

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

The project "TAEJ - Transparency, accessibility and legal education by improving public communication at the level of the judicial system", SIPOCA code 454/MySMIS code 118765 is co-financed by the European Social Fund, through the Operational Program Administrative Capacity 2014-2020.

BENEFICIARY NAME:

The project is implemented by the Superior Council of Magistracy (leader), in partnership with the National School of Clerks, the Judicial Inspection, the Prosecutor's Office attached to the High Court of Cassation and Justice, the National Institute of Magistracy and the Ministry of Justice.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

Improvement and unitary approach to public communication at the level of the judicial system in order to strengthen its image, to provide a greater transparency within the system but also in relation to the exterior, as well as to improve the access to justice by enhancing the level of information, the awareness regarding citizens' rights and through promoting legal culture.

EXPECTED RESULTS:

The project aims to achieve the following results:

1. Improved and a unitary approach at the level of the judicial system;
2. High level of access to justice by facilitating access to information on the judicial system and on the services provided to citizens;
3. High level of information, awareness of the rights and level of legal education of the public.

TOTAL VALUE OF THE PROJECT:

The total value of the project that is the subject of the financing contract is 29.667.068 lei, of which 24.915.549, 67 lei (83.98%) represent non-reimbursable financing from the European Social Fund, and 4.751.518, 33 lei represent the co-financing of the beneficiary and of the partners.

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Website: www.sipoca454.csm1909.ro

Content

CHAPTER 1. Situational Analysis	4
CHAPTER 2. Vision, Values and Principles	7
CHAPTER 3. Addressability and Target Audiences	14
CHAPTER 4. Strategic Objectives and Tactical Communication Objectives.....	22
CHAPTER 5. Key Messages	25
CHAPTER 6. Communication Strategies and Tactics	28
CHAPTER 7. Action Plan	57
CHAPTER 8. Monitoring and evaluation	63
CHAPTER 9. Sustainability and Professional Training	65
CHAPTER 10. Responsibilities in Implementation	71
CHAPTER 11. Recommendations and Strategic Action Plans for the Development of the Information and Awareness Campaign	72
ANNEXES.....	74

CHAPTER 1. Situational Analysis

The communication of the Romanian Judiciary has evolved in the recent years. From a closed system, with a more inward-looking approach, a greater openness can be

noticed, presently, to external communication, to making the information more transparent and to increasing its accessibility.

The need resulting from the increase in the number of requests coming from the press or litigants, from the pressure generated by incomplete or incorrect information about the system spread in the public space, from the abundance of fake news or media speculation focused on sensational, corroborated with the need to get in line with/align with regulations and good practices in the European legal system, lead to/converge on the need for a different approach in terms of communication.

Thus, the starting point of the Strategy is represented by an independent communication of each institution, with a minimum coordination within the system. According to a widespread current within the judicial system "what happens within the Judiciary concerns the Judiciary only", and the communication model is almost eminently reactive, in response to the requests received. This approach is also to be found de facto in the professional principles that guide magistrates - the obligation to be reserved and reluctance to communicate with the parties involved, which explains the lack of appetite for communication of this profession. In addition, the legislation on the protection of personal data and the access to information of public interest is not always clear and leaves room for interpretation.

At the central level, the institutions within the system are aware of the need and of the benefits of communication, aiming at responding to the interest and need for information of the public, even if not in an organized or coordinated manner/way. And within their territorial jurisdiction/in the territory, each institution has its own approach, depending on the available resources and on the internal assessment of the actual need for communication, being often left in the background.

On the occasion of the dissemination across the system of the Spokesperson's Manual and, subsequently, of the Guidelines for good practices in communication with the media, respectively of the Guidelines for communication of magistrates in the social media, or the one on communication with other professions in the system, one may notice that several benchmarks and communication rules have been introduced, that most of the spokespersons in the institutions relate to.

External communication maintains a technical language, difficult to be understood without training in the field, and the complexity of the situations within the system is perceived by the public especially in the light of the topics that the media takes over, emphasizing the deficiencies and negative elements. On the other hand, the progress across the system tends to be a topic that goes unnoticed in the public space, being perceived as minimal issues by the general public.

Analyzing the results of the Survey and those of the Communication Audit carried out during the TAEJ project - Transparency, accessibility and legal education by improving public communication at the level of the judicial system, it is found that there is a cleavage between public perception and trust in the judicial system - mostly negative, on the one hand and those of the professionals within the system on the other hand, sited at the opposite pole, with a much more favorable perception.

The explanations lie on the one hand in the low degree of information, associated with a minimum level of legal culture across the general public, along with the lack of a coherent and constant approach of the Judiciary to inform, educate and communicate with the public.

The media, which represents for the system both an audience and a key communication tool, focuses mainly on topics that draw the attention of information consumers, by covering almost exclusively the criminal cases and the honking cases.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

The useful information of prime concern to the citizen thus passes in the background, neither party assuming the role of information and education.

Analyzing the communication within the Judiciary, a series of present advantages and disadvantages can be identified along with the opportunities and risks of the external environment.

SWOT analysis on communication within the Judiciary	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in communication, examples of good practice within the system, constant improvements at the level of the activity of information offices; • Progress in digitization and access to online information, diversification and rapidity in accessing information sources from the legal field through the digital platforms, broadening the use of the electronic file; • Regulation of content and ways of communication through the guides drafted by SCM; • The existence of a body of elite professionals, who can become landmarks of ethics and morality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient training in the field of communication of those working in Information and PR Offices (BIRP) and as spokespersons; • Instability in office of spokespersons; • The over-technical language of the system; • The complexity of the system makes it difficult to implement unitary means of communication, standard procedures, and even standard visual identity; • Lack of coherent communication within the system from top to bottom, from SCM to the last court, at the level of the spokespersons; • Progress in communication is non-uniform; • The system has several communicators; • Reluctance to innovation in communication, minimal concern for attractiveness in communication; • Communication of each legal institution depends, to a large extent, on the attitude of the management.
Opportunities	Risks/Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the need for change across the institutions in the system on how communication is carried out; • Possibility to implement clear procedures and a management mechanism for the internal and external communication across the institutions; • Justice is an area of interest for many audience categories; it creates a facility for the delivery of messages; • Digitization creates the opportunity for an increased transparency: more access to information, rapidity in delivering the information, relieving staff in communication structures and those in the archive and registry departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of confidence for a large part of the population in the Romanian justice system • The limited legal culture of the population and of the litigants • Complexity and technical nature of the legal field; • Legal institutions do not have a niche audience, they address the general public; • Constraints of the legislation regulating free access to public information; • Discrepancies between the pace of justice and the pace of the media; • The interest of the media is more focused on aspects related to the

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

<p>of certain routine tasks. In the long run, digitization could further reduce response times in communication, resulting in increased satisfaction of litigants and petitioners;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The opportunity to develop a partnership between media representatives and legal institutions: professionalization of staff working in the field of communication; increasing legal education at the public level; professionalization of accredited journalists in the legal field; • Taking over good practice from EU member countries, through exchanges of experience between professionals in the system and implementing actions with already proven applicability 	<p>criminal field;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fake news
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The purpose of the Communication Strategy is to improve and develop the external means of communication of the system, aiming at increasing the transparency and the level of accessibility for the citizen/for citizens.

The guidelines considered in the elaboration of the Strategy are grouped on the following levels:

- **Establishing a communication framework, with measurable objectives and an action plan that can be adopted by the institutions within the system independently or in a coordinated way, for the purpose of a unitary public communication.** Its purpose is to move from a reactive communication to assuming a communication plan that supports the objectives of the institution and is in line with those established by the judicial system. The proposed measures take into account the realities of the system, exploiting the existing good practice, establishing at the level of each institution the priorities for action and the resources allocated for implementation.
- **Training actions, exchange of good practice and inter-institutional coordination** of spokespersons, as well as of the technical staff with role in communication from the institutions related to the system - public relations departments, registries, archives - for a unitary practice across the system.
- **Procedures for the most common situations** encountered in communication are detailed as "how to" sections and annexes, easy to use by the spokespersons, in addition to the Good Practice Guidelines.
- **Actions to inform and educate the general public** on the role of the institutions in the system, on how they work and the most common situations that citizens may face in relation to the Judiciary and the institutions involved, and which will be carried out in the promotion campaign within TAEJ or through micro-campaigns on topics identified as priority at the level of an institution.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **Establishing a monitoring methodology** for assessing progress and adjusting the course of action, by taking feedback and constantly measuring the results at system or institution level.

Together, all these will facilitate and streamline communication, both at the level of the Judiciary and within each institution that is part of it.

CHAPTER 2. Vision, values and principles

Diversity, understood as the multitude of points of view, skills, approaches or personal experiences specific to each person, which generate different perceptions of the same situation, defines today's complex society. The importance of a diversity of points of view is undeniable, both at the level of public institutions and in the private sector or in the society as a whole. A world without systems, however, would be hard to imagine.

The system represents, according to the definition, *a set of elements (principles, rules, forces, institutions), depending on each other, which form an organized whole*. Referring specifically to the Judiciary, we note that it has, by its nature, a number of features that can sometimes limit its freedom of action and increase the complexity of communication. However, the main theme that is reflected right from the definition stage is *the need for unity*, both as approach and as message.

The unity differs from standardization or leveling. It is a red thread, a common factor, easy to follow both by the body of professionals in the system, but also easy to perceive and assimilate by all categories of target audiences - from official communications to the press releases of the representatives of an institution, up to the activity carried out in the courtroom or the visual identity and layout of the presentation materials.

Such a unity-focused approach can only be successful if it is based on a clear vision, which includes both the brand that the Judiciary wants to shape and the specific communication actions through which this brand to be brought to the attention of target audiences. Thus, *the vision*, or promise made by the brand, drafted in general becomes an independent, modern, fair, transparent and accessible Judiciary for citizens, which meets effectively the needs of today's society.

In order for this vision to take shape, the Strategy was based on the Communication Audit, carried out in advance, as a barometer of the way in which the communication has taken place within the Romanian Judiciary. The audit emphasized the individual, even independent nature of the communication, but it could not determine the existence of a common strategy or of a set of principles with extended validity. On the contrary, the approach varied depending both on the profile of the institutions and on the nature of their activity (courts vs. prosecutor's offices, for example), as well as from institution to institution, according to the objectives assumed by the management and the human and material resources available. However, at the level of individual actions, there were identified the Communication Strategy of the Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM), completed in 2007, or the Communication Strategy of the Judicial Inspection (JI), drafted and implemented between 2016 and 2018, following the request from the external auditor. Last but not least, the Guidelines elaborated by the SCM on the relationship with the media, with the representatives of the other legal professions, but also the one dedicated to communication in online represent valuable tools, known and used by a large part of the professionals in the system.

From the point of view of the attention paid to communication activities, the central institutions, with coordinating role, have shown a constant concern, being more

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

exposed, compared to those in the territory, both to the requests coming from litigants and the general public, as well as to those coming from the media.

The need for a communication strategy to bring together all beneficiary institutions is also underlined by the Report of the European Network of Judicial Councils (ENCJ) on Public Trust and Image of Justice for 2017-2018. The ENCJ states that this strategy must take into account the singularities of the system and highlight the **fundamental values of justice: human attitude, independence, impartiality and professionalism**. At the same time, the Report states, **any communication from the system must be factual, transparent and objective** and the members of the system must be directly involved in its implementation, whether they are heads of institutions or spokespersons, whether they are judges, clerks or other professional categories.

This strategy aims to facilitate the transition from an institution-centered communication to a beneficiary-centered communication and to outline a flexible but well-defined framework, where the tools used today can still be used, pursuing the answer to three main questions:

- **How to communicate** (language);
- **What to communicate** (message);
- **How often to communicate** (consistency of communication)

The Strategy also encourages the transition from a predominantly written communication to a visual communication that humanizes the transmitter and captures effectively the attention of the target audience.

Based on the above benchmarks, the vision of communication constitutes the starting point in building a unitary approach.

2.1. The vision of communication

Unitarian, transparent, constant and easily accessible communication, made by all beneficiary institutions, exponents of the Romanian Judiciary, in order to inform and positively shape public perception, prevent crises and inspire a change of attitude, internally, using a set of principles of common relevance.

How do we apply this vision of communication in our daily work?

Step 1

A transition from reactive communication to proactive communication, which pursues several strategic objectives, based on a work plan, with action plans and measurable results

Step 2

A citizen-oriented communication, with illustrations and visual elements that are easy to understand, which reduces the level of complexity of the information and makes it explicit for everyone to understand (litigants, public).

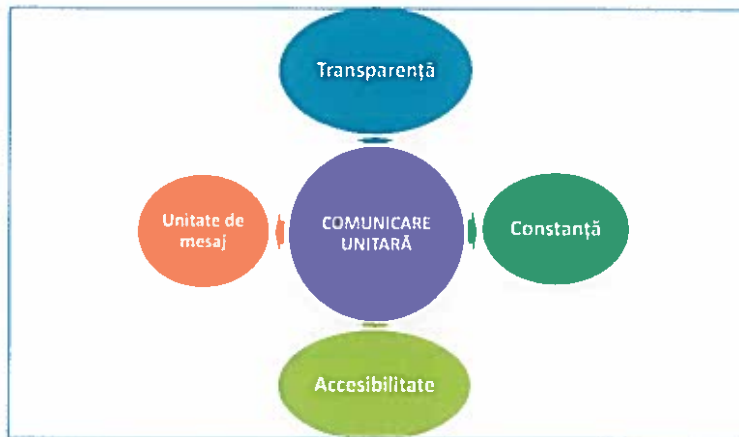
Step 3

A humanization of communication, made through people and for people, in order to increase the impact of the messages

Step 4

A constant communication, adapted to the audiences and to the information channels

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system



Transparency Message unity Unitary communication Uniformity Accessibility

Figure 1: The vision on communication in the Romanian judicial system

The unitary vision, correlated with the other landmarks and with the tools and tactics presented in the dedicated chapters, will contribute to the achievement of the following communication objectives:

On a short term: increasing the level of visibility and promoting the role of the institutions that make up the Judiciary, in relation to the citizen;

On a medium term: changing the manner of communication at the level of the judicial system, so that it can be defined by uniformity in the consistent delivery of key messages, leading to the creation of a favorable climate of opinion;

Long-term: strengthening the identity of judicial institutions and their values, in order to become known and accepted by all categories of target audiences and to gain trust in the Judiciary, respect for the law and credibility of the professional body, as major objectives of the communication exercise.

2.2. Values considered defining for the Romanian Judiciary

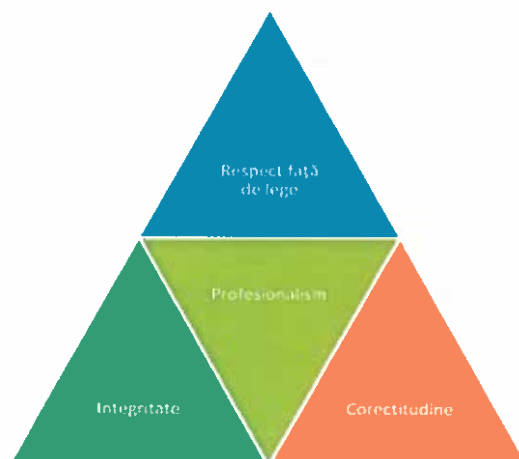
The set of values speaks about what it is really important, both for each of the beneficiary institutions and for the system as a whole.

At the international level, a landmark document is the Bangalore Set of Principles on Judicial Conduct, developed in 2002. It identifies 6 core values, namely: Independence; Impartiality; Integrity; Courtesy; Equality, Competence and Effort.

A present image, valid at national level, is outlined by the Communication Audit, the representatives of the system considering **Professionalism; Respect for the law; Correctness and Integrity** as guiding the activity throughout the system.

They will direct the entire approach and the selected communication actions, being reflected in all key messages.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system



Respect for the law Professionalism Integrity Accuracy

Figure 2: The set of values of the Romanian Judiciary, according to the Communication Audit

The valorization of the principles and their application will be done strategically, so that they would not constitute additional brakes in communication.

2.3. The purpose of communication in the Judiciary¹

In order to facilitate the adoption of uniform practices, the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) drafted, at the end of 2018, a Guide to communication with the media and the general public.

According to it, the communication in the Judiciary follows 8 main landmarks, as follows:

- To inform the target audience about the activity of the Judiciary;
- To emphasize the role of justice in society;
- To emphasize the independence of institutions, especially when it is challenged;
- To promote respect for judicial institutions and their representatives;
- To strengthen or restore citizens' faith in institutions;
- To adopt public positions, on topics of interest for justice and society, when circumstances justify such an action;
- To improve the level of understanding of legislation, at the level of the general public;
- To strengthen overall the image of justice.

The specific needs, existing at local level, are to be considered in addition to the European perspective. Thus, in addition to the aspects described above, the communication activities aim at:

- Increasing the level of understanding of basic legal notions, at the level of society;
- Educating the public about alternative procedures and solutions (for example mediation);
- Providing predictability, both in terms of interpretation of rules and regulations, and in terms of the type and frequency in delivering information

2.4. Fundamental principles of communication within the Judiciary

In order to successfully put across the communication vision, a common set of principles, relevant to the whole system, is also needed. These principles will be

¹ https://rm.coe.int/cepej-2018-15-en-communication-manual-with-media/16809025fe#_Toc524690289

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

taken into account at the level of all institutions within the system, as the base for building up the messages to the audiences.

- **The principle of transparency:** public information is provided in a complete, fair and timely manner by qualified persons.
- **The principle of promptness:** the beneficiary institutions will respond promptly to requests from the target audience categories they interact with and will react quickly to events from the external environment.
- **Consistency principle:** whenever requested, institutions will seek to provide those types of information that can be made public, while maintaining the same level of quality and promptness.
- **The principle of accessibility, with two complementary perspectives - language & accessibility**
 - *Accessibility in terms of language*, also discussed in Opinion no. 7/2005 of the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) on "justice and society": simple and clear judicial language is advantageous because it makes the rule of law accessible and predictable for citizens. This will avoid - if not necessary - Latin expressions or other wording difficult for the general public to understand.
 - *Accessibility in terms of access to information*, which involves both the implementation of efficient platforms and information systems (portals, websites, electronic displays, presentation materials, etc.), but also the education and information of the public, so that it have the ability to use them properly.

Why is it important to put across the principles in the communication activity?

The main motivation, as in the case of the Communication Strategy as a whole, is to establish generally applicable benchmarks, leading to a positive change in the perception of the main categories of audience on the Judiciary, given that, according to the Eurobarometer² published in July 2020 by the European Commission, Romania registered the largest decrease in trust in justice compared to 2016 (-14 percentage points), the independence of judges and courts being called into question.

In addition, the use of common principles contributes to streamlining the interaction between beneficiary institutions, as representatives of the system, on the one hand and the general public, through media representatives, on the other hand, journalists noting, as shown in the Survey on the public perception of litigants and legal professionals on the Judiciary (hereinafter referred to as the Survey), the fact that the legal system as a whole is difficult, "fragmented" and actions and communication or lack of communication generate mostly confusion and lack of trust, with reference to central institutions.

2.5. The 7 Cs of successful strategic communication

Another important landmark for giving substance to the strategy is given by the 7 Cs model, presented by Culip, Center and Broom. According to the authors, successful communication is based on:

- **Credibility:** the receiver's confidence in the competence and prestige of the sender;
- **Context:** the correlation between the messages of the communication plan and the realities in the environment;

²<https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/flash/surveyky/2258>

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **Content of messages:** the ability of messages to be relevant and in line with the values of the target audience;
- **Clarity:** the capacity of messages to present the ideas, themes, objectives and priorities of the Judiciary in a simple and accessible way;
- **Continuity and consistency:** the permanent and proactive nature of the messages, the consistent nature of the communication actions;
- **Channel:** use of relevant and current communication channels;
- **Consideration:** attention to the information needs of each category of target audiences (both for internal and external communication)

The 7Cs model is a practical and easy-to-apply tool that can be useful in the long run, especially for spokespersons and other people with communication responsibilities.

Thus, the Communication Strategy recommends a grid based on the 7Cs model, to be applied at the level of each institution in the system.

2.6. Regulations and barriers

Communication in the Judiciary is regulated by: Law 544 of 2001 on free access to information of public interest; The internal regulations of the institutions within the structure of the system; The communication guidelines developed by the SCM; Personal Data Protection Legislation (GDPR); Privacy and juvenile law.

The unitary approach requires for the spokespersons and the other persons with communication attributions at system level to demonstrate not only a good knowledge, but also a common interpretation of these regulations, so that they would no longer represent any "brakes".

The challenges faced by the spokespersons also have a significant impact on communication: insufficient professional training in communication, lack of continuity in the exercise of the office, different levels of experience and exposure or time allocated, but also the status of a secondary activity that communication has, in addition to the basic/main activity.

One-way communication and passivity are two other themes highlighted in both the Survey and the Communication Audit. Overall, a large part of the communication agenda is set by those outside the system (media, litigants, etc.), and the institutions of the legal system (through the Information and Public Relations Offices) are responsible for providing the requested information. It follows that, from the point of view of communication, the legal system is, for the most part, one without initiative, which does not set a communication agenda, has no communication targets, does not set a certain impact, a point accepted also by the spokespersons. Also, there are to be noted the technical language and the predilection for written communication as well as the need for some audiences to turn to specialists to "translate" the information, which is difficult to assimilate by litigants or the general public.

Last but not least, the Audit indicated that the limited performance of the communication activity achieved so far is also due to material and logistical deficiencies:

The current organizational structure hardly covers the real workload, and the lack of equipment and technologies (computers, internet connection, and specialized programs for making promotional materials) further complicates the mission of the spokespersons.

These barriers can be overcome more easily with supporting documents, such as the Communication Strategy, the Spokesperson's Manual and the Guidelines developed by the SCM, but also by developing training programs in the field of communication.

2.7. Priority action plans

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

The strategy aims to provide beneficiaries with a set of clear benchmarks and tools that can be replicated later and adapted to both the specifics of the institution and the particular situations that may be encountered in the daily practice, the result being a long-term orientation.

At the same time, based on the tools to be described in the dedicated chapters, the transition from a reactive communication, focused on providing information when requested, to a proactive communication, which explains the operation and activity of institutions, priority action plans, the results achieved and the benefits for the citizen, will be possible, contributing in a concrete way to improving the level of confidence in justice and educating the general public.

Whenever possible, the good practices encountered both at European level and in Romania will be applied at system level, such as, for example:

- Development of online communication and provision of practical information in the public space;
- The list of frequently asked questions and answers (FAQ), posted on the institutions' website;
- The fact-checking system, which simplifies communication with journalists, allowing them to promptly obtain a confirmation/invalidation of information;
- Simplification of the interaction among professionals in the system, by using messaging applications (WhatsApp) and organizing workshops and meetings.

The personification of communication is also encouraged, by designating a “voice” to be associated with the institution, but also by using channels that allow direct, immediate interaction, such as social networks or actions addressed to a specific target audience.

At the same time, the Strategy will take into account the priority action plans outlined by the Communication Audit, respectively:

- Creating a predictable communication framework that supports the unitary vision;
- Improving the activity of spokespersons and communication apparatus – Information and PR Offices, registry, archive - in relation to the target audiences;
- Intensifying the use of social networks in institutional communication;
- Development and use of a crisis communication manual;
- Accessibility of judicial language;
- Transfer of communication tools from the written area to the visual area;
- Improving direct, immediate communication through websites;
- Drafting presentation materials, preferably in audio-video format, to explain the routine aspects related to the interaction with the system;
- Encouraging magistrates who are spokespersons to participate in public speaking;
- Standardization of a branding identity and visual identity at the system level.

CHAPTER 3. Addressability and target audiences

Justice is a public service and an area of major importance for every citizen. Moreover, the communication activity of the Judiciary is also analyzed by international bodies, such as the European Union – its resulting effectiveness and perception being assessed through various Eurobarometers or surveys.

If by addressability we mean all the persons to whom the communication is channeled, we can say that, for the Judiciary, it can be classified as universal. However, the approach and perception significantly vary depending on the target

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

audience, so a thorough analysis is essential to correctly answer the question: what does the group expect from a communication perspective and what are the obstacles encountered?

It is also necessary to profile the target audiences, both at system level and for each institution, as a first step towards a better understanding of the characteristics that define them.

The main types of audience

Overview of the types of audience, common at the level of the Romanian Judiciary	
Internal audience	External audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central institutions: Superior Council of Magistracy; Public ministry; Judicial Inspection, National Institute of Magistracy; National School of Clerks; • Other central institutions: High Court of Cassation and Justice; Ministry of Justice; • Territorial institutions - courts; • Territorial institutions - prosecutor's offices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general public • Litigants • Representatives of the other legal professions and professional associations • Mass media (vector for transmitting information to all audience categories) • Representatives of civil society and the business environment • Institutional audience

Among the external audiences, the general public represents the most diverse, numerous and, implicitly, the most complex category. As stated in one of the documentary visits, made by the Consultant, "the court room reflects, on a small scale, the Romanian society", reflecting the multitude of more or less well-founded points of view and expectations. Regarding this type of audience, the Communication Strategy of the Superior Council of Magistracy of 2007 proposes the separation of the general public into two sub-types, namely the involved public, defined as all the persons who at some point have direct experience with any of the institutions that form the system, and the neutral audience defined as all the persons who did not have or do not have any direct experience with the system, but who receives opinions issued by other categories, through exposing them in the press.

At the time of elaboration of this Strategy, as sources of information for the neutral public we can mention the social networks, but also word-of-mouth, whether it is about opinions coming from the involved public or of other categories.

How does the perception of external audiences on the system evolve?

The link between the degree of exposure, the sources of information and the level of trust in the system is one of the closest.

If, for example, in the case of the institutional public, the interaction between the system, as sender of the message and the beneficiary is carried out in a standard way, having an official and formal nature, ordinary citizens tend to get information from the media or online platforms, waiting for a relevant content, applied and translated into accessible language, which puts additional pressure on the spokespersons or representatives of the institutions concerned.

Another element to consider is the degree of exposure - the constant interaction with the system and the direct knowledge of the manner of working will bring the image as close as possible to reality.

On the other hand, a mediated, sporadic and media-influenced interaction can make the image of the system more fluid and sometimes more distant from reality.

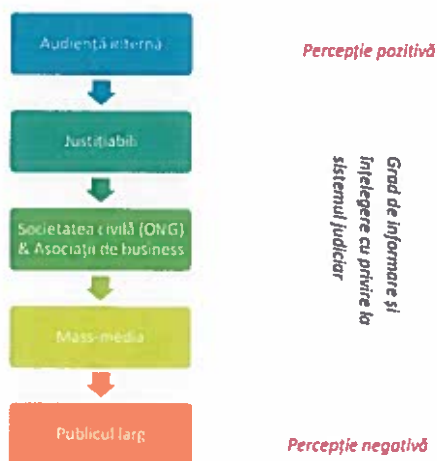
The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Thus, according to the conclusions of the Survey, the members of the system are the group with the highest level of trust, their perception resulting mainly from direct experience and from the reality of the daily activity.

The trust of litigants in the system varies depending on the nature of the interaction with justice, which, on a case-by-case basis, may lead to an improved perception against the initial expectations or, conversely, may confirm the negative image or even further damage it. Also, in the case of litigants, an affective component is distinguished - by the very nature of the activity, which gives satisfaction to a party, an unfavorable answer or sentence can lead, through generalization, to a negative image projected to the whole system.

The perception of the media representatives is made up mainly of the relationship established with the spokespersons, with the public information offices, but also by participating in court hearings, accessing the statements of reasons and other means of information.

Last but not least, the perception of the general public is influenced by the media and may vary depending on the media channels that those citizens trust the most.



Internal audience Litigants Civil society (NGO) & Business Associates Media General public Positive perception Degree of information and understanding regarding the judicial system Negative perception

Figure 3: Evolution of perception on the Judiciary, depending on the degree of understanding and information of the main types of audiences (according to the Survey)

In terms of information conduct, there are a number of elements common to all categories of target audience, the interest in the activity of the system determining the access of channels with a rather specialized content.

The young segment tends to get information online, by accessing websites and institutional pages on social networks, while the middle-aged or older public prefers information from the media.

Audience	Information sources
General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mass-media (TV, radio); • Social networks; • Online platforms (websites)
Litigants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online platforms belonging to the institutions of interest (websites, portals, specialized channels);

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word-of-mouth; • Representatives of the legal professions
Representatives of civil society and of business associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct interaction with spokespersons/ representatives of the Judiciary; • Online platforms; • Representatives of the legal professions; • Other sources
Journalists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct interaction with spokespersons / representatives of the Judiciary; • Online platforms; • Social networks; • Other sources of documentation
Institutional public (professionals in the system)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official communications; • Direct interaction with spokespersons / representatives of the Judiciary; • Online platforms; • Social networks; • Media (TV, radio)

Figure 4: Information behavior of the main types of audience (according to the Survey)

Audiences, particularities and expectations

Effective communication is not limited to providing information, but specifically covers the needs and expectations of the person or target group. The documentation stage, together with the Survey and the Communication Audit, allowed the shaping of an overview and detail image regarding the specifics, practices and expectations of each type of audience identified.

The table below follows 3 main directions:

- To whom is the communication addressed?
- What is the main obstacle?
- What should be improved?

At the same time, the analysis is a starting point for outlining specific objectives, key messages and the action plan, so that it contributes in a concrete way to achieving the assumed goal: an improved perception of the Romanian Judiciary.

TO WHOM IS THE COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED?		WHAT IS THE MAIN OBSTACLE?		WHAT SHOULD BE IMPROVED?
Type of audience	Description of audience	SWOT	Peculiarities of communication	Expectations
Internal	Central and territorial institutions, part of the Judiciary, other representatives of legal institutions	<p>Strengths: positive perception of the system, due to direct experience and good understanding</p> <p>Weaknesses: complexity of system and institutions, bureaucratization; lack of cWare infrastructure to facilitate communication;</p> <p>Opportunities: the desire to contribute to openness and transparency, in terms of communication;</p> <p>Vulnerabilities: limited possibilities for interaction / exchange of opinions and good practices; reluctance to seek advice or help from colleagues in other institutions.</p>	<p>Most of the time, the communication is punctual and formal, according to the rules in force and the specifics of the activity of each institution.</p> <p>There is a practice of organizing internal professional events, intended for the professional representatives of the institutions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactivity; • Transparency; • Unified approach; • Solidary attitude; • Interactivity and cooperation opportunities; • Mutual respect and recognition of merit.
External	Institutional public (institutions with legislative and executive power, central and local public authorities)	<p>Strengths: positive perception of the system, due to direct experience and good understanding, professionalism;</p> <p>Weaknesses: complexity of the system and institutions; bureaucratization;</p>	<p>Communication is punctual and formal, according to the norms in force and the specifics of the activity of each institution;</p> <p>From the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactivity and transparency; • Openness to dialogue, when the situation is such.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

External	People preparing for a career in the Judiciary (within NIM and NSC)	Direct	<p>Opportunities: the desire to contribute to openness and transparency of the system, in terms of communication; Vulnerabilities: diversity of views and non-unitary approach.</p> <p>Strengths: positive perception due to direct experience, the existence of a well-established formal and informal communication flow; connection to European bodies; enthusiasm and initiative. Weaknesses: system complexity; niche dictated by the nature of the activity Opportunities: digitization; collaboration with the representatives of the other legal professions and with the civil society, for the development of common projects, diversification of communication channels. Vulnerabilities: insufficient promotion of the role of the two institutions and the importance of the professions of magistrate and clerk.</p> <p>Strengths: the interest of</p>	<p>perspective of the presence in the public space debate, the Judiciary is the least visible, compared to the legislative and executive power.</p> <p>External communication is mainly aimed at the students of the law faculties from Romania; Also, for the activity of continuous training (NIM), communication can also be for magistrates in office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactivity; • Interactivity and cooperation opportunities; • Diversified communication channels & digitization.
External	Litigants	Direct	<p>Strengths: the interest of</p>	The interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility,

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

			litigants in the communication coming from the system; Weaknesses: different expectations; lack of a basic legal culture; the subjectivism of litigants in the way they perceive the system; system complexity and bureaucratization Opportunities: the desire to contribute to openness and transparency of the system, in terms of communication. Vulnerabilities: lack of human and material resources to make communication more efficient; non-unitary practices (for example, center vs. territory)	includes both written communication and oral or non-verbal communication. The perception of the system is dictated by personal experiences	both in language and communication channels; • Empathy and attention; • Mutual respect.
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TO WHOM IS THE COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED?		WHAT IS THE MAIN OBSTACLE?		WHAT SHOULD BE IMPROVED?
Type of audience	Description of audience	SWOT	Peculiarities of communication	Expectations
External	Representatives of other legal professions (lawyers, experts, officers of the court, mediators, etc.)	Strengths: set of common values and benchmarks regarding the quality and efficiency of the activity; direct experience and good understanding of how the	The interaction includes both written communication and oral or non-verbal communication. There is a formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness to dialogue; • Unified approach; • Transparency; • Respect

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

External	Institutions with which the system collaborates, for the accomplishment of the act of justice	Direct	<p>system works; Weaknesses: communication barriers, especially in the courtroom; bureaucratization; fragmented understanding of the role of each party; Opportunities: desire to streamline communication; Vulnerabilities: the transfer of responsibility to the other party (for example, the need to educate the general public about the specialized language / complexity of the act of justice).</p> <p>Strengths: set of common values and benchmarks regarding the quality and efficiency of the activity; direct experience and good understanding of how the system works; Weaknesses: bureaucratization and complexity of the system; Opportunities: desire to streamline communication; Vulnerabilities: potentially different interpretation of regulations, slow reaction speed in terms of communication; adopting a unitary communication strategy at the level of the Judiciary and</p>	and an informal communication (inside the institution or outside the institutional space).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactivity; • Transparency; • Cooperation and mutual respect;
			Communication is punctual and formal, according to the norms in force and the specifics of the activity of each institution.		

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

External	General public	Mediated	<p>defining benchmarks to guide the communication activity; Vulnerabilities: secondary activity status of communication; reduced communication skills of staff; the diversity of points of view, which makes it difficult to communicate "in one voice"; the individual communication activities of the professionals in the system</p> <p>Strengths: the general public's interest in the information coming from the system, when presented accessible. Weaknesses: different expectations; lack of a basic legal culture; one-way communication from the system. Opportunities: increase the level of openness and transparency of institutions; diversification of communication channels; the possibility to extend, at national level, the good practice developed locally or encountered in the work of EU counterparts. Vulnerabilities: inadequate understanding of the communication made by institutions or professionals in</p>	<p>Communication is mediated, media and social networks representing the main sources of information;</p> <p>In the absence of direct experience, the perception of the system is influenced by the way in which media presents a particular topic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility, both in language and communication channels; • Applicability - practical information that can be used in specific situations; • Transparency and impartiality; • Taking on the role of educator by the system.
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The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

				the Judiciary, possibly to be interpreted by the general public as lack of transparency / subjectivism / lack of empathy / arrogance; ambiguity regarding what can and what cannot be communicated & in what context (i.e. statements in one's own name, made on social networks by people inside the system)	
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TO WHOM IS THE COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED?		WHAT IS THE MAIN OBSTACLE?		WHAT SHOULD BE IMPROVED?
Type of audience	Description of audience	SWOT	Peculiarities of communication	Expectations
External	Civil society and the business community	<p>Strengths: the desire for transparent and improved cooperation and communication;</p> <p>Weaknesses: bureaucratization, system complexity, passivity in terms of initiatives and communication;</p> <p>Opportunities: identifying collaboration opportunities; developing projects for the benefit of civil society and the business community;</p> <p>Vulnerabilities: lack of human and material resources to make</p>	<p>The interaction includes both written communication and oral or non-verbal communication.</p> <p>The initiative to develop joint projects belongs, in most cases, to the representatives of NGOs or business organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openness to dialogue and cooperation opportunities; • Proactivity

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

External	Media	Direct	<p>communication more efficient; the status of secondary activity of communication.</p> <p>Strengths: interest in communication from the system; Weaknesses: different expectations; the complexity of the system understood as a lack of transparency, the obligation to reserve and the legislative restrictions that require the provision of a relatively small volume of information; reactive attitude of spokespersons / representatives of institutions, limited human resources (small number of journalists). Opportunities: the desire to contribute to the openness and transparency of the system, in terms of communication; intensifying the professional training of spokespersons,</p>	<p>The media is the main vector for transmitting information from the system to the general public;</p> <p>Communication with the media is done using a variety of tools: press release, press conference, interview, synchronous</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactivity; • Transparency; • Openness for dialogue; • Consistency in the spreading of information and its type.
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The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

CHAPTER 4. Strategic objectives and tactical communication objectives

The role of the communication strategy is to help ensure greater transparency and integrity at the level of the Judiciary, in order to improve access to and quality of the services provided. In short, **prestige and trust in justice**.

How can the vision be translated, through communication actions, taking into account the conclusions drawn from the documentation phase? Through a set of strategic (long-term) and tactical (short-term) communication objectives, formulated in full accordance with the profile of the beneficiary institutions, but also with the particularities of the target audience categories, as they were described in the previous chapter.

The objectives represent the core of the entire planning and they will substantiate the future messages, tactics and tools, but also the resources needed for their implementation.

Preconditions: factors that influence the degree of achievement of the objectives

Defining a set of strategic and tactical objectives - for the Judiciary as a whole, but also for each beneficiary institution - is a first step in implementing the Communication Strategy. Subsequently, for these objectives to be met, it is important to consider a number of points such as:

- **Understanding the need and existence of consensus in the implementation of a unitary communication policy, at the level of the entire Judiciary:** improving the way communication is carried out depends on each institution and on each professional with responsibilities in the field of communication;
- **Prioritizing communication within the activity of the Office of Information and Public Relations and spokesperson,** so that this is no longer a secondary concern, achieved in the short time left free, after the trial activity;
- **Partial relief of the spokespersons and other people in charge of the communication activity or the implementation of the necessary steps for the extension / adjustment of the organizational structure and the recognition of their effort;**
- **Starting projects or initiatives to ensure the access of system communicators to equipment and other material resources necessary for the communication activity:** new generation laptops with integrated video camera and microphone; new generation mobile phones; tripod for filming; screens for the dissemination of information materials, intended for the public, printing of communication materials, business cards for spokespersons;
- **The concern for continuous professional training in communication,** so that all professionals with a role in communication and those from technical - e.g. experts within The Information and PR Office to have access to practical information to apply in a unitary way;
- **Working with the factors involved in increasing the level of information and improving the legal culture at the level of the general public, such as the Ministry of Education, media, NGOs, others.**

4.1. Communication objectives at the level of the entire system:

4.1.a. **The overall strategic objective,** relevant for all parties involved, is to **increase the level of trust in the Judiciary and institutions of the other professions, the media and the general public.** Achieving this objective should not be a one-time communication effort, for a well-defined period of time, but rather a goal adopted by all members of the system. Although they may seem isolated

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

episodes, or actions of minor importance, with a limited audience, it must be borne in mind that any communication from the beneficiary institutions contributes directly to the construction of the overall picture.

Internal factors that contribute to achieving the general strategic objective:

- The correct understanding of the importance of communication in shaping the perception of the Judiciary, especially in those categories of public where there is no direct experience;
- The desire of the professionals in the system to adopt a unitary and open attitude regarding communication;
- The level of training of spokespersons clerks but also of the staff within the registries and archives in the field of communication, these being the ones that currently interact with the public;
- Human and material resources that can be used in the communication activity;
- Ability to collect and present positive information, good practices and successful examples existing in the system, allowing a balanced image of justice

4.1.b. General tactical objectives:

- Improving knowledge in the field of communication and strengthening institutional capacities to increase public confidence in justice and correct its perception of the system;
- Strengthening the relationship with the media, for the benefit of each institution, but also of the Judiciary as a whole;
- Improving the quality of the communication activity, by adopting a proactive approach and implementing a two-way model, to allow external audiences to provide structured feedback;
- Improving the level of judicial education mainly among litigants, but also at the level of society.

4.2. Communication objectives specific to beneficiary institutions:

Superior Council of Magistracy:

- Improving the collaboration with the institutions from the territory, in order to send a unitary message;
- Correct and complete information of the citizens regarding the activity of the Council and of the Judiciary, in a broad sense;
- Strengthening the relationship with media representatives and streamlining the flow of communication;
- Positioning the Council as a central benchmark in the system and as a guarantor of the independence of the Judiciary

Judicial Inspection:

- Correct and prompt information of citizens about the activity of the institution;
- Strengthening the relationship with media representatives and streamlining the flow of communication;
- Diversifying the communication channels with the specific audiences or updating them

National Institute of Magistracy:

- Positioning the Institute as a training school and promoting its activity;
- Diversifying the communication channels with the specific audiences, with an emphasis on digitalization.

National School of Clerks:

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- Positioning as a training school and promoting the activity and professional opportunities offered;
- Diversifying communication channels with the specific audiences or updating them.

Public ministry:

- Promoting the constitutional role of the Public Ministry to represent, in the judicial activity, the general interests of the society and to defend the rule of law, as well as the rights and freedoms of citizens;
- Correct and complete information of citizens about the activity of prosecutor's offices;
- Strengthening the relationship with media representatives and streamlining the flow of communication.

CHAPTER 5. Key messages

Professional practice puts communication specialists in extremely diverse positions, because each situation comes with its own set of features and challenges. Along with field-specific regulations, key messages are the common denominator - they must emerge from every communication action and be perceived exactly by those to whom they are addressed. A simple story, well-founded and strong enough to cause a change in perception or behavior.

In other words:

- What do we want to communicate?
- What are the arguments?
- What should the audience do?

The architecture of key messages begins with the Slogan, the core of the entire communication, understood as the generally valid promise that the system makes to that target group, as a whole, through each beneficiary institution. The slogan speaks about the guarantee of the independence of the Judiciary, fundamental power in a democratic system and, implicitly, about equality before the law, for each individual citizen. In support of the slogan are the values and keywords, those terms considered indispensable for the speech, since they make it easy to identify. The narrative is the story that is meant to be told through that message, defined by a few words, simple and relevant to the audience. From this narrative the messages will derive, backed by arguments and, subsequently, the activities through which these messages will be made known.

A. Slogan (<i>Promise made by the system, through each beneficiary institution</i>)				
B. Differentiators (keywords)				
C. Narrative <i>The story to be told by that message, defined in simple words, relevant to the audience</i>				
D. The 5 layers of the message (key elements for each level)				
1. Belief <i>Starting point</i>	2. The challenge <i>Reality to be considered / limitations, reservations or existing preconceptions</i>	3. The model <i>The way we acted / what we do differently, what we set out</i>	4. The results <i>The concrete benefit that we seek to bring through that action</i>	5. The impact <i>What motivates us to do this and what is the next step</i>
E. Strategic arguments: figures, data, success stories, relevant examples				

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

(maximum 3 arguments for each key message)

F. Concrete actions for communicating messages

Activities through which the messages thus drafted will be brought to attention of the target audience groups

What do we want to communicate?

In order to be credible and effective, external communication must reflect existing internal benchmarks. As shown in the Communication Audit, the key messages drafted by each of the beneficiary institutions, but also the communication at system level, as a whole, should include:

- Elements that humanize the system: empathy, messages of closeness
- Elements that reflect the useful value of justice in society: settlement, arbitration, equity
- Elements relating to the purpose of justice: truth, justice, commitment of justice, fairness, non-discrimination, justness
- Elements that demonstrate the transparency, openness and accessibility of the system;
- Elements that emphasize the fact that the activity is carried out in the interest of the citizen - justice as a public service;
- Elements that emphasize the quality of the body of professionals - competence, professionalism.

The design of the messages will thus follow three main levels, to be also found in the information and awareness campaign carried out by the Superior Council of Magistracy:

- Transparency and accessibility of communication: communication of information in a way that is easy for the citizen to understand;
- Humanizing the system, both by how the information is presented and by associating "figures" and images;
- Rigor within the system: for example, magistrates are the ones who apply the law, not the ones who draft it; communication limitations; objectivity and the set of rules on which the activity of magistrates is based (factual truth and that of evidence).

It is important to emphasize that a key message will include only those elements considered to be the most appropriate for that communication. Their use will be staggered, depending on the purpose, but also on the target audience.

The key messages will also follow a clear structure, in which technical information is accompanied by clarifications for the general public, for the benefits or elements of interest to citizens to be easily identified and assimilated.

Examples of key messages valid for the entire Judiciary:

- *Equal before the law*: regardless of the role we have in society, each of us obeys the rigors of the law and is responsible for his/her actions;
- *Justice provides the balance of society*: the activity of the Judiciary restores order within the communities and society as a whole;
- *Justice is at the service of the citizen*: a public service, which aims to ensure respect for civil rights and freedoms;
- *Every citizen has the right to justice*: whatever the social status, material resources or degree of education, any person can address the court to settle a conflict;
- *We act independently, for justice*: as magistrates we treat each case equally, and we make correct decisions, according to the legal provisions;

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- *Independence of the Judiciary, the essence of a modern society:* the correct and independent knowledge and application of the law by judges and prosecutors contributes to the progress of society as a whole

Examples of key messages given by the Judiciary in relation to each type of audience:

For the general public: We fairly judge each case;

For litigants: In your service;

For representatives of other legal professions: Collaboration and mutual respect;

For the media: Partners for the correct information and education of citizens;

For civil society: Your involvement matters;

For the domestic public: Together we build justice

Keywords validated in the workshops, which can serve as a starting point in drafting messages: independence; respect; empathy; obedience; knowledge; balance; justice as a public service; the citizen as the beneficiary.

Key Message Checklist:

Step 1

Does the message fit into the unitary vision undertaken at system level?

Step 2

Does it reflect the values and principles undertaken?

Step 3

Does it contribute to achieving the undertaken communication objectives?

Step 4

Does it take into account the particularities of the audience to which it is addressed?

Step 5

Is it easy to understand and drafted in an accessible language?

CHAPTER 6. Communication strategies and tactics

Information is everywhere, and people want to be informed. The opportunities brought by the new technologies, along with the traditional means of communication have taken access to information to new heights. According to a study carried out in 2011 at the University of Southern California, an average person is exposed, every day, to a volume of information equivalent to 174 newspapers, 5 times more than in 1986³. And yet, the availability, at the theoretical level, is not enough. It must be structured according to clear guidelines, which take into account the objectives of the sender of the message, but also the expectations, needs and the processing capacity specific to the receiver.

General framework and regulatory rules

Beyond its role in society and the prestige of the body of professionals and of the institutions it integrates, the Judiciary must also show an increased concern for communication. From the layout of the web page, to the content of the press releases and discussions held in the courtroom, each component contributes to the formation of the image of the whole.

Indeed, the presentation in public of information relating to professional activity may, to a certain extent, constitute a form of exposure. The lack of **transparency**, however, has an even more pronounced negative impact and can be interpreted as self-sufficiency or, in extreme cases, as an attempt to cover up less functional situations and events. At the same time, **a collective and genuine effort** is needed.

The communication activity in the Judiciary is regulated, as we showed in Chapter 2.6, both from the legislative point of view and from the point of view of the codes of

³ <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/332/6025/60>

conduct developed at national and international level. These elements, designed to simplify and clarify the responsibilities of spokespersons and information professionals can become, in some contexts, an important barrier.

At the same time, the participants in the Audit pointed out that the Guidelines developed so far by the Board, fail to cover all situations that may be encountered in professional practice, so there is a need for training sessions focused on specific situations, for magistrates, staff from the registry and archives - permanently exposed to the interaction with the public, but also for experts from the Information and Public Relations Offices, who have the status of civil servants.

This chapter describes the platforms and tools used to relate to each audience and it includes a number of recommendations for improving communication activity at that level. The concrete measures, proposed for the implementation of these recommendations, will be detailed in the section dedicated to the communication plan.

6.1. Communication recommendations for spokespersons, BIRP (Information and Public Relations Office), Archive and Registry

The spokesperson, together with the specialists from the Information and Public Relations Offices, Archives and registries are the main interface of the Judiciary, in relation to litigants and the general public. In particular, however, their professional attributions are not limited to the communication activity, but include many other aspects of a technical or administrative nature.

From the point of view of organization, the Information and Public Relations Offices have a different composition depending on the type of institution or the hierarchical level, but also on the scope of the communication activity. Thus, the Courts of Appeal must have a judge who is the spokesperson, a counselor who is a civil servant / expert within the Information and PR Office and, depending on the needs, one or more clerks. For courts, the structure comes most often down to a judge / spokesperson and a counselor, and for the small courts the communication is made only by the spokesperson.

A similar situation is observed in the case of Prosecutor's Offices, where institutions such as the National Anticorruption Directorate (NAD), the Directorate for the Investigation of Organized Crime and Terrorism (DIOCT) or the Prosecutor's Office attached to the High Court of Cassation and Justice (POHCCJ) have a complex communication structure, while for the rest of the institutions the structure is simpler: usually the prosecutor-spokesperson takes care of the relationship with the media, and the clerk of petitions and written requests.

The role of Information and Public Relations Offices and spokespersons is a complex one - from implementing the strategy and choosing the right communication tactics, to direct interaction with the public and to monitoring and preparing activity reports.

Recommendations in the field of communication, for experts from the Information and Public Relations Offices:

- **Proactive definition of a framework:** the topics of interest to be communicated by the institution, during a certain interval (for example, one year); establishing the most effective ways to communicate with litigants and the media;
- **Copywriting and regular updating** of information related to the activity of the institution, both in hardcopy (posters, flyers, informative texts / videos and screen announcements) and online (frequently asked questions, announcements and press releases published on the website, communication through social media);

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **Periodic monitoring of the communication activity**, through qualitative and quantitative analysis of the media coverage of the institution and its representatives, petitions and recurrent requests for information, in order to identify issues that can be improved and validate those that work;
- **Providing support for the extension and standardization of communication channels and the type of information presented**, by setting up an institutional page on social networks and updating it frequently with information of interest: changes in the operating program; improvements / investments made within the institution; actions or events that the institution organizes or supports; Standardization of contact data (coordinates of the Information and PR Office, registry, archive) and information of interest to the citizen (information brochures) available on the website;
- **Adopting an attitude of calm, openness to dialogue, transparency and promptness**, in relation to citizens requesting information;
- **Accessibility of legal language**, so that the information provided can be easily and correctly understood by citizens;
- **Development, at the level of the institution, of a mechanism for processing the feedback** from the public, through questionnaires or contact forms displayed on websites or on the pages of social networks;
- **Strengthening training in communication**, by participating in trainings and seminars dedicated to professionals in the Judiciary, by exchanging good practices, analyzing honest feedback and individual study.

Communication recommendations for archivists, registrars and other clerks involved in public interaction

- **Supporting the information activity of the litigants**, by elaborating and / or displaying informative materials to facilitate the orientation in the institution or to explain the procedural aspects;
- **Adopting an attitude of calm, openness to dialogue, transparency and promptness**, in relation to citizens requesting information;
- **Accessibility of legal language**, so that the information provided can be easily and correctly understood by citizens;
- **Strengthening training in communication**, by participating in trainings and seminars dedicated to professionals in the Judiciary, by exchanging good practices and by analyzing honest feedback;
- **Efficient organization of the activity**, so that waiting times are reduced, in interaction with the public and litigants.

6.2. The spokesperson

In accordance with art. 16 of Law no. 544/2001 on free access to information of public interest, "(...) public authorities and institutions have the obligation to appoint a spokesperson, usually from the information and public relations departments".

Appointing a spokesperson for an institution can be both an opportunity and a challenge:

- The spokesperson represents the institution externally, in communication activities, in interviews and at conferences.
- The spokesperson should use pre-selected goals and key information, feedback from target audiences, the course of events and media coverage to shape the message.
- The spokesperson can be considered the "figure" of the institution. The audience, regardless of its type, will always be more willing to accept

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

messages coming from an institution that has a "figure", instead of unacknowledged, generic messages, delivered in the form of templates or in a technical language, difficult to decipher.

- The spokesperson is directly subordinated to the head of the institution.

Therefore, in order to be able to carry out his/her activity successfully, it is important for the spokesperson:

- To know very well the organization and functioning of the institution he/she represents, the activity and the specifics of each department of the institution;
- To have the capacity and capability to present in an accessible way the information about the activity of the institution, to have the capacity to "translate" to everyone's understanding the technical, legal language and / or the professional jargon specific to the field of activity;
- To be able to understand and sometimes anticipate the expectations of the media representatives and the consequences of the given statements, so as to structure his/her answers effectively;
- To answer correctly, completely, clearly and firmly the questions of the media representatives, which requires a thorough documentation and mastery of the field of activity of the institution (erroneous or incomplete information is likely to give rise to a feeling of frustration and hostility among journalists creating a negative public opinion. A hesitant tone or evasive responses can allow speculative, distorted and even tendentious exploitation of the message);
- To refrain from no comment reactions. If the spokesperson does not have all the information to formulate an answer to a question, it is much more appropriate to acknowledge this sincerely, stating immediately that the desired answer will be documented and provided as soon as possible; at the same time, if a question cannot be answered objectively, as there is a prohibition on providing information and personal data covered by law, it is recommended to explain that he/she does not have the right to answer the question and to refer to legal texts that prohibit the formulation of a public answer;
- Not to communicate information that can be assimilated or equivalent to pre-pronouncement in cases subject to media attention, taking into account the principle of presumption of innocence, or to express personal opinions, regardless of whether they could be confirmed later;
- Not to get into controversy with journalists, to keep his/her balance, calm, attention, patience and availability and not to be "offended" by questions no matter how difficult, erroneous, tendentious or uncomfortable they may prove;
- To coordinate the activity of drafting press files (kits), press releases, press statements, all materials intended for the press, issued by the institution;
- To "pass beyond the glass" of the TV, not to have speech defects, to have a pleasant presence that inspires confidence, balance and calm, to pay attention to his/her own image (clothing, accessories, hairstyle, etc.), taking into account that psychologically, the receiver is tempted to equate the spokespersons image with the image of the institution he/she represents, to have a pleasant voice (not to "scratch the speakers with his/her voice"), balanced intonation and clear diction, to control his/her facial expressions and gestures - put in the service of emphasizing the ideas from the delivered messages - to have presence of mind, to master the track and to know how to create a relationship of good collaboration, equally, with all the representatives of the media institutions;

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- To show willingness to provide media representatives with the requested up-to-date information, even outside of working hours. He/she must also have the capacity to imprint a responsible and self-respecting relationship with them to limit the tendency to be requested outside working hours to provide non-urgent information or information that can be obtained by simply consulting the official website of the institution, statistical data or information requiring laborious documentation, which cannot be carried out without the support of the specialized departments of the institution. It is recommended that in discussions with media representatives, they be instructed to send such requests by e-mail, due to be settled as a matter of urgency during the next day's working hours. A news story based on rumors or assumptions, which appears due to the impossibility of contacting the spokesperson or because he/she refuses to express his/her opinion on the grounds that "he/she is out of working hours" will have a negative echo in the perception of public opinion. Even if the spokesperson later sends a "right of reply" or clarifications, they usually go unnoticed because the recipient, the "beneficiary" of the information has already formed an opinion and does not agree to be contradicted. The spokesperson is obliged to take into account the reality that the first impression counts, only the initial information is remembered and shapes the beliefs of the receiver. Therefore, it is important to provide the information when requested, if it is related to a current event.

Therefore, a spokesperson must always show:

- Professionalism
- Confidence
- Competence
- Authority
- Transparency and openness to dialogue

And to be guided by the unitary vision assumed in terms of communication:

- Messages are consistent and coherent to prevent controversial statements
- A single "figure" makes well-constructed statements and approved in advance by the hierarchical superiors / leaders of the institution

The conclusions of the Audit are recorded in the same vein, according to which the spokesperson is the main person responsible for the "humanization" of the message coming from the legal system. In addition, the information he/she provides must be current and not limited to what is happening in the institution he/she represents. Thus, it is necessary to undertake the role of leader in communication and trainer - educator of the general public, identifying and bringing in the public space topics of interest, specific to the Judiciary.

In order to lay the foundations of a good cooperation relationship with counterparts from the other institutions, but also with journalists, it is recommended that the spokespersons go through several steps, at the time of appointment. These will contribute to diminishing the impact of taking on a new professional responsibility, generating a predictable framework for carrying out the activity.

There are no "good" communicators and "bad" communicators. There are only experienced communicators and inexperienced communicators.

Notes: The basic rules for the spokesperson's relationship with the media are detailed in Annex 1.

The steps to be followed by the spokesperson, at the time of appointment, are detailed in Annex 2.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

6.3. Communication strategies and tactics within the Judiciary

At inter-institutional level, but also within the institutions that make up the Judiciary, communication has, most of the time, a formal and sporadic nature, being made in writing, in the form of communications, requests, notifications, official letters. To these is added an informal communication, made either in writing (by e-mail or messaging applications) or verbally (in person or by telephone).

From the point of view of the structure, there is a horizontal communication between the institutions at the same hierarchical or inter-departmental level, when it comes to the same institution, and a vertical communication, between the institutions at different hierarchical level or between different departments of a single institution.

According to the Communication Audit, at the time of the research a certain reluctance regarding informal communication was observed. Specifically, requesting additional information or exchanging views on a particular topic, especially between local and central professionals, has not been described as a common practice, with many preferring to manage situations "on their own". There are also a limited number of opportunities for people with communication responsibilities in different institutions to meet to discuss topics of common interest or share good practice.

Within the institution, communication takes place according to a well-defined flow. The information is processed by the Spokesperson, who decides what is to be communicated or not and is finally approved by the head of the institution.

The image of the system in the local and central press is captured by the press monitoring received by the Council, which is forwarded to the other central institutions.

Tactics for improving communication within the Judiciary:

- **Dialogue**, to ensure the exchange of good practices and unitary practice: Periodic (1/year) events dedicated to professionals in the system, with communication responsibilities, to present current topics, case studies, good practices from Romania or at European level;
- **Continuous education**: Periodic (1/year) professional training sessions on communication for magistrates, clerks, archivists and staff from the Information and PR Office;
- **Figures and results**: Regular communication of the action plans from central institutions to institutions in the territory, where possible, in order to increase the level of trust in representation and encourage unitary practice.

Communication between central institutions: SCM, PM, JI

The three central institutions - the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Public Ministry and the Judicial Inspection have, in essence, distinct attributions, expressly provided by law, fulfilled in different ways. They represent balanced structures in the Judiciary and contribute, through their activity, to achieving a quality act of justice.

Thus, the communication between the SCM, PM and JI has an official nature, made in writing, but also a personal one, in which the spokespersons are involved in achieving an exchange of good practices or consult on the correct solution of a specific issue, encountered in professional activity.

Given their role of representation and guidance (for SCM and PM), respectively of analyzing the conduct of judges and prosecutors (for JI), with national impact, it is important that there is a constant, transparent communication between the three, based on mutual respect.

Communication tactics:

- Ensuring a continuous inter-institutional dialogue, in particular between spokespersons in the context of this unitary communication strategy, in order

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

to identify topics of interest, provide the exchange of good practices and identify common procedures or solutions. This approach will provide uniform communication both with local and external institutions and will help increase the level of trust in the Judiciary.

- Implementing of a good practice mechanism through which the Superior Council of Magistracy can take over certain information or topics identified by the Public Ministry and the Judicial Inspection as being of wide interest and their explanation or correction, as appropriate, in relation to professionals in the system or with the other categories of target audience.

Communication with the institutions coordinated by the SCM: the National Institute of Magistracy and the National School of Clerks

The relationship between the central institutions - the Superior Council of Magistracy, the Judicial Inspection and the Public Ministry - and the National Institute of Magistracy is based on two dimensions. On the one hand, we are talking about the educational component, NIM being involved in the initial training and then in the long-term professional development of magistrates. At the same time, it is collaboration on issues of common interest, such as opinions on the curriculum, approval of the Institute's training programs, access to training sessions, joint projects or other topics that require the definition of a common point of view.

Similar levels are noticeable also in the relationship with the National School of Clerks, the latter being involved in the training of clerks - a body of professionals with a fundamental role for the smooth running of justice.

Communication tactics:

- Regular meetings between the SCM, NIM and NSC together with the institutions in the system, for the harmonization of communication, good practices and proposals for inter-institutional coordination, in order to respond effectively to the identified needs;
- Development of a feedback mechanism to allow the integration of observations related to the training of future magistrates and clerks, honestly and in line with the realities and expectations existing in the system

6.4. Communication strategies and tactics with the executive and legislative power

Opinion No. 18 (2015) shows that in recent decades the relationship between the three powers of the state (legislative, executive and judicial) has undergone transformations. The executive and the legislative power have become more interdependent. The power of the legislature to hold the executive accountable has diminished. At the same time, the role of the Judiciary has evolved. The number of cases brought before the courts and the number of legislative acts that the courts have to apply have increased dramatically. The increase of the executive power has led in particular to an increasing number of appeals of its actions in court, which, in turn, raises certain questions about the object of the control role of the Judiciary over the executive. The number of appeals in court regarding the powers and actions of the legislature has increased. Therefore, the Judiciary is increasingly forced to examine and sometimes even restrict the actions of the other two powers.

From this perspective, there is a need for a framework to support constant institutional communication between the Judiciary - the Judiciary as a whole - and the executive and legislative power, to initiate and promote a mechanism for permanent dialogue between them. This approach will contribute to increasing the level of information of citizens about the activity of the Judiciary, to improving the public

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

perception of their activities and constitutional responsibilities, to finally be part of the general object undertaken by the Strategy, namely increasing trust in justice.

Principles for communication with the executive and legislative power:

Loyal collaboration, where each of the state powers recognizes that the other powers have legitimate functions that must be respected. It is necessary for the information to be i) carefully verified; ii) presented objectively and in good faith; and iii) duly substantiated, with sufficient and clear reasoning, consistent with the proposed texts.

Balanced reflection: each of the powers will be informed about the activities and responsibilities of the other power, before formulating an opinion and will ask for a point of view, if the available information could negatively influence the image on the activity. For the same purpose, the communications will also include the positive aspects, not only the negative ones, the personal value judgments being clearly delimited from the factual ones.

Observance of the freedom of expression and of the obligation of magistrates to express reserve: according to the Bangalore Principles on Legal Conduct, magistrates enjoy freedom of expression like all other citizens. However, they cannot express their political beliefs to ensure neutrality and independence. At the same time, magistrates must refrain from any defamatory comments, regardless of whether these concern a person or an institution. The executive and the legislative powers have the same rights and obligations - the freedom to express themselves, without prejudice to the independence of the Judiciary and without attempting to influence the settlement of cases in a particular way. In other words, criticism must be limited and respectful.

Partners for legal education: Lack of knowledge of rights and mechanisms for exercising them is one of the common situations that magistrates face in interacting with the court users. It is thus appropriate to develop joint projects in order to improve the level of legal education, both among pupils and students, as well as among the general public as a whole.

Tactics for improving communication with the executive and legislative power:

- **Maintaining a constant communication between the SCM and the institutions in the system** regarding the impact of some decisions of the legislative or executive power, such as the degree of workload at the system level, priority aspects that can be improved, areas and projects of common interest.
- **Dissemination of the Good Practice Guidelines** on the relationship with the executive and legislative, which, once finalized, will contribute to supporting the dialogue between the Judiciary and the legislative and executive powers.

Communication with other institutions - e.g. The Constitutional Court of Romania

Before the courts, the Constitutional Court of Romania may be notified if exceptions are raised regarding the unconstitutionality of a law or ordinance related to the settlement of the case, at any stage of the dispute and whatever its object.

The communication is thus an exclusively formal, procedural one, as part of the judicial activity.

6.5. Communication strategies and tactics with other legal professions

The activity of magistrates, but also of the support staff, such as clerks and archivists, is interconnected with that of representatives of other legal professions, which gives communication a strongly subjective note. We identify an official written communication, an integral part of the act of justice and an oral and non-verbal

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

communication, present especially in the case of court hearings. However, according to the Communication Audit, this is sporadic and inaccurate.

It is important to note that this type of interaction is not specific to the functioning of public information offices and spokespersons - their activity aims at the relationship with the media and the provision of information of public interest. If the requests made by the representatives of other professions can be included in the sphere of public communication, the response methods and procedures are identical to those used in communication with litigants and the general public.

However, the communication strategy with the other legal professions should be based on the idea of cooperation and mutual desire to find a common denominator. As shown in the conclusions of the Survey, the source of disagreements between the two parties is the different set of expectations and the difficulty of identifying common needs and mutually beneficial communication solutions. Although they are on either side of the barricade, with different roles, magistrates, clerks and representatives of other legal professions have, in fact, the same objective: a fair act of justice, for the benefit of the citizen.

The Superior Council of Magistracy and institutions such as the National Union of Romanian Bars can play an active role in promoting these principles of good cooperation, by organizing regular meetings for the exchange of good practices, but also by requesting anonymized feedback from professionals.

Tactics for improving communication with representatives of other legal professions:

- **Dissemination of the Guide to good practice** on the relationship of the Judiciary with other legal professions, adopted by the Superior Council of Magistracy at the end of 2019, which provides a set of useful benchmarks on how the interaction between the two parties should take place.
- **Dialogue: exchange of good practices and regular meetings** between the SCM / institutions in the system and representatives of other professions, to identify common projects / current issues and topics of interest for discussion forums.
- **Feedback mechanism:** anonymized feedback questionnaire, distributed by the SCM and equivalent institutions among the other legal professions, to outline a professional profile of the magistrate / lawyer / notary / bailiff, from the point of view of communication. The results shall be then communicated to all institutions, so that each of the specialists can better understand how the needs of the other parties can be harmonized.

6.6. Media communication strategies and tactics

Filter, mediator and partner - this is how the role of the media can be summarized. A communication channel and a first-rate source of information, it is, at the same time, an excellent promotional tool, but also a potential source of unforeseen events.

Press environment

In Romania there are a large number of private press channels, over a hundred televisions and radios, hundreds of printed magazines and newspapers, hundreds of online channels, many of them grouped in press trusts. Television is the most used channel in the country, 92% of Romanians watching it almost daily. The Internet is the second most popular channel in Romania - 42% of people use it daily. Radio and print media rank third in popularity, with less than a quarter of Romanians listening to radio daily and only 6% of them reading a newspaper (according to 2019 estimates of CEU Center for Media, Data and Society).

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

34

Printed publications are the most affected by economic and digital changes in recent years.

The print media is not very widespread in rural areas, both due to the lack of public interest, but also due to the poor coverage of distribution networks.

At the national level, the champion publications in terms of audience, both online and in print, are tabloid newspapers.

The trend to close print editions and to transfer them online continues. Publications with general content have a circulation of 10-15 times lower than the most purchased tabloid on the market.

Digital media is very well represented in Romania by online portals, with a significant audience of over 8 million unique visitors per month, for general news, business or segmented by audience categories such as: family, women, men, young people or by fields interest such as: health, cooking, agro, car. Also, social networks continue to increase their influence as a source of information, over 60% of Romanians getting information mainly from sources such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, other similar platforms.

Tactics and recommendations in relation to the press

How do journalists work?

It is known that the press works in a very competitive environment. A journalist receives dozens of press releases a day and attends at least 3-4 press conferences. For this reason, the information included in a press release or communicated at a press conference must bring novelty, be documented, attract attention with something different, have accessible language, have support from competent people. Sensational news such as accidents, terrorist acts, domestic and international political crises, events in political/public life, especially the negative ones, the opinions of experts in current fields and "certain public figures" are frequent topics in the Romanian press.

The main sources of public information used by journalists are: press events; press releases; domestic and international news agencies; plus own documentation using previous articles, private or public websites, published presentations or analyzes, sources, materials published by associations; specialized events; reports of analysts; blogs; Facebook.

Issues related to relationship with journalists

It is natural for there to be a certain cautious attitude between those responsible for the image of institutions and journalists. Their objectives and perspectives are different, but nevertheless, both categories can benefit from a natural, professional relationship.

The key to building a good relationship with the media is the level of approach, cooperation and credibility. Journalists will develop a trustworthy attitude if they can obtain useful and accurate information in a form that meets their needs. It is important for spokespersons to create the image of an informed source of information, which provides as much valuable information as possible without jeopardizing their interests.

The relationship with reporters or other media representatives will start from the premise that journalists do not necessarily represent a category of friends or enemies. Establishing a cordial relationship with a journalist is desirable, but a friendly reporter does not automatically mean one who presents the information in the way the institution wants.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Reporters never really take time off, so any interaction should be treated as an official interview. Don't say anything you don't want to read in the newspaper or listen to on the radio.

Reporters don't like to be told how to do their job. Do not ask to see an article before it is published or broadcast. However, it is a good idea to help revise more complex materials for accuracy before they are published or broadcast. And it is always a good idea to tell a reporter to call you if they need clarification or additional information for the material they are working on.

The main tools of communication with the press

Press conference: organizing a press conference is a way to be known and, in addition, publicized, but only if you have something truly important to say.

If you don't have something really important, reporters may decide not to come to your next press conference. Because you still have to communicate, if the information does not justify the organization of a press conference, a more appropriate tool may be to send a press release.

Press release: it is the simplest way to inform journalists about the activity of the institution and the most used way of communication between communication specialists/institutions and journalists. It can be for information, invitation communication, announcement communication, reminder communication, response communication.

The content of the press release must be: attractive, concise, easy to read by the journalist (s), **comprehensive enough to be taken as such**. Most importantly, it **must contain verifiable data**.

Note: The organizational steps of drafting a press release are described in Annex 3.

Types of information that can be made available through press releases, independent of cases or the basic activity of the institution: statistical data, official visits, works/investments for the benefit of the citizen; anniversaries; exhibitions; educational projects; messages sent for certain events.

Press statement: a form of interaction with the press, live, in front of several journalists, or recorded, which is used when an institution/ a public person must communicate information related to a problem / situation of public interest. It must be concise and it must contain very clear, unambiguous data related to the situation/problem. No questions shall be taken from journalists.

As with all other communication tools for the general public, it is particularly important that the institution's representative approaches the subject of the statement in an articulate style, emphasizing the main message in as simple language, without long phrases or sentences, without digressions "off topic", avoiding, as much as possible, the use of specialized terms that would lead to a "translation" into the common, colloquial language. At all times, the spokesperson is obliged to take into account the level of the auditor represented by the "average auditor" made up of the vast majority of listeners.

Note: The organizational steps of drafting a press release are described in Annex 3.

The right of reply and the right to rectification are components of the right to information. This type of communication aims at correctly and completely informing the public opinion, respectively the consumer of information, who is able - and entitled - to know the position of the criticized party, in order to form a correct opinion. The style of the right to reply must be sober, without "roughness" of language in the form of invectives, avoiding the vindictive, accusing, victimized or superior-ironic tone to the claims of the press article in question.

Particular aspects of the right of reply

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

According to Decision no. 220 of February 24, 2011 of the National Audiovisual Council, art. 54, "The request for the right of reply/rectification will be registered by the broadcaster, specifying the date and time of receipt, and the applicant will be given a written proof in this regard." (2) "If the broadcaster refuses to register the application, the applicant may address directly to the National Audiovisual Council within a maximum of 30 days from the date of broadcasting the program that caused the injury."

Considering the existence of a concluded Cooperation Protocol - based on the above-mentioned provisions of Decision no. 220/24 February 2011 - between the Superior Council of Magistracy and the National Audiovisual Council, it is recommended, in situations such as the one highlighted in art. 54, paragraph (2), to immediately notify to the Superior Council of Magistracy and to request its assistance in order to obtain the necessary repairs.

Note: *The organizational steps for drafting a right of reply are described in Annex 3.*

Clarification

It is possible for a media institution to publish press material that contains some erroneous, confusing or incomplete information, caused by insufficient documentation of the author.

In this situation, in which the good faith of the author cannot be questioned, the communication structure, through the spokesperson, with the approval of the head of the court or prosecutor's office, can elaborate clarifications to correct and complete the information disseminated in the public environment.

Unlike a press release, right of reply or press statement, the clarification is specific. The difference between the clarification and the right of reply is that the clarification is not the reply of a 'party' in a dialogue, but only an erratum.

The text of the clarifications will refer, in a neutral, impersonal tone, strictly to the aspects identified as erroneous, confusing or incomplete without other comments, assessments or value judgments regarding the subject, author or media institution.

The interview should be seen, first and foremost, as an opportunity, as it offers the possibility to present to the audience the key messages of the institution; to position the representative of the institution as an expert in his/her field of activity; to prevent crises, rumors and negative perceptions; to strengthen and restore the reputation of the institution, but also of the Judiciary as a whole.

Depending on the press channel for which it is given, the interview can be: for the written press / radio / TV / online / written (on paper) and / or online + filmed / Recorded or live - video - synchronous.

Interviews can be conducted: by phone / face-to-face / by e-mail / television: with a single guest or with several guests.

Debate (talk show) - a television or radio show, which treats an important topic for society. Along with the show's moderator, several guests participate, who can express their point of view on a topic of the day.

The phenomenon of fake news: what it means and how it can be fought

The growing number of highly accessible communication platforms, but also the important volume of information posted daily has made the critical assessment increasingly difficult to achieve. Involuntarily or deliberately, some publications or pages on social networks bring to the public's attention fake news, presented as true facts or situations.

The mechanisms of such an approach are diverse - from posting older news under a recent date, to newstickers that have nothing to do with the subject of an article up to videos with a strong emotional impact, but which are not always based on real facts

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

or they are distorted. If the ways of drafting fake news differ, the motivations, on the other hand, can be largely common: the possible financial stake (because more clicks or more views also mean higher revenues), respectively the change of perception about a particular topic, institution or person, possibly for the benefit of a third party.

The negative effects of misinformation through fake news are also reflected socially: because it distorts reality, it is easy to manipulate public opinion, and confidence in evidence and the entire democratic system decreases, the result being a sharp polarization.

Types of fake news:

- Fictitious information, placed in a seemingly credible context;
- Distorted information, based on real facts or events;
- Information that interprets real facts or events, which it manipulates according to an agenda;
- Click-bait information, where the title or description has a sensational form, to attract readers, but the content itself is evasive

Education and the encouragement of critical thinking are the main forces that, over time, can limit the spread of fake news. However, an important step is the adoption of a set of simple benchmarks to help both communication professionals and the general public in distinguishing information from manipulation.

Questions to detect fake news:

- *What is the source of the information?* To be considered the website or social networking page that published the news and the policy adopted by the respective platform.
- *What is the frequency of posting articles?* Is it a continuous or sporadic activity?
- *Who is the author?* Is he/she a journalist, or a simple user? Is the author identifiable? What other articles did he/she write? Was he/she quoted by other sources?
- *Does the title reflect the topic of the article?*
- *Is there evidence to support that information?* Are there other official platforms that have taken over that information?
- *What is the tone and language?* News with a "sensational" nature can prove to be a pamphlet.
- *Is the topic of the news treated in detail or placed in the real context?*
- *What is the date of publication?* Is it current news or old news reposted?

Steps to identify and fight fake news in the press when it concerns the Judiciary:

- Constant monitoring of the press, both at the level of central and territorial institutions;
- Identifying possible fake news and analyzing it in a critical manner;
- The spokesperson and the head of the institution shall set the steps to be followed, respectively the formulation of a right of reply, if applicable;
- Dissemination of the official position of the institution regarding that information, when it is likely to cause significant reputational damage;
- Explaining topics that tend to generate fake news by misinterpretations or by taking them out of context in interviews or articles, thus limiting readers' appetite.

Fake news posted on social networks

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Fake news and misinformation are two phenomena that have simultaneously spread on social networks and, for this reason, should be treated together.

Misinformation refers to misleading or biased information, content or data that is meant to manipulate. Misinformation is deliberate and spread following a precise tactic. Its purpose is to create confusion or cause the target audience to believe that "lie". Last but not least, we can say that misinformation is a tactic used in the information war.

In turn, fake news is specially created, has a sensational nature and a considerable emotional load. It is based on partially true or entirely fabricated information and look identical to news, making it more difficult to identify it and categorize it as fake. Much of the content that is massively distributed on social media and that falls into the category of fake news is made up of photo or video montages, processed extremely well, so that the user can not realize that the content is not real. It is important to note that most users are informed using small devices, such as mobile phones or tablets, and the details that could raise any suspicion become difficult to notice - the format contributes to the rapid "viralization" of this type of content.

Misinformation and fake news are extremely common in certain periods, such as election campaigns, or are used in aggressive campaigns that support certain causes. The main goals are to change the public's perception of a certain topic and generate an emotional reaction.

Spreading fake news on social networks

Often, fake news is generated by online platforms and websites that want to be real and credible or by Facebook / Twitter pages or "fabricated" personal accounts, but which seem to belong to real people. When the activity of these online entities is no longer sporadic and turns into well-organized actions and is supported by a joint effort, it takes the form of an aggressive and dangerous disinformation campaign for the whole society.

Fake news is amplified and distributed quickly through fake accounts on social networks or automatically by robots. Social networks such as Facebook have tried to stop the phenomenon of "robots", but the phenomenon of "postaci" has grown - people specially co-opted in various misinformation campaigns, whose role is to post continuously on pages of interest, in order to induce error and manipulation, launching various rumors, distributing spam messages, slandering or simply fanning the flame in various conversations that take place on certain topics.

Indications of a fake profile include: the absence of a photo with a real person, the absence of contact information, the lack of activity on the page or the existence of sporadic posts, the very small number of friends or followers.

The takeover of fake news and disseminating it to a misleadead audience increases the scope and visibility of the topic - usually, on emotional topics, the public reaction is immediate and conclusions are drawn after a light reading.

Steps to fight fake news on social networks, when it targets the Judiciary:

- Monitoring institutional social media pages and comments on posts;
- Formulating and disseminating, through social networks, the official point of view of the institution, whenever necessary;
- Educating audiences, through campaigns, actions and articles meant to explain, in accessible language, what real information / news or quality content means and what are the dangers of misinformation;
- Checking the accounts that have an intense activity within that institutional page, to see if they belong to a real person or not and, where appropriate, blocking and reporting them.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

The correct information of the public about the work of the Judiciary requires an effort from all parties involved, including by correcting fake news where appropriate. Also, the topic of fake news can be considered in the exchange of good practices between spokespersons, which will contribute to the unity of approach and, in the end, to an effective communication activity.

Crisis communication

The crisis situation can be defined as a complex phenomenon, which consists in an unforeseen situation, which can call into question the responsibility of an institution (organization, system, etc.) before the public opinion, which can threaten the institution's ability to normally carry out the activity and which can damage the public image of the institution through negative effects in symbolic terms.

What a crisis situation in the Judiciary means:

The characterization of a situation as a crisis, in the specific activity of the courts, prosecutor's offices and the Superior Council of Magistracy supposes, cumulatively the following:

- An event whose gravity or magnitude is likely to create disturbances and strong reactions among the public opinion (explosions, fires, attacks, road accidents, work accidents, procedural measures against notorious people, magistrates, any other event for which the Judiciary and/or the SCM has direct and immediate responsibilities, etc.);
- The event should arouse the increased interest of the press; resulting in a large number of requests for information

Other factors that indicate the existence of a crisis situation: the presence of the topic in the media; the negative tone of the media coverage; escalation of the situation.

Essential aspects for successful crisis management:

- Securing information;
- Communication through one voice;
- Time pressure;
- Good communication and collaboration with the head of the institution;
- The institution's response, proportional to the scale of the crisis.

Note: *The steps to be taken by the spokesperson to manage a crisis situation are listed in Annex 4. Detailed recommendations will be provided in the Crisis Manuals.*

Tactics for improving media communication:

- **Openness:** Adopting an outward-facing communication that takes into account the characteristics of those receiving the message;
- **Trust:** Strengthening the relationship between the management of the institutions and the spokespersons, on the one hand, and journalists, on the other, through semi-annual open meetings, organized at central and local level;
- **Interaction:** Arranging spaces inside the institutions for meetings / discussions with media representatives, but also with other categories of audiences;
- **Content:** Proactively identifying current issues, which can be exploited by media appearances;
- **Speed of reaction:** Promptness in providing the requested information and constant dialogue (journalists must be informed about the time horizon in which they will receive the information / what is the reason why certain information cannot be provided);

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **Balance:** Constant generation of positive / neutral information on the activity of institutions, which should encourage a balanced image among the general public;
- **Justice for all:** Use simple and accessible language whenever possible

6.7. Communication strategies and tactics with civil society and NGOs

An important part of democracy is the collaboration between the authorities and society. Civil society needs to find a reliable partner in the Judiciary, with whom it can develop projects on topics of wide interest, such as, for example, education or assistance to people from vulnerable groups. In turn, the Judiciary may be the one to initiate the dialogue, to convey important messages for society as a whole, to carry out information or awareness campaigns, but also to contribute to increasing the degree of legal education among certain categories of public.

Within the Superior Council of Magistracy, members working as representatives of civil society are binding agents and have the opportunity to involve in a joint effort both professionals from the legal field and from the economic, academic or organizational environment, for the needs of each structure to be identified and understood.

The starting point in communicating with civil society is openness to dialogue, followed by transparency. Among the collaboration actions are:

- Partnerships - for educating or informing the public on a certain topic, including by developing common communication materials or platforms;
- Promoting fundamental civil rights and freedoms;
- Exchange of good practices and transfer of know-how from professionals in the Judiciary to the general public

Each of these actions must have influence and relevance, take into account the local context and specificity and, last but not least, be beneficial to all parties involved - initiators, authorities, beneficiaries and the general public.

The role of communication with civil society:

- **Information and awareness:** non-governmental organizations often have the necessary resources to disseminate messages on a large scale;
- **Expertise:** civil society can provide valuable information, analysis and professional skills complementary to those in the Judiciary;
- **Innovation:** professional organizations and associations can formulate new solutions and approaches for the frequent situations faced by the Judiciary (for example - mobile applications / communication platforms);
- **Cooperation:** non-governmental organizations can be a very good communication platform, both locally and nationally and internationally, as they bring together experts and advocates from various fields.

Steps to initiate or strengthen communication with civil society:

- Identifying topics / segments of interest;
- Defining partner selection criteria;
- Establishing the degree of involvement that can be allocated, at the level of the institution - provision of specialized information, drafting of content for different materials or presentations, organization or participation in various actions;
- Ways and resources needed to implement the project - human, logistical

Tactics for improving communication with civil society and NGOs:

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- Proactivity: identifying relevant areas, organizations and associations at local or national level and contacting them, in order to establish potential areas for collaboration;
- Collaborative dialogue: organizing meetings / debates, at central and / or local level, to collect ideas or topics of interest

6.8. Strategies and tactics for communicating with litigants

Interaction with litigants is at the heart of the act of justice and can be considered, along with communication with the media, one of the most complex branches - in terms of expectations, but also in terms of plurality of channels used.

There is a written communication (web pages of institutions, portals, requests, summonses, sentences, presentation materials, etc.) and a verbal and non-verbal communication, in the case of court hearings, but also in relation to clerks, archivists or members of the Information and Public Relations Offices. By the nature of the situation in which they find themselves, citizens tend to add an emotional charge to the act of communication, and can easily consider themselves treated with indifference or superiority, when the course of events is not what is initially desired or imagined.

On the other hand, the interaction between system representatives and litigants reconfirms the lack of education on legal issues and the limited degree of understanding at the level of the general public. There is confusion about the types of courts (tribunals / courts / courts of appeal), but also in procedural or technical terms - how to make a request, what is the reason for a particular sentence, what are the responsibilities of other professional categories, especially of lawyers. These difficulties can be more easily overcome by conducting information and education campaigns, which can be used to explain, in an accessible way, the role of the institutions that make up the Judiciary, the terminology, the stages and options available for the most common cases.

Tactics for improving communication with litigants:

- **Accessibility:** Displaying, on the websites of the institutions, a piece of useful information, adapted to the most frequent situations (how to draft a certain document, what competencies the institution has, what are the steps to follow, etc.);
- **Digitization:** Completing the activity of the Information and PR Offices through electronic information points, located inside the institutions;
- **Interactivity:** Strengthening the presence of institutions in online and, in particular, on social networks;
- **Human attitude:** Adopting, by all professionals with communication responsibilities, of an empathic and cordial attitude in relation to litigants, an attitude that must be accompanied by mutual respect;
- **In plain terms:** Elaborating/disseminating information materials, on physical and digital support, regarding the activity of the institution; Frequently asked questions and answers; procedures to be followed for settling certain cases;
- **Respect:** from the observance of the working hours, to the attitude of the magistrates in the courtroom.

6.9. Strategies and tactics for communicating with people pursuing specialized studies for a future career in the Judiciary

From the training stage, future professionals in the Judiciary should be familiar with the important role that communication has in carrying out the act of justice and more.

A first step in this regard is the very openness that the representative institutions - the National Institute of Magistracy and the National School of Clerks show in relation to them.

Thus, the communication strategy with people pursuing specialized studies, preparing for a future career in the Judiciary, should be well anchored in the current context:

- The information should be clearly formulated, easy to identify and disseminated equally on both classic and physical media (notice boards, posters, flyers), as well as on websites and institutional pages on social networks;
- Whenever possible, the message should be personal, not just official, for barriers to be limited and for learners and trainers to feel that they belong to the same system and will soon be part of the same extended team of professionals;
- Posts on institutional pages on social networks should not be limited to occasional issues, such as contests or various events, but should bring up other topics of interest - good practices, expert opinions on various topics, success stories or useful advice from trainers/professionals, materials available in the virtual library;
- The interaction should be structured in the form of a dialogue, instead of one-way of messages, from the institution to future professionals;
- The implementation of a feedback mechanism is encouraged, for students to easily make suggestions and opinions, in order to establish what the aspects of interest are and how they can be addressed. The feedback coming from the persons following specialized studies will be corroborated with the feedback coming from the Superior Council of Magistracy and the other central institutions, for the training to take into account both the realities of the system and the expectations of each category of beneficiaries.

Tactics for improving communication with people preparing for a career in the Judiciary:

- **Accessibility:** using multiple media and communication tools - materials in physical format, website, pages on social networks, messaging applications or mobile applications, so that the information can be easily accessed by those interested;
- **Proactivity:** providing attractive information that anticipates expectations and strengthens the relationship between the current system and future professionals: for example - role models, from a professional point of view, examples of good practice in certain courts or prosecutor's offices, examples of good practice at European level;
- **Training:** organizing, possibly in partnership with central institutions, actions dedicated to training in the field of communication, to address practical issues that future professionals will face in the activity: interaction in the courtroom, relationship with the media, relationship with litigants;
- **Feedback:** regular collection, in a structured way, of opinions and suggestions from future professionals, in order to consolidate / recalibrate the communication activity.

6.10. Strategies and tactics for communicating through digital platforms and social networks with the general public

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Where does communication in the institutional environment stop correctly and how far does the need for accessibility go? Although opinions are still divided, the importance of the online and social networks can be easily seen in the day-to-day work, but especially in difficult times for society as a whole, such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

The transparency of the Judiciary through digitalization was encouraged, according to the Audit, by the representatives of the SCM, and regulated by the Guide of good practices regarding the activity of magistrates in social media and on online platforms. There can also be mentioned here the ROLLI and Ecris platforms, which have significantly improved access to information and have partially relieved communication professionals of certain tasks.

The presence of the beneficiary institutions in the online includes the web page, social media and digital platforms, but also the communication by e-mail.

Regarding social networks, there is an official communication, through the Facebook pages of the institutions and an informal communication - through WhatsApp. WhatsApp groups are considered a useful tool, both for communication within the institution and in relation to the media, where the simultaneous transmission of information increases efficiency and reduces the risk of misperceptions (favoring certain journalists, in terms of speed of response).

Developing the presence of the Judiciary in the social media space / platforms

Social networks are the only way to communicate immediately, through which institutions can bring messages to the attention of the target audience and get feedback from it. Last but not least, they are also the main source of information used by the young and middle-aged population - an increasingly numerous segment and, implicitly, more relevant for the engaged communication objectives.

In Romania, Facebook is the most popular platform used by both institutions and the general public. Following, in the ranking of preferences are Instagram, YouTube and messaging applications such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger, followed at a certain distance by Twitter. Each of them can be a useful vector for transmitting information, depending on the context, the chosen format and the objective.

Developing the presence of the Judiciary on social media requires for two conditions to be met simultaneously - institutions, spokespersons and other members of the Information and Public Relations Offices to understand the relevance of setting up an institutional page, and to manage them based on a clear methodology.

Thus, to ensure a constant flow of communication and to encourage a transparent dialogue, collaboration and participation, while observing the right to free expression of users of social networks, it is recommended:

Creating and posting on the Facebook page a Terms of Use, to inform users who want to interact with the posted content using the methods they have available (comments, public or private messages, Messenger). The regulation can be displayed in the Notes section and set at the top of the page to be visible and easily accessible.

Within it, it can be specified:

- *Type of content to be posted on the page:* the information will be reduced to administrative issues, news in the field, news, events, press releases and other media information, publications, speeches, press conferences / events in video format. There won't be advertisements, trial information, personal data, etc.
- *Management of comments:* participation in discussion, dialogue and constructive feedback are encouraged. The institution shall not engage in

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

discussions concerning pending cases, judgments or any other type of discussions which do not involve data of public interest.

- *Role delimitation*: the institution does not provide legal or other advice, and does not answer questions from users regarding certain personal cases or circumstances that affect them.
- *Types of interaction*: private messages on Facebook and other applications (WhatsApp, Messenger) or posting public messages in the form of comments on posts on the page are not considered official communications to the institution. To officially contact the institution, users are instructed to use the available contact details (for example - in the About section of the Facebook page; on the institution's website at xyz.ro).
- *User Privacy*: All posts and comments on the Facebook page are public and available to anyone who accesses the page. Posts remain online indefinitely and can be found through search engines. The institution recommends for the users of the page to protect both their personal and others' privacy by avoiding posting personal data. If this happens, the mentor may remove from the page that data and information.
- *Inappropriate content*: freedom of expression is encouraged and debates between users are allowed, using decent language. Abusive, defamatory, discriminatory, threatening messages or comments, which include fake information, obscene video / photo material or personal data about others, to instigate and harm them, may be at first, hidden. If they are repetitive, the User Prohibition sanction will be applied to the users who post them.
- *Other types of content that may be removed from the page without prior notice to the user*: advertising messages, messages considered political propaganda, extremist messages, spam links, fake photo or video images.
- Facebook is owned by a third party company and users who access it must also comply with the terms and conditions of use of the application.

Responsibilities in the administration of institutional Facebook pages: Administrator and Moderator

- Two representatives from the Information and Public Relations Offices and the IT office will be appointed to manage the institutional Facebook page, usually the spokesperson, or two other professionals with responsibilities in the field of communication, who will have the quality of Page Administrator. This will ensure continuity in the management of the page, if one of them is not available or leaves the institution.
- The administrators of the page are the ones who have the main responsibility over the content posted on the page and for its management, establishing the frequency of posts and the actual information provided, in line with the management of the institution.
- One or more Moderators will be appointed to moderate the activity on the page, who will take over the messages and comments as soon as possible and will be able to ensure a prompt, specific social media reaction (given that there may be crisis situations generated by users). The moderator can post and send messages on Messenger using the Page's identity, delete or reply to added comments, see who the author of the posts on the page is and, last but not least, access the page's statistics.

Moderating comments, within an institutional Facebook page

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **Using the available settings:** the Moderating Page section gives the Administrator the ability to set a list of words or phrases that, once used in comments or messages, are automatically blocked and will no longer appear in the posts; *The obscenity filter* is another option that can be enabled or disabled in the Facebook page settings by the Administrator.
- Comments that explicitly violate the Terms of Use of the page are hidden or deleted without prior notice.
- For comments on the verge of violating the Regulation, but which are not sanctioned according to the Regulation by deletion from the page, the user may receive a warning in response to his/her comment, asking him/her to argue his/her opinion or he/she is politely told that his/her opinion has nothing to do with the post or the subject of the page.

Examples of answer:

- *Your comment is not the subject of discussion here. Thank you for understanding!*
- *Please respectfully support your statements with arguments.*
- When the user posts a comment that is not related to the topic of the post, he/she can be alerted to prevent the discussion from degenerating.

Examples of answer:

- *Thank you for the message! This is not the topic of today's post, but we will analyze whether this topic should be addressed on our page in the future;*
- *Thank you for the message! We talked about this topic in our previous communications. We invite you to browse the posts on this page / enter the video section and you will find more information about the topic.*
- *Thank you for your message and we respect your point of view, but we invite you to keep the discussion on the main topic of this post.*
- When the user posts a comment requesting information or discussing issues unrelated to the content of the page.

Example answer:

- *Thank you for the message. To obtain the requested information, please contact Department X, contact: Y (mail, telephone).*
- It is good to know that Facebook allows you to disable the option to post comments or send private messages (via Facebook Messenger), if the Administrator or Moderator of the page decides so. However, Messenger increases transparency in communication and trust in the institution - according to statistics, for most users, the availability of this contact helps to increase trust in the page/product/institution, even if the user does not intend to use it.

Monitoring the communication activity on the Facebook page

Monitoring the activity on the Facebook page can be done both quantitatively and qualitatively. Based on these benchmarks, a report can be prepared, which can be completed monthly with relevant audience data and indicators about the content generated by users within the page.

Quantitative indicators:

- *Number of likes:* represents the total number of users who liked the page and receive the content published by the institution in their news feed;
- *Interactivity / Engagement:* this is one of the most relevant indicators, because it shows whether or not users are interested in the content published on the

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

page. Interactivity is measured by the number of reactions, shares, comments, click on a link, click on the image, views of videos, within the Facebook page;

- **Impact / Reach:** indicator that measures the total number of Facebook users who have seen a certain post, in a certain time interval. In other words, the audience of the posts;
- **Top 3/5 posts depending on the impact:** in the monthly report you can mention the posts with the highest impact/engagement, in order to make a comparison and adapt the content in the future.

It is important to mention the type of posts (text, image, video, link)

Qualitative indicators:

- You can track the total number of comments received from users within a month and their distribution by categories: positive, negative or neutral.
- Their interpretation in context is recommended: it will be possible to observe if there are certain favorite topics that make users react through comments or if there are certain topics/keywords that are repeated with a certain frequency in the comments received.

Recommendations on the use of other social networks

Applications managed from the Facebook page

Facebook allows you to associate a WhatsApp account and set the WhatsApp button for the application to be easily accessed by users when they enter the Facebook page. To keep in touch with users on WhatsApp, it is recommended to use predefined reply messages (as in the case of Facebook Messenger), customized according to the situation.

Along with Facebook Messenger, Instagram is another application that can be managed from Facebook. You need an Instagram account linked to the Facebook page and both channels can be managed through the Creative Studio option, available on Facebook.

It has a less formal nature, the emphasis being on communication through audio-video materials.

Other social networks

Twitter is the recommended micro-blogging platform for real-time communication with certain audiences (journalists, opinion leaders, representatives of other institutions), to distribute short messages, possibly in addition to traditional communication channels.

It is recommended to use Twitter for short updates and to publish concise information that does not require a breakdown - references to press releases or other information on the website, brief information to the press, other similar situations.

To increase the visibility of messages posted on Twitter and the number of followers of the account, it is recommended to use the references included in the posted text.

YouTube is the recommended platform to bring all your videos together in one place for easier access. To watch the videos it is recommended to use the links to the YouTube channel on the rest of the social media platforms.

Twitter and YouTube can be integrated into the Facebook page. The content on the two channels can be viewed directly on Facebook.

Tactics for improving online communication:

- **Planning:** Analysis of opportunities, availability and human and material resources that can be allocated for the development of online communication;
- **Coordination:** Appointment, among the persons with communication attributions from each institution, of a person in charge with the launching and constant (weekly) updating of the pages on the social networks;

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **Information:** Development of a specific content strategy and a posting plan. Topics covered include: important moments in the institution's activity (changes in the management team / official visits / elaboration of documents of general interest / actions carried out in partnership with civil society or with the business environment / information and education campaigns, etc.)
- **Evaluation:** Measuring the impact of the communication activity, from a quantitative point of view (Followers - the number of people following the page; reach - the number of people the information reached; engagement - number of Likes / comments / reactions), but also from a qualitative point of view (level of interactivity; nature of comments).

6.11. External communication, using the institutions' channels

The image matters - from the chromatic to the details related to the page, each element says something about the institution or the professional who appears in front of his/her audience.

In the absence of an action plan assumed at national level, each institution has outlined its own approach to the communication activity, acting according to the human and material resources available.

Redefining the use of the online / social media environment

In terms of its own communication channels, the website is the most frequently used tool, being accompanied, in some cases, by a Facebook page, where announcements and press releases are reposted.

Significant differences in layout from one website to another, but also the complex structure and difficulty of the average user in finding the necessary information were also highlighted in the documentation and visual audit stage.

This makes clear the need for a unitary visual concept, which translates the vision expressed in the Communication strategy and also respects the particularities and expectations of the beneficiary institutions. The proposed action plans, both for visual identity and for websites, will be inspired by European reference institutions and platforms. Last but not least, the recommendation for a simple way of presentation is maintained - without chromatic stridencies and unnecessary graphic elements, but with a strong orientation towards the citizen and towards the representation of his/her values.

Principles for reconfiguring websites and selecting content for translation

- **Accessibility:** Main page and category information should be organized according to importance for visitors (target audience), while maintaining a balance between accompanying images and text;
- **Functionality:** It is recommended to organize the information categories in horizontal sections (so to have relatively the same order on each type of screen - desktop, tablet, mobile), with a link to the category itself;
- **Illustration:** It is recommended to use icons where the text allows, to provide visual support;
- **Information:** If you want to keep publishing documents in PDF format, in addition to a link as explicit as possible there should be added a descriptive text of the content (1-2 sentences);
- **Warning:** Verification of the necessary pages according to GDPR for the website and the presence of the informative message for the use of cookies;
- **Search:** It is recommended to optimize the search engine on the website in order to find more easily the information you are looking for;

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **International:** For translation into other languages, the information pages should be selected according to the importance for visitors, respectively the pages about the institution, useful information and the contact details page.

Recommendations regarding the typology of information that will be translated into international languages

With regard to the versions of the website translated into international languages, there can be no question of a uniform practice at European level. Each country demonstrates its own approach to content, and the same applies at the institutional level. However, equivalent institutions of the Public Prosecutor's Office in Denmark, Estonia, Germany and Norway are an example of good practice. It is noted that, frequently, the information provided is: the presentation of the institution, its history, structure, media appearances and contact details, all selected by virtue of their international relevance.

For the 5 beneficiary institutions the translation of the following categories of information is recommended:

Institution	Sections
Superior Council of Magistracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the Romanian Judiciary • Presentation of the board • SCM competencies • Regulation of organization and functioning • Organizational Chart • SCM apparatus structure • Brief History of the SCM • Contact
Public Ministry (already has an English version)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation on the organization and functioning of the institution • Institutional memory • Relations with other authorities: Relations with the executive; Relationship with the legislature; Relationship with the police • Principles of organization and operation • Attorneys General of Romania • Virtual tour • Contact
National Institute of Magistracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization • Team • Access/competitions • Contact
National School of Clerks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and Legal Regulation of NSC • Organizational Structure of NSC • NSC's Team • The profession of Clerk • The Training System for Clerks

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact
Judicial Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure; • Control reports, appreciated to be relevant; • Contact

Tactics for improving communication through in-house channels:

- **Current layout:** Restructuring and/or updating the web pages of the institutions, to present the information to the visitors in a more accessible and attractive way;
- **Common denominator:** Building a unitary visual identity for the entire system: color scheme, font and font size, with emphasis on readability on mobile and tablet;
- **Information at hand:** Creating, on the websites of the institutions, of a section of frequently asked questions and answers, which would allow the fast and efficient information of the litigants; Contact information (phone, email) available on each site, along with the operating schedule;
- **Messages sent where the audience is:** Strengthening the presence on social networks, as they are an extremely popular source of information - Creating the pages and periodically updating them with data of general interest / significant moments in the activity of the institution;
- **Justice for all:** The use of simple language and accessible to the general public; Dissemination of brochures with useful information for the public.

6.12. Communication through written and audio-video presentation materials

Business card of the institution, presentation materials are an essential communication tool in relation to audiences. Their role is to provide applied information, in a concise manner - if we are referring to brochures and flyers, or to position the brand in relation to the viewers - if we are referring to roll-ups displayed during an event, or banners displayed on a specific website. This type of tool is also an important part of conducting education and information campaigns for the general public.

In terms of layout, each presentation material must fully comply with the requirements in the visual identity manual of the institution. An accessible format that is easy for the beneficiary to follow is also required.

From a language perspective, terms accessible to the general public will be used or, where this is not possible, the use of technical terms will be explained, by examples or footnotes.

Recommended topics for presentation and information materials:

- *Institutional activity and organization of the Judiciary:* what is a court / tribunal / court of appeal / prosecutor's office, what are the responsibilities of each of these institutions and in what situations should the litigants address that institution;
- *Procedural aspects:* the administrative circuit of a request and the settlement procedure; submission of documents, formulation of requests, consultation of files from the Archive;
- *Behavior in the courtroom: the court in simple terms*

6.12.1. Brochure

The brochure is used when the purpose of the communication is to convey a larger volume of information and/or graphical representations, for which a larger number of pages is required.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Cover 1 will include the elements of visual identity, as described in the Manual, the name of the institution, the name of the material or the purpose for which it was drafted - for example: The activity of the Bucharest Court of Appeal/The Romanian Judiciary.

The contents of the brochure will be written in a way that is easy to read and assimilate. It is recommended to use subtitles, as appropriate, for a more efficient grouping of ideas.

Cover 4 will include the name of the institution and contact details.

Recommendations on topics that may be the subject of a brochure:

- The role of institutions in the Judiciary, depending on the specifics of the cases;
- The administrative circuit of an application;
- Case circuit;
- Settlements of claims - civil and criminal;
- Orientation of the litigant in court;
- The court in simple terms;
- Brochure in the field of civil/criminal law;
- Brochure in the field of civil rights;
- Brochure in the field of enforcement in civil matters.

The purpose of such material is to inform the citizen, in an accessible language, by reconstructing the steps to be taken, so that he/she understands how the Judiciary works and has quick and easy access to information.

The brochures can be distributed both in physical format - at the court headquarters, and in digital format, on websites and on the just.ro portal. The drafting and dissemination of easy-to-understand materials contributes, in the long run, to increasing the degree of legal culture and, implicitly, to increasing confidence in the Judiciary.

Note: An exercise on drafting a brochure is presented in Annex 5.

6.12.2 Flyer and leaflet

The flyer is an accessible communication tool when the volume of information is little. The same recommendations for visual identity and content as for the brochure are kept.

6.12.3. Roll-up and spider-wall panels

For the successful set up of a space for an official event, it is necessary to install branding elements, such as roll-ups and spider-wall panels.

Their different format offers flexibility in terms of location. Roll-ups can be used to cover a presidium when there is a projection screen in the background, or to signal a specific area (for example, the entrance to the conference room). In exchange, the panels are a compact background, extremely useful for group photos or to hide a certain area.

Their design will be made in accordance with the landmarks in the Visual Identity Manual.

From a content perspective, it is recommended to choose a short text - for example: the name of the event or the slogan of the institution.

For informative roll-ups, the content (information score) will be selected and the steps in the Visual Identity Manual on the positioning of visual information/text and logos will be complied with.

Recommendations for drafting roll-ups on rights and freedoms:

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Among the civil rights and freedoms, as they are provided in the Romanian Constitution, it is recommended to promote those related to the Judiciary.

For dissemination in the courts may be considered:

- The right to defense;
- Free access to justice;
- The right to a fair trial.

From the perspective of the most common causes:

- The right of private property;
- The right of inheritance;
- The right to personal, family and private life.

Each right will be accompanied by a brief explanation. It will be mentioned that the right is provided for in the Constitution referring to the SCM website, where the Brochure in the field of civil rights can be accessed.

The roll-ups will be displayed in physical format or in online format, in the form of banners, on the websites of the institutions in the system. Their widespread dissemination will also contribute to increasing the degree of legal culture.

6.12.4. Audio-video materials

An attractive and interactive way to present certain information is through audio-video materials. Unlike written communication, they have a more personal and human touch, especially when people directly involved in that project appear in the shot. An impact formula is the inclusion of testimonials - stories that allow the association of an "idea" or an "institution" with a figure.

Depending on their purpose, the institution will decide on the scenario to be followed, the duration of the material and the distribution channels and the ways of promotion. For communication in online and social media, it is recommended to draft materials of short duration (up to 1 minute), so that attention is maintained throughout. Larger materials can be disseminated at events or in internal communication, as the number of disrupting factors is low.

Recommendations for filming statements or video messages

Regardless of whether the video recordings are made in the office with in-house resources or are filmed professionally, some preliminary aspects will be taken into account, which contribute to the spreading of the institutional image:

- Opt for a presentable outfit, avoiding stripes, checks or prints that can distort as a visual effect in filming. The necessary attention will also be paid to make-up;
- Do not wear stunning accessories. They contribute to visual disturbance and distract the audience from the delivered message;
- No harsh or distant expression will be approached. You need a friendly audience;
- The attitude displayed should be that of a person sure of himself/herself and of the message he/she communicates;
- The arguments will be provided in a language as simple as possible, to be easy to understand;
- Check the light in the frame, avoiding the effect of shadows or excessive glare of the face, by recording a test frame, to be previewed;
- The gaze will be directed towards the camera to increase the impact of the message. If the filming is an interview with a journalist, you will look at the journalist;

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

				preparation for a career in the Judiciary	on various actions / events
3	Roll-up / spider wall	Central institutions, territorial institutions	Branding Information Popularization	Internal public (guides and brochures) External public (rights and freedoms)	Coordinates of the institution Key information Contact
4	Audio-video materials	Central institutions, territorial institutions	Information and education	External public, especially litigants and the general public	Procedural aspects explained / useful advice

Recommendations regarding the drafting of presentation materials:

- The materials drafted by the central institutions can then be taken over and disseminated / personalized at the level of the entire Judiciary, by each institution, in compliance with the rules on visual identity.
- Where these materials exist, they will be adapted/updated to reflect the vision and actions plans outlined by the communication strategy and visual identity manuals.

Recommended ways to disseminate presentation materials on a large scale:

- At the headquarters of the institutions (courts, prosecutor's offices, central institutions), for viewing by litigants and other professions;
- With the help of NGOs/Professional Associations, at their headquarters or in actions/events organized for the target audience, or online on websites/social media, if the audience is relevant;
- Within the communication actions carried out together with the representatives of the other legal professions;
- Through the partnership with the Ministry of Education/School Inspectorates/other educational institutions.

Measures on the development and standardization of means and channels of communication from the Judiciary to the public

Several institutions, the same system, a unified approach to communication. Although different in terms of role, organizational complexity and available resources, representatives of the Judiciary can implement a number of measures to lead to the development and standardization of means and channels of communication:

- Use of a similar structure and a unitary visual aspect for each website;
- Use of the same set of benchmarks for the information provided - for example, the same way of presenting contact details among all courts, as part of the just.ro portal;
- Dissemination of information materials drafted at central level, among all courts and prosecutor's offices at national level;
- A standardization of communication by using the same structure in drafting materials for communication with the media, both in terms of structuring information and in terms of visual layout;

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- Standardization of the drafting of court decisions, so that they are as accessible as possible for the litigant;
- Regular meetings between professionals in the system - magistrates who are or are not spokespersons, experts of the Information and Public Relations Offices, clerks, archivists and registrars, to create a framework for dialogue and ensure uniform practices and interpretations in communication.

CHAPTER 7. Action plan

"What?", "When?", "For whom? And "For what purpose?" are the main questions that the action plan aims to answer. Its role is to increase the degree of predictability and efficiency of the activity of the spokespersons, by materializing the unitary vision in a set of specific actions for each institution.

The development of the plan is based on the following platforms:

- The websites of the beneficiary institutions, respectively the websites of the other institutions in the system;
- The pages on social networks (Facebook; Instagram; YouTube);
- Mass media (TV, radio, online & printed publications; news agencies);
- Direct communication, through events; conferences; other types of meetings;
- Presentation materials: brochures, flyers, audio-video materials.

Each institution that is part of the Judiciary will be able to develop its own communication plan, depending on the objectives undertaken, the nature of the activity and the resources available.

Steps to ensure continuity in the implementation of the strategy



Preliminary activities – Implementing the communication plan (12 months) – monitoring and evaluation of results – Updating the plan for a new time frame (12 months)

Preliminary activities to ensure the adoption of the strategy at national level

Preliminary activities		
Activity	Period	Responsible
Launch of the Communication Strategy	January 2021	Contracting Authority
Drafting a plan with topics of interest, strategic actions and communication priorities, based on the recommendations of the Strategy	January - February 2021	Contracting Authority, beneficiary institutions
Consultations with the spokespersons/other professionals with responsibilities in the field of communication on how to customize the Communication Strategy and Plans, at national	February 2021	Contracting Authority

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

level (including at the level of local courts and prosecutor's offices)		
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The action plan

I. Communication with the internal public

Activity	Instrument	Recommended frequency	Message/ Content	Evaluation	Objective accomplished with these measures
Exchange of good practices & positive reinforcement of unitary practice in communication	(Online) events, dedicated to professionals in the system	2 per year/ annually	Current issues; Frequent situations; Challenges & solutions identified	Number of participants in events; Feedback received by way of dedicated forms	Improving communication expertise and strengthening institutional capacity to increase public confidence in justice and correct its perception of the system
Continuing training in the field of communication	Training sessions dedicated to magistrates, clerks, archivists and experts within the Information and PR office	Annually	Frequent situations; Practical solutions for the correct management of the communication activity; Applied case studies / good practices	Number of participants in events; Feedback received by way of dedicated forms	
Guests at events	Participation in international conferences	Where appropriate	Presentation of success stories/ recompenses/ best practices	New ideas generated / themes promoted in the system and internationally	
Positive news / frequently asked questions / did you know that	Proactive Consultations (between departments within the institution / between	Quarterly/ as appropriate	Topics of interest to the public Detecting success stories from interacting with target audiences	Adapting the message Attitude in communicating with the public Number of petitions	

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

	institutions) Involvement of experts within the Information and PR office		settled Communicated vs. mediated topics	
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II. Communication with the media

Measures aimed at strengthening the relationship with the media, for the benefit of public communication of each institution, but also of the Judiciary as a whole:

Activity	Instrument	Recommended frequency	Message/ Content	Evaluation	Objective accomplished with these measures
Improving the relationship with the media through dialogue and harmonization of expectations	Informal meetings dedicated to the exchange of good practices and the training of journalists	Annually / as often as necessary	Current topics / identification of topics of interest Public legal education needs Journalists' expectations and landmarks of communication in the Judiciary Landmarks from good practice guides	Number of journalists present at meetings; Feedback obtained Quality of materials published after the meeting (tone & accuracy of information rendering)	Strengthening the relationship with the media, for the benefit of each institution, but also of the Judiciary as a whole
Periodic communication of topics of interest regarding the activity of institutions	Press release	Whenever necessary	Current issues; Key messages specific to the institution issuing the press release Image associated with the	Number and type of press channels that take over the information ; Quality of published materials (tone & accuracy)	

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

			press release	of information rendering)	
Positioning the representatives of the institutions as experts in the field and providing institutional points of view, on several topics	Interview	Whenever necessary	Current issues; Key messages specific to the institution that the interviewee represents Photo opportunity	Content quality and representation of key messages; Publication profile / number of views / readers The evolution of the collaboration with the respective press channel	
Communicating important news/appointments/events	Press events (press conference / press briefing/ live statements)	Whenever necessary	News of interest to the public Photo/ video/ synchronous opportunity	Content quality and coverage of key news Number of articles/ press channels that participated/broadcasted	Strengthening the relationship with the media, for the benefit of each institution, but also of the Judiciary as a whole

III. Communication with litigants

Activity	Instrument	Recommended frequency	Message/ Content	Evaluation	Objective accomplished with these measures
Informing litigants	Frequently asked questions and answers section, displayed on the websites of each institution	Permanent	Duties of that institution Procedural aspects (requests, file circuit, etc.) Useful information (fees,	Number of website visits; The number of requests received from litigants and their adequacy	

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

			working hours)		
Informing litigants	Running educational/informative messages on the screens of the institutions' headquarters. Dissemination of guides with useful information	Permanent	Useful information (possible delays, working hours) Procedural aspects (requests, file circuit, etc.)	The number of requests received from litigants and their adequacy	Improving the quality of communication activity, by adopting a proactive approach and implementing a two-way model, which allows external audiences to provide structured feedback
Initiating/consolidating the online presence, by setting up institutional pages, on social networks	Establishing, populating and promoting an official, institutional Facebook page	Permanent	Duties of that institution Procedural aspects (requests, file circuit, etc.) Useful information (fees, working hours) Events of public interest	Number of page followers/views of the posted materials; Number and nature of comments received	
Measuring the degree of satisfaction of litigants, regarding the communication activity	Satisfaction questionnaire on interaction with the Judiciary, in electronic or physical format	Annual	Questions specific to the activity of the institution	Number of completed questionnaires; The nature of the answers received	

IV. Communication with the general public

Activity	Instrument	Recommended frequency	Message/Content	Evaluation	Objective accomplished
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The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

					with these measures
Information and education, by continuing and strengthening the partnership with institutions in the field of education & NGOs	Open lessons, visits to the headquarters of the institutions, dissemination of informative / educational materials in schools Dissemination of information materials through NGOs targeting a specific audience (for example vulnerable people)	Annual Whenever possible	Organization of the Judiciary; Frequent situations; Case studies on specific cases;	Number of actions performed or number of participants in actions	Improving the level of judicial education mainly among litigants, but also at the level of society
Disseminating information of interest to the public through personal channels (website, social media)	Promoting information through personal channels (unmediated)	Regularly / whenever possible	News columns / did you know that / Interviews / Video tutorials	Number of visitors / reactions	

CHAPTER 8. Monitoring and evaluation

Establishing a set of benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the communication strategy is of double importance. On the one hand, it allows a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results generated by the activities undertaken; on the other hand, it makes it possible to adapt these activities in order to contribute as concretely as possible to achieving the assumed objectives.

The approach to monitoring and evaluation will take into account the types of communication addressed by the strategy - internal and interinstitutional

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

communication, respectively external communication, but also the allocation of a sufficient time - 12 months, in order to obtain relevant indicators and an overview. At the same time, the monitoring criteria will relate to the objectives assumed through the strategy, in order to determine the degree of their achievement.

Type of communication	Target audience	Indicators for the qualitative analysis	Indicators for the quantitative analysis
Internal	Central and territorial institutions, other representatives of legal institutions	<p>Online questionnaire on the degree of satisfaction of the system representatives, regarding the communication activity;</p> <p>Evaluation questionnaires for the event participants;</p> <p>Frequency and nature of interaction in informal communication (messaging applications)</p>	<p>Number of participants in online and face to face events/actions;</p> <p>Number of requests addressed to central institutions, by persons with responsibilities in communication from territorial institutions</p>
External	Media	<p>The tone of the press materials (positive / neutral / negative);</p> <p>The degree of understanding and satisfaction of the media, regarding its interaction with the Judiciary;</p> <p>Number and frequency of communication crisis situations, at system level.</p>	<p>Audience of media platforms that covered the topics included in the Action Plan;</p> <p>Number of press channels that covered these topics (depending on the specifics of the institutions);</p> <p>Number of journalists who participated in the events</p>
	Civil society, NGOs, business environment	The degree of success in co-opting the representatives of the civil society	Number of partnerships/ projects initiated or developed, at system level or by beneficiary

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

		and the business environment for the development of activities of common interest, on topics of interest.	institutions, in collaboration with representatives of civil society/ business environment
	Litigants	The quality of the interaction with the litigants, as perceived by the spokespersons and the categories of professionals exposed to the interaction with the public	Number of relevant requests/ addresses, following the communication campaign (ie decrease in the number of requests whose settlement is not the responsibility of the institution concerned)
	General public	The level of legal culture, influenced by the elaboration of presentation materials, by the information campaign and by the educational projects carried out; Quality of interaction on social networks (type of comments/ability to establish a dialogue)	Opinion poll on the perception/ degree of satisfaction in relation to the Romanian Judiciary; Number of visits of the web pages of the beneficiary institutions; Number of followers/engagement reported on the social pages of the institutions

The qualitative and quantitative evaluation will be carried out by the Authority and communicated to the other beneficiary institutions, for joint actions at system level, but also by each entity, for specific projects.

Also, depending on the history and scope of the communication activity, each institution will be able to set out its own set of performance indicators (KPIs), selecting the most appropriate from the means of monitoring and analysis, such as: (number) press releases, during 12 months; (number) projects implemented in partnership with civil society; (number) training events for system professionals, topics of interest to the press; topics of interest to the public; unforeseen situations; etc.

CHAPTER 9. Sustainability and training

The essence of the unitary communication strategy consists precisely in its capacity to be understood, assumed and replicated at the level of all the institutions that make up the Judiciary.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

To this end, the Contract provides for the organization of 36 training sessions for the main categories of professionals with responsibilities in the field of communication: spokespersons (10); judges and prosecutors (14); members and staff of the SCM, respectively NIM/NSC/JI (2); court clerks (8); the clerks of the prosecutor's office (2). Each training session will be moderated by a team of two experts and will last 2 days/each. Also, the same training module will be replicated in all sessions for the same category of participants.

Each communication training activity will also include a module dedicated to horizontal principles: sustainable development, promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination and gender equality.

Last but not least, it is recommended to include on the lists of participants the experts within the Information and PR Office who are involved in the communication activity.

Training approach

The training sessions will be interactive with a strong practicality. We will use the 20/40/80 rule, namely people remember 20% of what they hear, 40% of what they read and 80% of what they put into practice. For this reason, participants will be involved in the training to practice using the tools created for them. Some tools accompany the Communication Strategy and are of a general nature. Others will be created especially to be relevant both to each category of training participants, and especially to the communication activity to which they correspond.

In terms of content, the training will include both common issues and elements tailored to the needs and expectations of the participants in each target group described above. The goal is for participants to assimilate the information and the steps to be followed in order to implement the communication vision as it was formulated in the Strategy, but also to achieve the assumed communication objectives, at system and beneficiary institutions level.

The training of each professional group will be done in two stages. The first stage will take place in the classroom, and the second involves individual study (course material and resources) and evaluation (online test). The test will include a section that will assess the quality and relevance of the training, giving the participant the opportunity to announce his/her intention to further use the tools and knowledge gained from the training.

Principles that will guide the elaboration of the content and the delivery of the training sessions:

- **Respect:** adults learn better from trainers who respect and treat them as adults,
- **Relevance:** what the adult learns must be relevant, important for his/her life and work,
- **Applicability:** what the adult learns must have immediate practical applicability,
- **Learning by doing:** adults retain about 20% of what they hear, 40% of what they read and see and 80% of what they do or discover on their own,
- **Experimentation:** adults have more confidence in what they discover themselves than in information presented by others,
- **Involvement:** the learning process is much more effective when it is active than when it is a passive process.

The organization of training

The training sessions will be organized using the ADDIE method, which includes five phases: information analysis, design of the training session, development of the presentation, implementation of the plan for the training session and assessment.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Training needs analysis. It was carried out through the Communication Audit and based on the information provided by the Contracting Authority or collected by the team of trainers. This stage contributes to setting the training objectives and the themes/topics of the training modules from the two training days.

Design. The content of the training session (for each category) is set: learning objectives, key aspects of teaching and the training activities that can be used to explore and strengthen key aspects of teaching.

Development. The presentation is documented, by creating a session plan, the support materials and the materials for the participants (worksheets, etc.), the material for individual study and the assessment questionnaire are prepared. The concept of each type of seminar is drafted (includes the individual study).

Planning. The calendar of the training sessions that will be communicated to the participants.

Implementation. The training will be divided into two sections: one for the Communication Strategy and a second on topics relevant to each category of participants, topics deriving from the Communication Strategy and the learning needs of each target group. The modules will be of a maximum of 45 minutes and will include in different proportions presentation (20 - 30%) + exercise (80 - 70%) or presentation (20-30%)/ questions and answers (80 - 70%). The presentation will answer WHAT and WHY questions, meaning those concepts needed to understand the topic and a practical lesson (how to put knowledge into action; it is the part that answers the question HOW). The training is interactive and includes elements of gamification such as points, rankings, competitions and prizes. The exercises include small group discussions, case studies, role-playing, personal action plans and various simulations in front of the video camera. Breaks will vary between 15 and 60 minutes. The protection rules imposed by the pandemic will be observed. The maximum number of participants per session: 20. Participants will receive individual study material and various resources. The study material is not mandatory but only serves as additional resources for those who need or want to deepen certain topics.

Assessment. The assessment consists in obtaining feedback from participants on the usefulness of the courses but also measuring the improvement of the level of knowledge and the willingness of participants to include in their practice what was discussed and practiced during the course and individual study. At this stage, the data obtained through the assessment tools will be collected, processed and interpreted, in order to issue a value judgment on the results. The results will include also the conclusions of each trainer based on the direct observation of the participants during training and the online questionnaires that participants will fill in.

Reporting is added to these components. Each session will be reported by the experts who carried it to gather information that will complete the activity report - Interim Report 7. It will include the results of the assessment of the training participants as well as the conclusions of the feedback provided by them but also recommendations and follow-up proposals for improving the communication of the participants.

In order to ensure the sustainability of the project, we recommend resuming periodically (annually) the training sessions.

Training topics

Following the Communication Audit, certain themes and learning needs for each group were outlined. From the point of view of communication, we will focus on external communication because the Audit showed that there are no problems in the

horizontal, vertical or inter-institutional internal communication of the system. These are working properly.

An articulated external communication at system level, delivering clear messages to the public is absolutely necessary. At the same time, translating the information into a language understood by the general public, with easy-to-understand examples, would contribute to increasing the desire for information and to a better perception of the system. Proactive communication from the system can impose on the public agenda the real topics it proposes for public debate, changing the current situation in which the public agenda is dominated by sensational news and often "fake news".

The training will provide participants with the necessary tools and knowledge to enable them to focus on authenticity - the image must start from the inside out, intensify education/training efforts - both for the population and professionals in the system, and promote real success stories that arouse the interest of the media and communities. They will practice ways to simplify the language for intelligible information, to reach the public but also how to beat fright in front of the video cameras. The training will emphasize the need for personalization - the humanization of the legal system, through the communication of the people behind it, the work and continuous efforts to ensure quality justice.

The training will lay the foundations for a unified and effective communication practice, so that professionals from all beneficiary institutions have at hand a clear set of benchmarks, enabling them to act successfully in the role of communicator, and groups target audience to find, in turn, in the system, a reliable partner, defined by integrity, professionalism and transparency.

Below are proposals for training topics that can be repeated after the implementation of the project to be deepened. Some topics will be repeated with each category, but the examples and exercises will be different. Also, the presentation of these common themes will not repeat every time we set the proposed training topics for a certain category. We will only mention the different aspects.

Spokespersons. The specific topics proposed for this category include:

Relationship with the media. The training will contribute to changing the paradigm of the current communication, and the spokesperson will learn to perceive the press as a partner in relation to the public and not as an opponent; to perceive the communication activity not as an obligation, but as an opportunity to make the system transparent. He/she will understand when it is appropriate to communicate, by what means he/she better achieves his/her communication goal. Moreover, he/she will be encouraged to know very well the press with which he/she communicates - what is written in the media, who writes on legal issues, what the orientations are, what topics are published. Other aspects: action stereotypes of journalists, management of press conferences, press briefing, press statements, press release, what has news value, editorial calendar, etc.

(Written and audio-video) copywriting - storytelling. He/she will practice ways to make legal language accessible by translating legal information "from Romanian to Romanian" in the content delivered to the media and, implicitly, to the general public, understanding that the spokesperson is primarily responsible for "humanizing" the message coming from the legal system. He/she will learn about ways he/she can balance the accuracy of the information while still keeping all the legal characteristics of an act which he/she explains to the public. He/she will practice writing press releases and news to arouse the interest of the press and he/she will learn how to write a speech.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

He/she will understand what are the best practices in creating audio-video content and will practice in front of the camera so that he/she can later produce short videos explaining certain aspects to the general public, litigants or to the media.

Public Speaking. The training will include a variety of public speaking exercises from breathing, diction, posture/non-verbal language to interaction with a video camera, aspects of combining verbal and non-verbal communication in interaction with the audience, how to deliver a speech. Practical training will address concrete communication situations to standardize response practices to petitioners, audience, media, etc. He/she will practice various interview techniques and will understand, for example, how to avoid answering to questions for which he/she does not have the answer or to which he/she is not qualified to answer. Other aspects: behavior in debates, talk shows, etc.

Online communication and social media. We will focus on the benefits of using social media in legal communication. Elements related to the impact of messages and how what is communicated produces a differentiated effect at the level of the target audience. He/she will understand how to promote online the content he/she creates and what are the rules of effective online communication (the institution's website and its page in various social networks). Examples from the "Good Practice Guide on the activity of judges and prosecutors in social media/online platforms" shall be used.

Crisis communication. The manuals that will be drafted within the project will form the basis of this module. Formats and checklists will be used in exercises that will include case studies and simulations, including in front of the cameras.

Judges and prosecutors. The specific topics proposed for this category include:

Relationship with the media. In addition to relevant issues mentioned in the training of spokespersons, we will include examples necessary to correct a deficient relationship with the press but also ethical requirements in relation to it. Emphasis will be placed on non-verbal behavior in direct interactions with the press: gaze and gestures, handshake, body language, lie and lie detection, etc.

Crisis communication: We will organize simulations using the examples and tools provided by the crisis manuals that are being drafted in the project for a better understanding of the actions needed in crisis management.

Communication in the online environment: In addition to presenting the benefits of using social media, we will discuss private/ public profile, reputation management in the online, etc. Examples from the "Good practice guide on judges and prosecutors in social media/online platforms" shall be used.

Public speaking. In addition to other relevant aspects mentioned in connection with the training of spokespersons, we will include the behavior during the interview, debates, talk shows, statements, briefings/ press conferences, etc.

(Written and audio-video) copywriting - storytelling. He/she will understand the best practices in copywriting and audio-video content and, like the other categories, will practice in front of the camera in order to later build short videos explaining certain aspects to the general public, litigants or media.

Presidents of courts. The specific subject proposed for this category includes the same topics proposed for the category of judges and prosecutors, but the examples and exercises will be different. Proposed topics: media relations, crisis communication, online communication, public speaking, (written and audio-video) copywriting - storytelling.

Chief prosecutors. The specific subject proposed for this category includes media relations, crisis communication, online communication, public speaking, (written and audio-video) copywriting - storytelling.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Members and staff of the technical apparatus of the SCM, NIM, NSC and JI. The specific subject proposed for this category includes: copywriting (written and audio-video) - storytelling, online communication, crisis communication, public speaking.

Court clerks. The specific subject proposed for this category includes common topics with other categories of participants such as online communication, public speaking, (written and audio-video) copywriting - storytelling. To these persuasive communication is added: efficient communication depending on the typology of litigants and on the form of managing the relationship with the public.

Prosecutor's office clerks. The specific subject proposed for this category includes the same topics as for court clerks, only the examples used in the exercises will be different.

Training of trainers. The training of trainers sessions will address specific subjects in the field of communication, from the perspective of the Communication Strategy developed within the project. They are addressed both to trainers in this field at the level of NIM and NSC, as well as to the participants in the other training sessions who are interested in becoming trainers in the field of communication.

Their aim is to provide sustainability, in the sense that, after the completion of the project, there will be a group of people with strong knowledge in the field of communication, who could support the ongoing training activities of the two training institutions for judicial staff.

The two training sessions will address the same target group. There will be both trainers from NIM and NSC, but also people who have specific skills and want to become trainers. Depending on the line-up, examples and exercises will be built to allow those with experience to practice and improve their skills and for those who are new to a training of trainers session to acquire such skills.

The first session (2 days) will include two modules followed by the presentation of the practical project. The second session involves the processing of practical applications - the presentation of the projects that will be videotaped and which will then allow participants to analyze themselves, in order to improve the performance as trainer and feedback from trainers and course participants.

Session 1. Modules may include topics such as:

Module 1	Module 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the trainer • Learning styles/ learning cycles • Methods used in adult training • Training process management (ADDIE) • Training needs analysis • Design/development of a course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course development/Presentation skills • Management of participants/Moderation skills • Conflict management • Evaluation of training sessions/providing feedback

Session 2. Presentation of the practical project and feedback

Between the two sessions, the two trainers will be able to offer advice to those who need advice in preparing the practical project.

IMPORTANT: Each training session will also include a **module for horizontal principles:** sustainable development, the promotion of equal opportunities and gender equality, but also non-discrimination. Proposed topics (illustrative examples): equal opportunities, as a human right; negative discrimination and positive discrimination; political correctness - a path to "polite society"; public relations - a strategy for building social consensus; notions of ethics such as responsibility as a moral and social value; ethics of responsibility and sustainable development; deontology of communication in public space, etc.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Considering long-term training

In order to attend as effectively as possible the communication needs at system level, we recommend regular training sessions. These will contribute, together with the Guides and Strategy, to ensuring an optimal level of knowledge in the field of communication among the newly appointed spokespersons, but also to consolidating and refreshing knowledge for professionals with longer experience in this role.

We also recommend including in the training sessions the experts from the Information and Public Relations Offices, who are not currently integrated in the training sessions, although they have an active role in the current communication activities.

CHAPTER 10. Responsibilities in implementation

Authentic changes need time, a well-defined guidance and an approach undertaken by all involved. In order to ensure an adequate implementation of the Strategy, it is necessary to set out the responsibilities of each institution, which will be translated, in concrete terms, into the activity of professionals with responsibilities in communication.

As the initiator of the project, the **Contracting Authority** is the one that facilitates the definition of the framework, strategic actions and work plan applicable throughout the system. It will pursue the transfer of the vision and the actions taken to achieve the assumed strategic and tactical objectives, actively contributing to the identification and promotion in the public space of topics of general interest. These, together with the information and awareness campaign, will contribute to increasing the level of legal education among the general public and improving the image of justice. Last but not least, the Authority will monitor and assess the implementation of the Strategy, assisting the other beneficiary institutions and professionals whenever appropriate.

The other central institutions - **the Judicial Inspection and the Public Ministry** will use the resources and platforms provided by the Authority and will draw up a dedicated, specific activity plan, which will aim at proactive, transparent, humane communication, capable to inspire confidence and earn respect in society. The messages will emphasize the complexity and quality of magistrates' training, the high level of performance of the system, the solutions identified to overcome the challenges, but also the measures taken to ensure high ethical standards and limit, as much as possible, slippage.

The National Institute of Magistracy and the **National School of Clerks** will be able to emphasize their role as trainers for professionals in the judicial field, through a constant presence in the online environment and on social networks, thus meeting the communication needs expressed by the new generations.

Courts and prosecutor's offices, both through magistrates and through the involvement of clerks, archivists and of the staff within the Information and PR Office, will directly contribute to the implementation of the Strategy. The spokespersons within each institution will have the role of developing a personalized, proactive communication plan, following the priority action plans identified by the Authority. Spokespersons will also analyze the diversification of communication channels, focusing on social networks, will be able to draft personalized promotional materials and will strengthen or improve the relationship with the media, using the recommendations of the Strategy, but also the Guides previously drawn up by the Authority.

Each of the institutions will follow, through the communication activity, both the vision, the principles and the objectives assumed at system level, as these are

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

presented in the Strategy, as well as the visual identity landmarks. Equally important is the consensus to create an interactive way of working at system level, to encourage the exchange of good practices, dialogue between professionals and the identification of the right approaches for the most common situations.

CHAPTER 11. Recommendations and strategic actions for the development of the information and awareness campaign

The unity of the message and the correct and complete information are two essential conditions for the perception of the different target audience categories regarding the Judiciary to be the correct one.

Likewise, insufficient knowledge or a multitude of contradictory views can give rise to inappropriate interpretations.

The aim of the campaign is to inform, educate, promote the benefits for the citizen and humanize communication from the Judiciary, contributing to increasing the degree of legal education. The messages will be transmitted through TV and radio spots, outdoor panels, but also through graphic and audio-video materials, broadcast both at the courts headquarters and online.

Factors influencing the successful running of the campaign:

- Good understanding of the particularities of the Judiciary, especially in terms of communication;
- Content - being recommended a balanced presentation of technical and emotional arguments, so that the messages are easily understood and assimilated;
- Creative executions - adapted both to the profile of the beneficiary - the Judiciary - and to the expectations of the public;
- Large-scale dissemination, through the optimal association between communication tools and the type of information to be delivered.

Following the workshops, organized to perfect the Communication Strategy, two approaches were identified, which can be intertwined:

- **From the point of view of the citizen/a** campaign that presents the information in the light of an ordinary citizen, who is put in different hypostases of interaction with the system and its institutions;
- **From the point of view of the system/a** campaign focused on the people behind the system and presents the realities they face in their daily professional life

From the point of view of information of general interest, the following will be taken into account:

- The role of the institutions in the Judiciary (what is a court / tribunal / a court of appeal / a prosecutor's office and what responsibilities does each have) and frequent situations (at the registry, at the archive, in the courtroom);
- Variety of cases and common situations (claims; family law disputes; criminal cases; professional law disputes);
- Citizens' rights and freedoms

Messages to strengthen the image of the Judiciary:

- The Judiciary **provides** the **balance of society**;
- Every cause matters;
- Beyond institutions, there are people;
- Justice concerns us all;
- Independence, professionalism and ethics define us;

Messages for drafting the presentation materials of the institutions:

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- Our role: to act for the benefit of the citizen
- Who are we?
- What are we doing?
- Why and when should you contact us?
- How can you contact us?

Messages for humanizing the body of professionals:

- This is us, this is what we do, these are the limits imposed on us by the statute;
- Find out what it means to be a judge / prosecutor / clerk

Recommendations on associating messages with the communication channel and the chosen tool

Short warning messages can be delivered via TV and radio spots.

Messages of a more personal or even emotional nature can be delivered through audio-video interviews. These can be done either as a collage, or by alternately presenting a judge / prosecutor / clerk - A working day with a judge / prosecutor / clerk. For this type of material, we recommend for the protagonists to be professionals from the system.

The messages helping citizens obtain more details regarding the activity of an institution and the orientation within it can be delivered in the form of virtual tours, in which the actors play the role of the litigant (for example: this is the Registry – here is where the applications for summons are registered, this is the Archive - here you can go to consult the file). Frequent situations can be reconstructed on the same scenario (for example: I want to sue a neighbor who flooded my apartment - how do I proceed?)

Explaining the limitations in the system and the realities that cannot be presented by associating with a certain professional can be done through animations, including in the form of comics.

The information and awareness campaign carried out by the SCM at national level can be carried out by local micro-campaigns, at the level of each court, which allow these to use the materials from the campaign to inform the litigants or to develop their own materials.

All the measures and recommendations offered through the Communication Strategy will contribute, from different perspectives, to achieving the objectives and materializing the vision from the beginning of this document: ***an independent, modern, fair, transparent and accessible Judiciary to respond effectively to the needs of today's society.***

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Basic rules for Spokespersons in the relationship with the press

- For the collaboration with the journalists, use **simple and direct terms** for everyone to understand. This approach is all the more important when dealing with radio or television reporters, as a 5-10 second interval from a news story will have to be used to fully expose the point of view. This rule also applies to written press reporters because a concise and well-constructed comment will increase understanding and decrease the likelihood of being misquoted.
- **Pre-interview preparation is essential, especially when communicating through the news media.** Prepare concise answers to all anticipated questions, including those that are not desirable, then outline some key positive aspects related to the topic of the interview. No interview can be considered a success if it does not fully cover the agenda.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- **Prepare a topic for the interviews.** During the interview, repeated references will be made to the chosen topic until it comes to identify itself with the position adopted.
- **There will be no “unofficial - off the record” talks and no mentioning of “no comment”.** There is no real guarantee that the statement made will actually remain "unofficial - off the record". The position of "no comment" creates the perception of guilt or attempt to deceive. If you want to limit your media exposure, you can give a strict answer that will satisfy the reporter and not create follow-ups. Then direct the talk to another item on the agenda.
- **It is recommended to get in touch with those reporters who deal with your field of activity.** Creating a bond of friendship, based on mutual respect, can lead to a much closer appreciation of your views or position on certain topics of interest.
- **Avoid discussions outside your area of expertise** or that go beyond your responsibilities. It is not imperative that you answer all the questions that are asked.
- **Maintain a polite and benevolent attitude with a reporter,** even if you do not necessarily agree with the person or with his/her perspective on the subject. In the long run, this attitude will have positive effects.
- **It is not desirable to get annoyed by outrageous or insulting questions.** Be polite but firm in your answers and in the way you control groups of journalists.

Annex 2: Steps for spokespersons to follow at the time of appointment

Step 1

Internal announcement: Presentation message, sent to the other spokespersons, among the central and territorial beneficiary institutions;

Step 2

External announcement: Presentation message, sent to the existing list of journalists at the level of the institution, to inform about the taking over of the position; posting a message on your personal or institution’s Facebook page, where it exists.

Business cards

Step 3

Action plan: Drafting a set of priority actions and themes, to be considered by the spokesperson, during his/her term (for example: involvement in educational activities, increasing the level of legal culture; orientation towards communication through social networks, etc.), with the approval of the head of the institution

Step 4

Exercise: identifying and mastering the key messages specific to the institution that the spokesperson represents; prior preparation of drafts for different communication materials (for example: press release, right of reply, presentation folder, etc.)

Step 5

Dialogue: Defining and implementing a two-way communication framework to encourage the exchange of good practices, both locally and centrally, but also between them (for example: monthly virtual meetings on specific topics; short newsletters, sent quarterly to the other institutions, to present the most frequent/problematic situations, encountered in the respective time frame)

Annex 3: Organizational stages for the elaboration of press materials

The organizational stages of a press release

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- Whenever a topic and/or situation of a general/particular nature is identified, upon the order of the management of the Superior Council of Magistracy or of the court/prosecutor's office, the communication structure proceeds to the elaboration and publication of a press release.
- The materials proposed by other departments of the institution, to be used for publishing in broadcasting, are received by the communication structure and presented to the spokesperson for analysis. He/she analyzes and assesses whether the proposed material is likely to be the subject of a press release or of other communication tool with the press. By resolution, the spokesperson establishes the treatment and the draft of the communication project by the staff of the communication structure as well as the main message to be promoted.
- The draft press release is presented to the spokesperson who analyzes and assesses the correctness and coherence of the message and, if necessary, recommends additions or corrections.
- After completing the drafting of the text, the spokesperson presents the press release to the institution's management for endorsement and approval for dissemination to the media and for posting on the institution's website.
- The communication structures within the courts and prosecutor's offices can send the press release for posting in the dedicated section of the website of the Superior Council of Magistracy.
- The spreading of a press release must be made without discrimination and as far as possible in the same time frame to the accredited media, respectively to the editorial offices of the printed dailies, from the online environment and of the radio and television stations and to the news agencies.
- After the delivery of the press release, the communication structure will monitor its takeover by the media within the current activity of monitoring the press.
- All written materials, resulting from the activity of the communication structure to be disseminated to the press, go through the steps mentioned above.

The organizational stages of a press statement:

- Making the decision to issues a press statement;
Setting the subject/topic that is the central object of the statement;
- Drafting the basic text of the press statement, emphasizing the main message (there may be secondary messages which, however, must not divert the attention of representatives of media institutions from the meanings of the main message);
- Making corrections, introducing any requested amendments and finalizing the press statement;
- Approval of the final text by the management of the institution;
- Multiplying the text of the press statement into as many copies as necessary, depending on the estimated number of participants;
- Appointing the person who will issues the press statement: he/she can be the head of the court/prosecutor's office, the spokesperson or another person in charge;
- Handing over the multiplied text to all participants, at the end of the presentation.

The organizational stages of a right of reply

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

- Careful analysis of the press material, by highlighting the related aspects that conflict with the factual truth;
- The decision of the head of the court or prosecutor's office, together with the spokesperson, to draft a right of reply;
- Sketching an answer to errors, false information or accusations contained in the press material, writing the text "in the mirror" (the answers/official denials will be inserted in the same order of errors or false information);
- Making corrections, introducing any requested amendments and finishing the draft response;
- Presentation of the final text for approval to the decision makers;
- Punctual delivery, after approval, of the right of reply only to the press institution that disseminated the material considered defamatory;
- Posting immediately the text of the right of reply on the institution's website after delivering to the press, in order to prevent the respective media institution from ignoring the right of reply;
- Delivery of the text, for information, to the Superior Council of Magistracy;
- The Superior Council of Magistracy can also post the respective right of reply on the institution's website, in the dedicated section;
- Monitoring the publication/dissemination.

Annex 4: Useful information for spokespersons in crisis management

Steps to be taken by the spokesperson for crisis management

Step no. 1: He/she will reassure the journalists that information and an official point of view on the event will be presented as soon as possible.

Step no. 2: He/she will make all the necessary efforts, at the level of his/her institution and of those involved or responsible, to be informed as quickly and completely as possible about all aspects of the event that occurred and arising from the questions asked by journalists, in order to formulate an official response, within the limits of publicity of the procedures carried out or to be implemented by the authorities.

In this regard, depending on the institution he/she represents and the nature of the issues under discussion, the spokesperson will contact:

- **Courts:** with the president of the represented court. For documentation, he/she can request information from the case judge/section president/court president or from the spokesperson of the lower hierarchical court, if it concerns a case pending this court. For information and coordination: with the president/spokesperson of the hierarchically superior court whom he/she will inform and from whom he/she will ask/receive instructions;
- **Prosecutor's offices (including NAD (National Anticorruption Directorate) and DIOCT (Investigation of Organized Crime and Terrorism)):** with the chief prosecutor of the institution or his/her deputy or, as the case may be, with the chief prosecutor of the territorial structure;
- **SCM:** the president or vice-president of the SCM, if it is a question of issues related to the competences and attributions of the SCM, as well as with other departments involved in providing the necessary information.

Step no. 3: He/she will analyze all the information received and will draft a document covering punctually, as far as possible, the requests of the press, in accordance with the provisions of the Guide of good practices in the relation of the Judiciary with the media.

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

Step no. 4: Following the consultation with the management of the institution and based on the instructions received from it, the spokesperson will inform on the way of delivery to the press and, thus, to the public opinion of the official point of view of the institution through:

- Official statement of the head of the institution (briefing, press conference);
- Press release, posted on the institution's website and sent simultaneously, by electronic means of communication, to journalists;
- Telephone communication, audio-video intervention of the head of the institution/spokesperson if he/she is not at work (taking into account the time of the event: weekend, public holidays or during the night, respectively outside working hours).

Recommendations for spokespersons in managing a crisis situation

- The adoption by the spokesperson in front of the media representatives of attitudes of denial, evasion, distortion of the size and consequences of an event that is identified as a crisis situation will be categorically avoided.
- The attitude of refusing to provide information (*no comment*) or confrontation (*controversy*) **will never be adopted**.
- The spokesperson must keep in mind that the final recipient of the information provided is not the press, but **the public opinion**. People's perception of justice, implicitly, trust in justice are determined, to a very large extent, by the news published in the media. For this reason, in relation to the media, the spokespersons must show transparency, speed, availability, adaptability, initiative, anticipation and non-discriminatory treatment towards the media.
- He/she **will not limit**, on subjective criteria, the delivery of the official point of view only to the accredited media institutions. By acting in a non-discriminatory manner, the area of hypotheses/rumors/speculations, interpretations and comments without factual support is restricted.

During the crisis it is extremely important to have a **single communicator with the press**, who effectively manages the relationship with journalists and expresses a coherent, unique point of view, using a standardized language and accessible to the public, avoiding thus issuing confusing, complicated or contradictory messages. This eliminates the development of rumors or misunderstandings that lead to the situation in which every journalist or even every member of public opinion builds his/her own version of the crisis situation, amplifying its effects.

Annex 5: Practical example: brochure on the file circuit, in a civil lawsuit

- Cover 1 & Cover 2
- Contents
- **What is the civil lawsuit?**

The civil lawsuit is the means of fulfilling the legitimate rights and interests that cannot be settled amicably by individuals, legal entities, institutions or authorities (for example: divorce, partition succession, misunderstandings between neighbors).

- **How does a civil lawsuit begin?**

The first step is to inform the competent court about the existence of the conflict, through a summons. This will be accompanied by documents confirming to the court the issues reported - for example, copies of identity documents, copies of marriage certificates or the sales and purchase agreement. At the same time, there will be evidence of the payment of the stamp duty (it is paid to the Local Directorate of Fees and Taxes) and, if necessary, of the power of attorney.

- **How to register the application for summons?**

The strategy for unitary communication at the level of the judicial system

The summons may be filed in physical format, at the court registry, sent by postal or courier services, or, as the case may be, by e-mail. The summons will be registered, and the file will be available on the portal.just.ro platform

• **What's next?**

Once registered, the summons is randomly assigned to a court panel, for the purpose of regularization (reporting irregularities, if applicable). When all the procedures have been completed, the summons will be communicated to the opposing party, which has 25 days to file a counterclaim. By the counterclaim, the defendant has the chance to defend and support his/her own point of view.

The counterclaim will then be sent to the complainant, who will be able to reply within 10 days.

• **The first trial term**

The court will summon all parties involved, announcing the date, time and court panel where to be present. Also, generally, in the first trial term the evidence to be administered will be discussed, in order to solve the case. On average, there will be an interval of 100 days between the time of registration of the summons and the first trial term.

• **Debate on the merits and the court decision**

During one or more trial terms, evidence will be administered, witnesses will be heard, and technical expertise or on-site research will be performed. The case will then be settled by court order.

• **Remedies**

Most judgments can be appealed within 30 days from the date of communication. The procedure will be similar to that of the first instance.

• **The final decision**

A court decision becomes final when the remedies are not exercised or if the remedies have been settled. Final decisions are enforceable titles.

• **Cover 3 & 4**

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