



**LRCM**  
Rights and justice for all

# ACTIVITY REPORT

LEGAL RESOURCES CENTRE FROM MOLDOVA

2024



## IDENTITY

The Legal Resources Centre from Moldova (LRCM) is a non-governmental, non-profit, independent, politically unaffiliated organisation consolidating democracy and the rule of law in the Republic of Moldova through research, monitoring and advocacy.



## VISION

We live in a prosperous, democratic country where people are free and accountable, live safely, enjoy equal opportunities, are protected by law, trust the judiciary and are confident in their future.



## MISSION

The LRCM promotes an independent, efficient, and accountable judiciary, efficient anticorruption mechanisms, observance of human rights, and an enabling environment for civil society and democracy. To that end, we identify problems with systemic impact, propose solutions, bring them onto the public agenda, address misconduct, and mobilise partners to bring change.



## VALUES

We believe in democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the values of an open society.



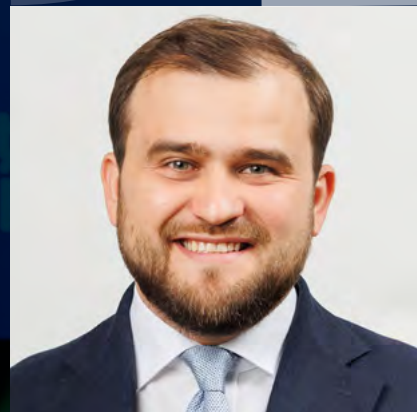
## PRINCIPLES

The LCRM is guided by the following principles:

- Professionalism and respect for professional ethics;
- Integrity and transparency;
- Human rights approach;
- Gender balance;
- Proactive and constructive attitude to changing things for the better;
- Team spirit and participatory approach in strategic decision-making;
- Political non-affiliation;
- Complying with regulations to ensure a sustainable environment.



# A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Dear colleagues and partners,**

The year 2024 was marked by both challenges and remarkable achievements. Despite the obstacles encountered, Moldova took a decisive step forward by embedding in its Constitution a historic commitment – European integration. This achievement reflects our society's deep aspiration to embrace European values and standards, despite a difficult political and economic context, with a war raging next door.

The LRCM team remained firmly committed to a course grounded in professionalism and strong cooperation with key institutions, external partners, and civil society. We have continuously supported essential reforms in the field of justice and the rule of law, actively contributing through our expertise to legislative proposals, close monitoring of institutions, and offering concrete recommendations to increase transparency and accountability in the public sector.

We are especially proud to have successfully organized the sixth edition of the Justice Reform and Anti-Corruption Forum – a vital space for professional dialogue among experts, judges, prosecutors, and other justice professionals, alongside civil society representatives and policymakers. Through this forum and many other initiatives, LRCM has been at the forefront of identifying viable reform solutions, driving progress toward a stronger and more independent judiciary.

In close cooperation with our civil society partners, we have closely monitored the implementation of reforms in the judiciary and prosecution system, offering legal opinions and well-founded recommendations. We have analyzed thousands of pages of legislative documents and hundreds of court rulings to assess and ensure that citizens' rights and the public interest are consistently protected. At the same time, we closely followed the activity of key institutions such as the Superior Council

of Magistracy and the Superior Council of Prosecutors, promoting transparent and fair selection and evaluation processes.

In addition to our work on the rule of law and anti-corruption, LRCM has stayed committed to defending fundamental human rights and supporting a strong civil society. We continued the tradition of our annual analysis of the European Court of Human Rights' case law, organized essential trainings on the implementation of the Criminal Procedure Code amendments, and promoted educational programs for young people—investing in the next generation and its ability to uphold democracy and civic values.

At the same time, we have witnessed a worrying intensification of disinformation in the field of justice and repeated attacks on the credibility of civil society organizations. In the face of these challenges, it is imperative that in 2025—when the political scene will be shaped by parliamentary elections—we remain more united and determined than ever. Civil society must be present and active in public debates, standing as a strong shield against polarization and manipulation.

Thank you for standing with us in this important mission. We invite you to keep working alongside us, with the same determination, to build a true rule-of-law state in Moldova.

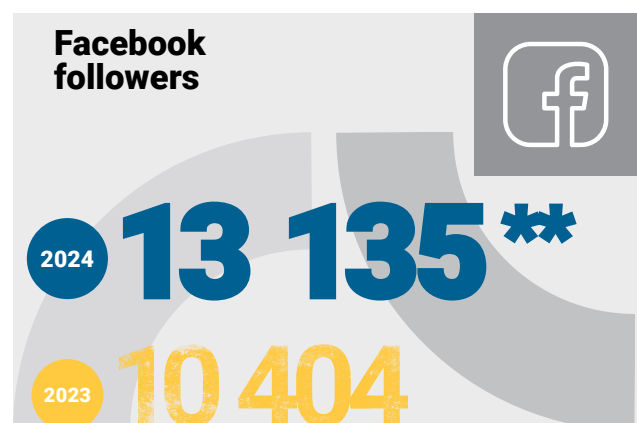
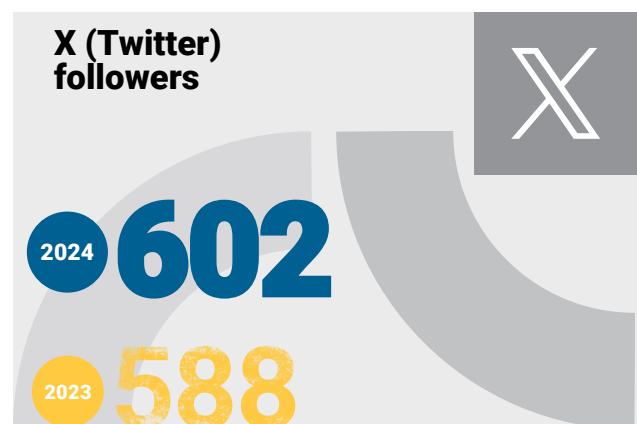
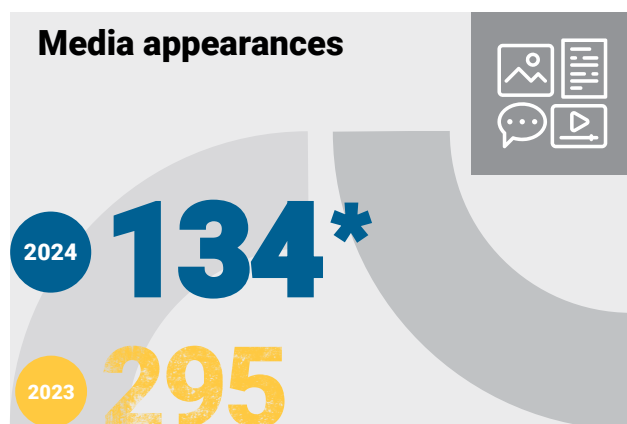
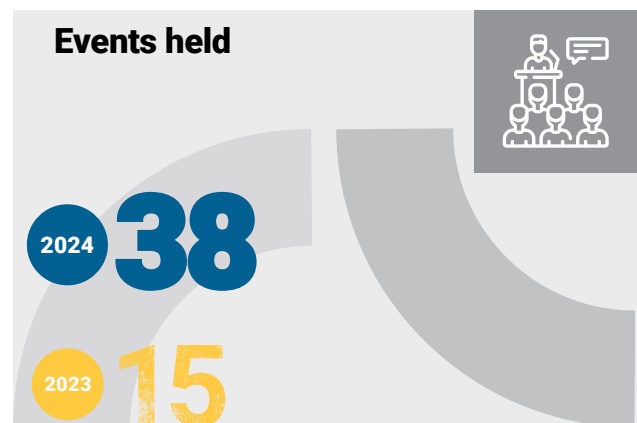
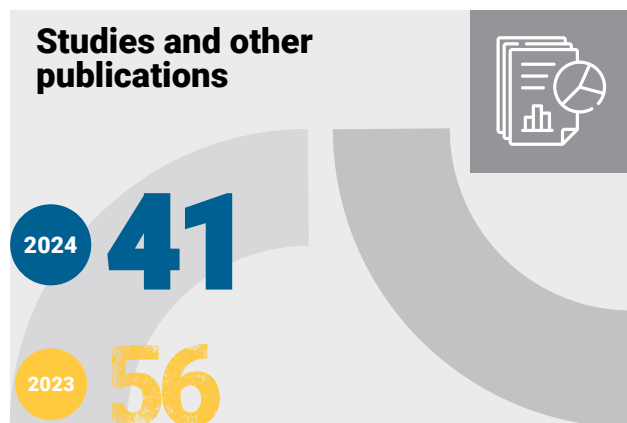
On behalf of the LRCM team,

*Ilie Chirtoacă*

*Executive Director*



## LRCM IN FIGURES



\*Appearances referring only to project-related activities

\*\*Followers, compared to the number of likes



# INDEPENDENT, ACCOUNTABLE, AND EFFICIENT JUSTICE

## HIGHLIGHT

### JUSTICE AND ANTICORRUPTION REFORMS FORUM

In a year marked by profound changes in the justice sector, the [Justice and Anti-Corruption Reforms Forum](#), held in September 2024, reaffirmed its role as the most relevant and impactful platform for dialogue between state institutions, civil society, and development partners. Now in its sixth edition, the forum—organized annually by LRCM—brought together over 200 participants and provided a professional and open environment to address the most sensitive topics concerning the functioning of the justice system and the fight against corruption.

The event brought high-level political decision-makers and diplomats to the forefront, reaffirming a shared commitment to strengthening the rule of law. The President of Parliament, Igor Grosu, acknowledged the underestimated difficulties of the reform and reiterated its irreversible nature, emphasizing that these efforts are not externally imposed but respond to a profound internal need. The interventions of development partners reinforced this message. Nina Maria Fite, Chargé d'Affaires of the United States, advocated for a society grounded in the impartial application of the law, while the European Union Ambassador, Jānis Mažeiks, recommended a prudent and sustainable approach, warning that the success of the reform depends on the ability to effectively communicate its goals and next steps.

The forum took place at a critical moment in the ongoing external integrity evaluation process (vetting). Participants engaged in candid discussions on the

structural challenges slowing down the evaluations, including the shortage of qualified personnel, difficulties in collecting data from various public and private institutions, the massive volume of documents to be analyzed—covering up to 15 years—and the constant need to translate materials for international experts. Under these conditions, the evaluation of a single candidate takes, on average, more than six months.

These bottlenecks highlighted the urgent need for genuine interinstitutional coordination. Justice reform cannot advance in fragments or under emergency procedures; it requires a synchronized effort among all key institutions involved: the evaluation commissions, the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Superior Council of Prosecutors, the National Integrity Authority, the prosecution service, the judiciary, Parliament, and Government. The support of civil society and international partners must be leveraged to maintain both the pace and quality of the reform.

Based on these discussions, LRCM prepared [a comprehensive summary](#), of the Forum that faithfully captures the topics addressed, key messages delivered, and challenges identified. This synthesis also includes LRCM's recommendations for the next stages of the reform, including accelerating the evaluation process while ensuring fairness guarantees, improving institutional cooperation, and strengthening public communication to restore citizens' trust in the justice system.



The year 2024 brought several essential changes concerning the administration of justice and the careers of judges and prosecutors. First and foremost, after several years, the Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM) and the Superior Council of Prosecutors (SCP) resumed activity with renewed composure, which contributed to unblocking several justice-related processes. LRCM continued to monitor the work of these two institutions and developed several studies aimed at assessing the impact of the new compositions on SCM and SCP operations.

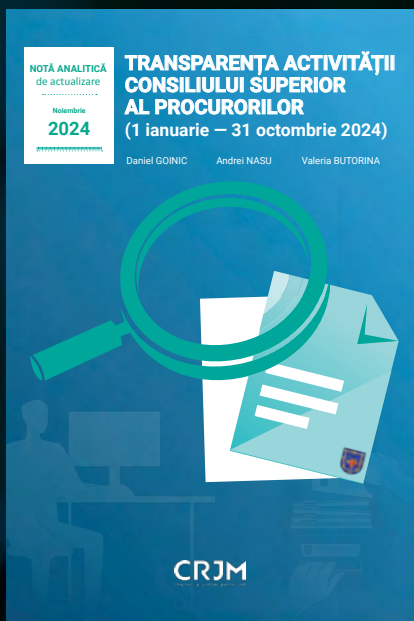
Following the monitoring of 49 meetings held between October 2023 and October 2024, LRCM published the results of a study evaluating the [transparency and efficiency of SCM's activity](#). The findings show a series of positive developments, alongside several shortcomings related to the publication standards of support documents for public meetings.







A similar study was conducted on SCP's activity. The findings highlight significant improvements in the organization and conduct of meetings, as well as some shortcomings identified for the first time. LRCM proposed several technical recommendations, as well as legislative amendments, to help improve the efficiency and transparency of SCP's activity.





For the sixth consecutive year, LRCM organized the [Justice and Anti-Corruption Reforms Forum](#) – the main inclusive platform for professional debate, which brought together around 200 professionals and experts committed to the rule of law, with the aim of identifying [the most feasible reform solutions](#).



The 2024 edition addressed topics such as developments in the external evaluation process, digitalization of the judiciary, outcomes in the fight against corruption, and showcased several inspirational stories from the justice and anti-corruption fields.

One of the special guests at the event was [Sir William Browder KCMG](#), founder of Hermitage Capital Management and leader of the global Magnitsky Justice Campaign, who spoke about the importance of tracking financial transactions, noting that some of the embezzled funds in the Russian Federation made their „first stop” in Moldova’s banking system.

In 2024, we continued to monitor legislative processes related to justice and issued [18 legal opinions](#) aimed at helping authorities improve the legal framework governing the rule of law—particularly in the context of [aligning Moldovan legislation](#) with European Union standards.



# INTEGRITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

## HIGHLIGHT

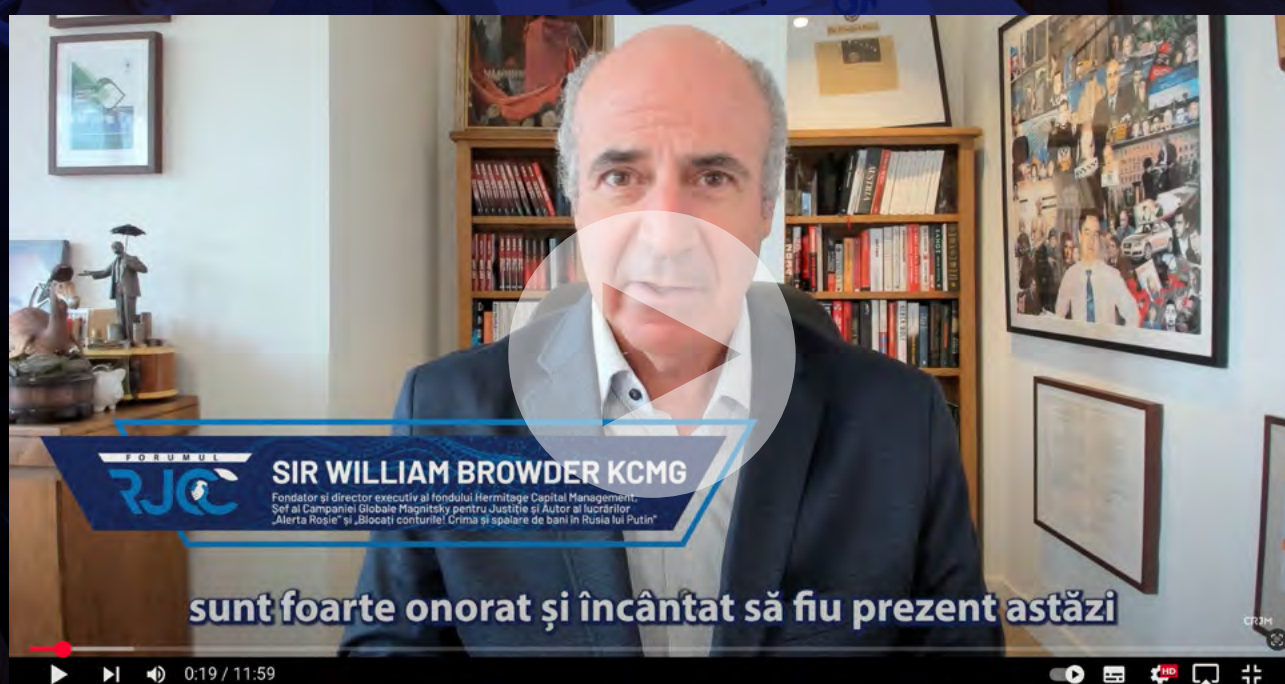
### THE COURAGE TO SPEAK THE TRUTH

Did you know that Moldova was the first stop for a significant portion of the USD 230 million stolen from the Russian people? This massive financial fraud was uncovered by Russian lawyer Serghey Magnitsky, who was imprisoned and killed in custody after exposing the embezzlement scheme. During the Justice and Anti-Corruption Reforms Forum, Sir William Browder KCMG—founder of Hermitage Capital Management and leader of the global Magnitsky Justice Campaign—highlighted the importance of decisive action against corruption and impunity.

Investigations from 2012 revealed that at least USD 50 million of the stolen funds were initially transferred through Moldova, exposing a complex international network of financial crime. This emblematic case led to the adoption of the Magnitsky Act, a global legislative tool used to sanction individuals involved in serious corruption and human rights abuses.

Another symbol of courage and sacrifice in the fight against corruption is Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia. Her fearless investigations into corruption and organized crime led to her brutal assassination in 2017. Her tragic death sparked a powerful movement to protect press freedom, culminating in the EU's anti-SLAPP directive—also known as the Daphne Law—designed to shield journalists and whistleblowers from abusive lawsuits.

Both Magnitsky and Caruana Galizia embody the ultimate sacrifice in the name of truth and justice. Their legacy underscores the urgent need to strengthen protections for journalists, whistleblowers, and human rights defenders, and highlights the importance of robust international cooperation in tackling systemic corruption. Moldova, like other states, must intensify its efforts to ensure that justice prevails—and that corruption and impunity find no place in a democratic society.







## LRCM ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024 / INTEGRITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

As part of its efforts to promote integrity and combat corruption, LRCM prepared 15 alternative submissions that were sent to the Judicial Evaluation Commission. These documents contained systematized information on judges undergoing evaluation who had previously served in the system, with data collected from open-source databases.

The submissions highlighted relevant court rulings or candidate behavior that could raise concerns regarding ethical integrity. They were intended to supplement candidate files with alternative information to support a well-founded and transparent evaluation process, thereby reducing the risk of promoting or retaining compromised individuals in the system.

In 2024, LRCM **publicly responded** to an action undertaken by the leadership of the Anticorruption Prosecutor's Office, which aimed to block and discredit the integrity evaluation process of anticorruption prosecutors by raising suspicions and unlawfully disclosing information targeting a member of the Evaluation Commission.

Previously, together with several civil society organizations, LRCM had urged the authorities to preserve the **requirement of scoring** in the selection process for the Prosecutor General, following a legislative initiative that would have allowed the Superior Council of Prosecutors (SCP) to appoint the Prosecutor General based solely on a majority vote. This approach

would have reduced transparency and meritocracy in the selection process and posed risks of corruption and vote manipulation.

Ultimately, the authorities accepted the recommendations of civil society organizations and abandoned the proposed legislative amendment, which would have constituted a setback from the existing legal provisions.

LRCM continued its monitoring efforts of competitions for top-level prosecutorial positions. In particular, it followed the highly contested and delayed selection process for the Prosecutor General, as well as the competition for Chief Prosecutor of the Prosecutor's Office for Combating Organized Crime and Special Cases (PCCOCS). The aim of these monitoring efforts was to inform the public and justice professionals, thereby contributing to increased transparency in these processes.

LRCM's anti-corruption monitoring and advocacy efforts also included engagement with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the Moldova country report under the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan. In addition, LRCM's legal experts participated in bilateral meetings and plenary sessions of the OECD's Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, sharing valuable insights and experiences.



# HUMAN RIGHTS

## HIGHLIGHT

### SHIELD FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

In the Republic of Moldova, resilience takes the face of those who do not abandon their principles—even when confronted with intimidation, institutional pressure, or abuse of power. Two employees of a Child Rights Protection Division chose to defend the best interests of minors in a sensitive abuse case, despite facing professional risk. They were sanctioned and dismissed for refusing to return the children to a parent accused of rape. However, the courts ruled in their favor. This case has become an example of how, in the end, the law can protect conscience.

Another symbol of resilience is a civic activist from southern Moldova. In 2022, he was physically assaulted inside the town hall by the former mayor after requesting support for a vulnerable person. Despite enduring psychological and physical trauma, the activist refused to give up and continued to fight for justice. The court's verdict declaring the mayor guilty and recognizing the human rights defender as a victim represents not only legal redress but also moral validation for all those who bravely confront abuse.

Similarly, four members of the Equality Council became targets of an intimidation campaign after issuing a decision on the discrimination of a woman with disabilities. This case demonstrates how vulnerable a mechanism designed to protect equality can be—and how crucial it is to support those who apply it fairly.

The support provided by LRCM and the lawyers involved in these and similar cases is just a small step toward justice. But none of it would be possible without the courage and determination of human rights defenders.



## LRCM ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024 / HUMAN RIGHTS

Monitoring how human rights are respected in Moldova remained a core part of LRCM's mission in 2024. For the 14th consecutive year, LRCM analyzed [the activity of the European Court of Human Rights \(ECtHR\)](#) focusing particularly on cases concerning our country. The main findings were presented publicly to raise awareness among



citizens and authorities about persistent shortcomings in the effective protection of human rights.

Additionally, LRCM's legal experts prepared an [overview of ECtHR rulings involving Moldova in cases related to parent-child relationships](#). These research efforts aimed to increase understanding—especially among justice professionals—of the broader and specific context of human rights protection in Moldova.





## ACTIVITY REPORT LRCM 2024

Approximately 400 justice professionals—including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and criminal investigation officers—benefited from [trainings organized by LRCM](#) in partnership with the National Institute of Justice. The goal of these sessions was to explain and discuss, in a mixed format, the amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code that came into force in 2024. In doing so, justice professionals were supported in developing their competencies in criminal investigations and in ensuring better protection of human rights.

Ahead of the 2024 presidential elections, LRCM reviewed the [electoral platforms of presidential candidates](#) to assess the extent to which human rights and rule of law issues were prioritized. Encouragingly, all candidates included commitments or proposals in these areas. Overall, issues related to human rights and the rule of law accounted for 33% of the candidates' electoral platforms or promises. However, LRCM's lawyers identified a concerning trend among politicians of making unrealistic proposals—some exceeding constitutional powers or contradicting international principles and standards.

Together with civil society partners, LRCM submitted a communication to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe regarding [the implementation by](#)

[Moldova of the ECtHR judgment in the Turkish teachers' case](#). Following this process, many of the proposals made by LRCM and its partners were recommended to the national authorities.

Another research effort focused on [the analysis of court cases concerning freedom of expression](#). To assess the consistency of judicial practice in media-related freedom of expression cases, LRCM reviewed all final judgments issued by the Supreme Court of Justice over the past five years. By analyzing both national and international legislation in the field, LRCM's lawyers developed a series of recommendations aimed at combating abusive lawsuits against public engagement—known as SLAPPs.

In 2024, LRCM also developed [a guide on identifying and assessing human rights defenders at risk](#), and continued facilitating legal assistance for eight human rights defenders.





# DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

## HIGHLIGHT

### DEMOCRACY BEGINS WITH INFORMED CHOICES

In a year when the voice of the people was set to decide who would hold the highest office in the state, LRCM embarked on a bold and necessary mission: to impartially and professionally analyze the electoral commitments of those seeking to lead the Republic of Moldova. LRCM's legal experts looked beyond slogans and promises to assess how human rights and the rule of law were addressed in the candidates' platforms.

For the first time in a presidential election campaign, LRCM quantified over 900 proposed measures, identifying not only how often fundamental values were invoked but also how realistically they could be translated into concrete actions. It was found that although most candidates declared support for the rule of law and human rights, many proposals were vague, declarative, or even contradictory to international standards. In some cases, the promises were purely symbolic—legally or financially unfeasible.

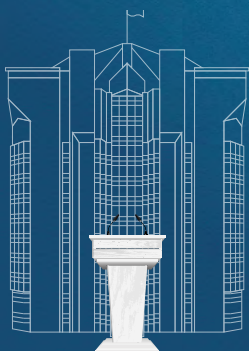
A telling example is the proposal to introduce a system in which judges or the Prosecutor General would be elected directly by citizens. While this may sound appealing from a democratic participation perspective, such a proposal disregards the principle of judicial independence. In practice, a judge elected by popular vote may be subject to populist pressures, dependent on interest group support, and risk losing impartiality and adherence to the supremacy of law—the very values they are meant to safeguard. This model, tested in other countries, has led to the excessive politicization of justice and the erosion of public trust in judicial impartiality.

The conclusions offered both reasons for optimism and cause for concern. Nearly every candidate included references to social protection, anti-corruption, or access to justice in their platforms. However, many promises clearly exceeded the constitutional powers of the presidency or contradicted Moldova's international commitments.

This analysis was not merely a technical exercise, but an effort to strengthen civic culture and political transparency. LRCM demonstrated that civil society not only monitors electoral processes but contributes to responsible public debate, providing citizens with the tools to make informed choices—grounded in facts, not illusions.

RESEARCH  
NOTE  
OCTOBER  
2024

ELECTORAL PROGRAMS OF  
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES FROM  
THE PERSPECTIVE OF HUMAN  
RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW



LRCM  
Rights and Justice For All



In 2024, LRCM published the seventh edition of its [radiography of attacks against civil society organizations \(CSOs\) and human rights defenders \(HRDs\)](#). Through its monitoring efforts, LRCM found that attacks against CSOs and HRDs take multiple forms and are proliferating across different platforms. The purpose of this document is to discourage hostile statements and behaviors targeting civil society organizations and human rights defenders.



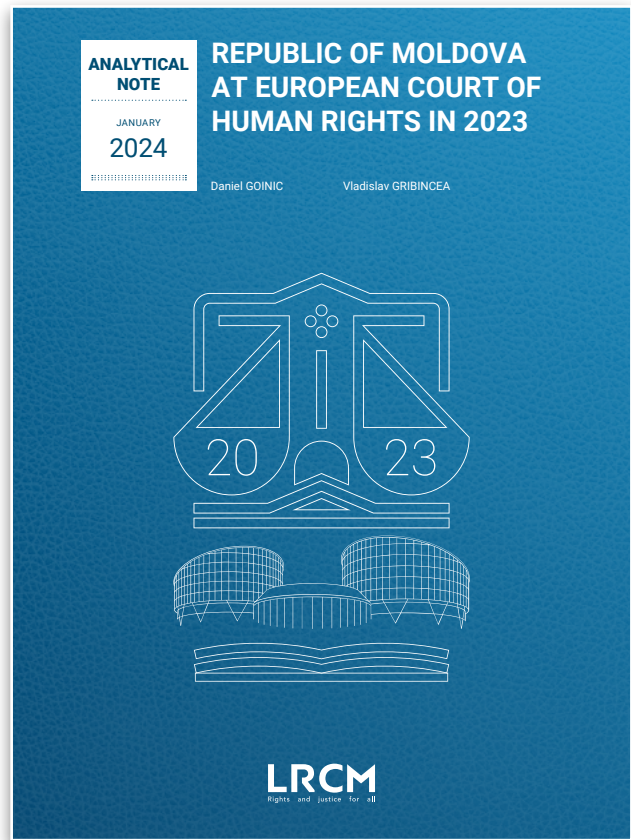
Also in 2024, LRCM continued its efforts to educate and empower young people to promote and apply democratic principles through the non-formal education program „[Applied Democracy](#)“. A total of 16 young people from various regions of the country took part in a five-day learning experience on how the justice system works, how human rights are protected, how to debate ideas, write project proposals, and understand the functioning of democratic institutions. Eight of these participants received small grants to implement four democracy-promotion initiatives.

Additionally, LRCM organized four public lectures, attended by over 200 students and young professionals, aimed at strengthening knowledge in the fields of non-discrimination, digitalization, human rights, and integrity.

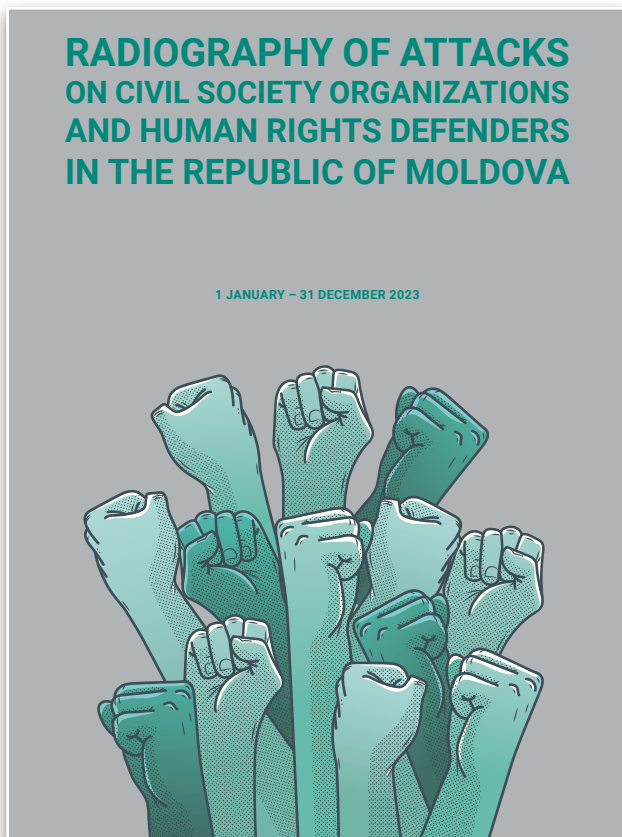


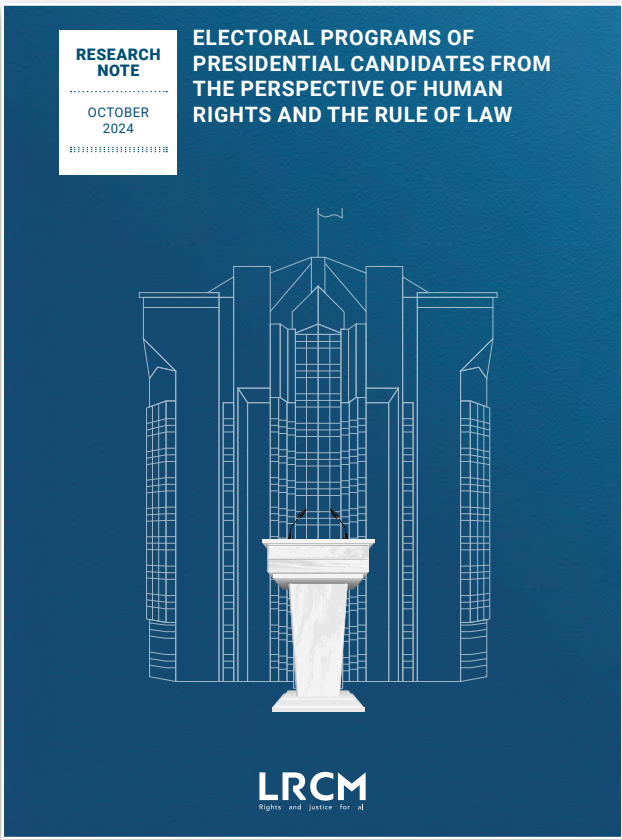
LRCM also continued to promote the percentage designation mechanism (2%) through public announcements and by maintaining and updating the platform [2procente.info](#), which includes the complete list of eligible beneficiaries and relevant contact details.

# LCRM PUBLICATIONS IN 2024













# LRCM TEAM



**ILIE  
CHIRTOACĂ**  
Executive Director



**VLADISLAV  
GRIBINCEA**  
Programme Director  
until June 2024



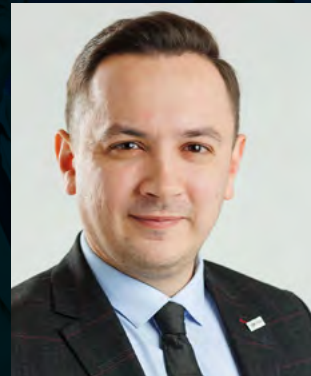
**DANIEL  
GOINIC**  
Programme Director



**CAROLINA  
BAGRIN**  
Programme Director  
from October 2024



**VICTORIA  
MEREUȚĂ**  
Legal Officer



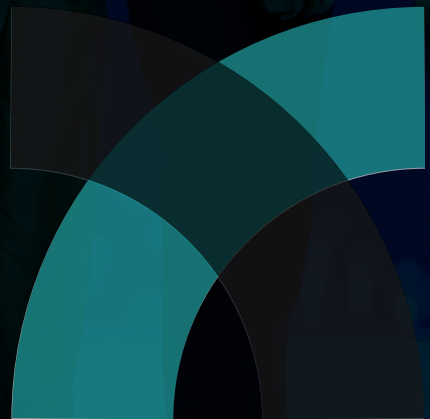
**ANDREI  
NASU**  
Legal Officer

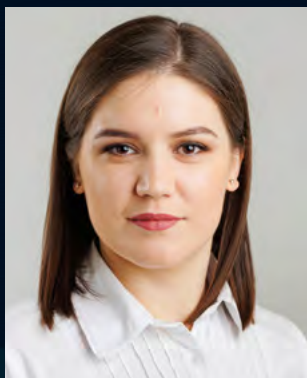


**AURELIA  
PALAMARCIUC**  
Legal Officer



**VALERIA  
BUTORINA**  
Junior Legal Officer





**OLGA  
CORTAC**  
Director of Administrative  
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**AURELIA  
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Assistant of Financial  
Administrative Service



**DUMITRU  
JOMIR**  
Communication  
Coordinator



**NATALIA  
ROTARU**  
Communication  
Specialist



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DIANA LAZĂR

GHENADIE BARBĂ

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ARCADIE BARBĂROȘIE

CRISTINA MARTIN

ION GUZUN

NADEJDA HRIPTIEVSCHI

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