LCRM – Legal Resources Centre from Moldova

Infographic// Population's and lawyers' confidence in the judiciary of the Republic of Moldova

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What was the trend of the confidence in the judiciary of the Republic of Moldova from 2008 up to 2019? What is the perception of citizens and lawyers on the independence of judges? The answers to these questions can be found in the infographic developed by the Legal Resources Centre from Moldova (LRCM) based on the analysis of the Barometer of Public Opinion from 2008 up to 2019 and of the survey "Lawyers' perception on the independence, efficiency and accountability of the justice system in the Republic of Moldova".

Starting with 2010, the general trend of confidence in the justice system was downward, with short periods of recovery shortly before or after the parliamentary elections of 2010, and 2014, the presidential elections of 2012, and after the shift of power in 2019. The lowest level of the public confidence in state institutions was observed in the context of the political crises of 2015 and 2016, and the Billion Theft in the banking sector, made public in 2014.

Main findings:

- The trust in the judiciary significantly dropped 6 years after the start of the judicial reforms in 2011. That means that the judicial reform failed to meet citizens' expectations.
- The increase of citizens' confidence in the judicial system is observed prior to the elections and the formation of new governments in 2009 and 2019. However, it decreased significantly after elections.
- Approximately half of the respondents believes that the courts treat applicants equally, regardless of gender and age;
- One third of the respondents think that the judicial system does not take into account one's job, political affiliation or wealth;
- In 2018 and 2019 approximately 60% of the respondents were not sure that judges would treat their case fairly;
- Only 29% of lawyers respondents to the survey in 2018 believed that the law was applied equally for all applicants;
- In 2018, only 17% of lawyers thought that judges were independent. 35% of lawyers were of the view that judges' rulings were fair and not influenced by external factors;
- Lawyers believe that politicians, prosecutors, other judges and members of the Superior Council of Magistracy often influence judges' rulings.

The following factors determine the confidence in the judiciary:

- The interdependence of confidence in the justice system and confidence in other institutions of the state. If public confidence in the state institutions decreases, confidence in the justice system will inevitably decrease as well.
- The media coverage of topics related to justice system. An abundance of stories about this topic share in media over longer periods can shape public perception in the long-term.
- The personal experience or the experience of the narrow social circle of the individual coming into contact with the court system. Being a party in court proceedings (court cases) strongly influences the opinion of a person about the judiciary.

The persistently low level of public confidence in the justice system should determine the judiciary and other relevant decision makers to take urgent actions to improve the quality and fairness of justice delivery.

The infographic on the confidence in the judiciary of the Republic of Moldova is available in**Romanian** and **English**.

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