICY DOCUMENT

- The random allocation of criminal cases within the prosecution service should be treated as an immediate priority in the future strategic framework, with a short implementation timeframe and a verifiable outcome indicator: the adoption and piloting of a random case allocation module within the prosecution service's information system. The absence of such a mechanism constitutes a structural integrity vulnerability, documented by domestic research and highlighted by the European Commission, and its repeated transfer from one strategic document to another without tangible results can no longer be justified.
- This priority should be embedded within a broader agenda for the modernisation of the prosecution service's information infrastructure. The further development of the Criminal Investigation Information System: e-Dosar through new case-management and statistical reporting modules, ensuring interoperability with the Ministry of Internal Affairs' e-Dosar: GECPC system (Government Decision No. 714/2024) and with the courts' PIGD/e-Dosar system, together with strengthening the capacities of the Information Technology Division of the General Prosecutor's Office, are essential preconditions for ensuring that the introduction of random case allocation delivers sustainable results.
- The e-Executare and e-Retinere systems, which have appeared in public policy documents since 2012 and 2018 respectively, should be included in the future strategy only if supported by a concrete technical and financial implementation plan, with dedicated budgetary resources and a clearly designated technical lead institution. Reiterating the same commitments without implementation undermines the credibility of any public policy document.
- Replacing TrueConf with a European videoconferencing platform requires an explicit budgetary commitment in the future strategic framework, going beyond the general commitments contained in the Rule of Law Roadmap. The European funding announced in March 2026 (EUR 4 million for e-justice) represents a concrete opportunity, provided that the procurement process is launched without delay. The absence of an independent security audit of TrueConf, in the context of Moldova identifying Russia as the principal threat to national security (National Security Strategy, December 2024), is an issue that the new strategic framework cannot afford to overlook.
- Reporting on the e-Dosar system should include not only the number of applications submitted, but also the effective usage rate measured against the total number of procedural documents, the number of courts in which the electronic case file has effectively replaced the paper file, and the level of user satisfaction among lawyers. Without these quality indicators, the formal declaration that the PIGD has been "implemented" risks obscuring a reality in which electronic and paper case files continue

to coexist without a genuine digital transition.

CONCLUSIONS AND GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON STRATEGIC DIRECTION III

Strategic Direction III highlights, for the period 2022–2025, the most pronounced gaps between the commitments undertaken and the results achieved under the policy framework. The average score of 1.75 out of 4 reflects a structural divide between regulatory reforms and reforms of an investment and technological nature, the latter being inherently dependent on adequate resources, implementation timeframes and effective inter-institutional coordination mechanisms.

Progress in areas such as the revision of the judicial map, the reorganisation of the prosecution service, the establishment of ADJAJ, the further development of the PIGD and the JUSTAT platform, and the expansion of digitalisation-related training activities was supported by a clear legislative framework and sustained technical assistance from external partners. By contrast, actions requiring capital investment, including the construction of court infrastructure and the development of new information systems, such as e-Executare, e-Retinere, the online platform for the auction of confiscated assets and the random allocation module for criminal cases within the prosecution service, have not achieved comparable progress. The underlying causes include insufficient multiannual budget allocations, the absence of a designated technical lead, and the persistence of unresolved inter-institutional disagreements at the decision-making level.

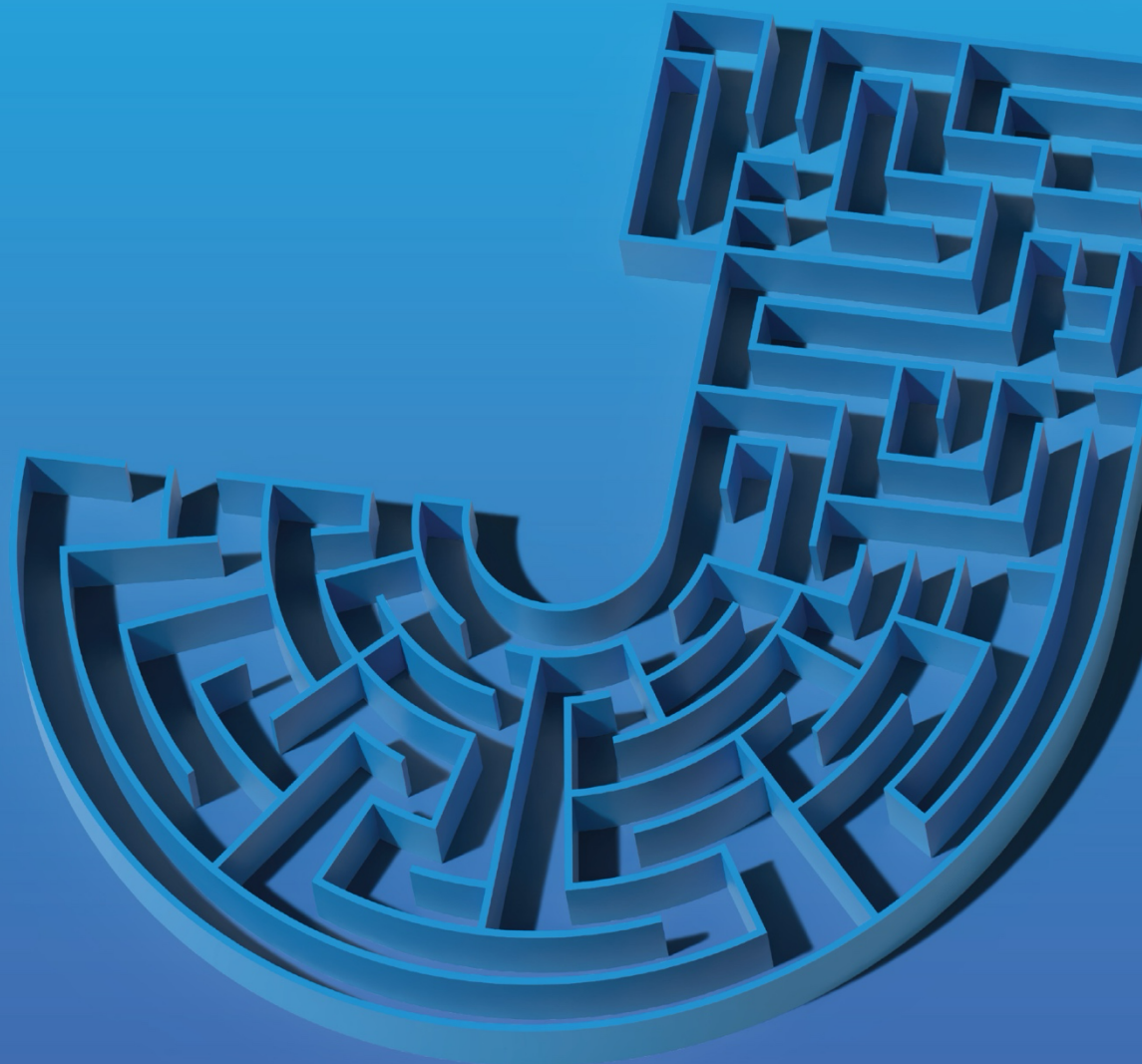
The shortage of judges and prosecutors has a systemic impact and cannot be adequately addressed through the temporary measures currently in place. This highlights the need for an integrated human resources strategy encompassing remuneration reform, workforce planning and recruitment, and transparent mechanisms for managing vacancies.

Furthermore, the justice reform process has remained heavily dependent on external funding throughout the period under review, underscoring the need for a national budgetary prioritisation mechanism capable of ensuring the continuity of reform measures even in the absence of external assistance.

The experience of the 2022–2025 period also reveals a broader issue of strategic planning coherence. The repeated inclusion, in successive policy documents, of unimplemented measures, such as the e-Executare and e-Retinere systems, without corresponding adjustments to indicators, implementation deadlines or institutional responsibilities, undermines the credibility and effectiveness of sectoral strategic planning instruments.



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