

Strengthening Rule of Law Institutions in Moldova: The Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman Service

Objectives

The goal of this project is to help to reform two of the most important institutions of democracy, the Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman Service, to improve the local and international visibility, accountability, and transparency, and to gain trust from the public.

Background

Ever since its independence, Moldova has been in a dangerous situation. On the one hand, the country is facing the challenges of transition and, on the other hand, there is the threat of secession of a part of its territory, Transnistria. Russia, as a powerful ally of the Transnistrian leadership, is continuously trying to use its influence to convince Moldova to return under the Russian umbrella. Even though the European Union had made several efforts to enhance democratic transition in the country (EUBAM, EUSR, etc.) these still don't seem to be enough. For the time being it, can be said that lacking the perspective of EU membership, Moldova does not get the help from the EU it needs.

Project

The Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman Service are vital for strengthening the capability of vulnerable groups and minorities, exercising their rights, and enforcing their interests. In the initial phase, the ICDDT carried on an expert mission to Moldova to identify and engage key stakeholders of these institutions, to study the functioning of the existing institutions, to analyze current legal environment and sources, and to prepare materials for the further course of the project.

The Centre organized two conferences in Moldova and its legal expert team prepared recommendation papers on possible reforms for both institutions. In addition, the ICDDT arranged a meeting of the judges of the Moldovan Constitutional Court with representatives of the Hungarian Parliament, the Constitutional Court, and experts in Budapest.

Based on the experts' findings, the ICDDT started the second project phase in March 2009; experts of the Ombudsman Office and the Data Protection agency were for 1 month trained in Budapest.

The ICDDT believes that the Constitutional Court and the Ombudsman Service in Moldova will be more effective after the reforms and will be able to assist citizens in the fight against maladministration, and will strengthen the protection of the fundamental constitutional and human rights.

Donor:	First Phase	Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
	Second Phase	Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Duration:	July 2008 – May 2009	