

Legal Reform: Court Optimization in Romania



Seven years after its accession to the European Union, the courts in Romania remain inefficient, plagued by backlogs, and susceptible to corrupt influences. The East-West Management Institute (EWMI) is currently implementing a court administration reform project in Romania, funded by the World Bank, to modernize Romania's judiciary, improve management, and increase efficiency by developing standards for court performance and introducing improved methods for resource management. In particular, EWMI is advising the Superior Council of the Magistracy (SCM) on establishing a comprehensive system for monitoring and benchmarking the efficiency of the courts, enabling it to better measure, monitor and improve performance and allocate resources. The project will also begin to implement recommended reforms through training programs and piloting at individual courts. This 18 month project is structured around the following deliverables:

1. Assessment Report that will examine existing methods and indicators for measuring court performance, including case flow management, human resource management, and fiscal and infrastructure resource management.
2. Issues and Options Paper, which, based on the assessment, will provide specific recommendations on how to better measure and improve overall court performance, establish benchmarks, and manage judicial and staff resources.
3. Structural Report that will provide guidance on how to operationalize and implement the recommendations on measuring court performance and resource allocation, including making any needed legislative and regulatory changes.
4. Training on the use of the new system of efficiency evaluation, benchmarking, and resource management for the SCM, senior judges, and other court managers, as well as training activities that will support and facilitate effective implementation of reforms in pilot courts.
5. A pilot program at various courts in Romania to initiate the implementation of the new system, as well as design an approach for rolling out the new system on a national level.
6. International Conference at which the above achievements will be discussed, refined, and publicized.

EWMI's policy recommendations, training programs, and pilot court initiatives will improve transparency and efficiency in the Romanian judiciary, helping to align it with European standards.

Working in partnership with grass roots groups, local governments and international organizations to build just, prosperous and democratic societies.