The List of Recommendations for Improving the Integrated Case Management System (version 4.1)

The computerization of the judicial system represents a priority for the Republic of Moldova, being an indispensable tool for a smooth operation and administration of justice, in circumstances where the caseload is continuously growing. Improving IT systems used in the courts is a key element, designed to help both judges and citizens, thus contributing to strengthening judicial independence, increasing the efficiency of the courts and the quality of justice and transparency in the courts operation.

The Superior Council of Magistracy (SCM) decision No. 259/12 of 17 September 2009¹ on digital audio recording of court hearings and implementation of integrated case management software set forth that starting 1 October 2009 the courts will use the Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) and the hearings audio recording system.

Thus, through its Moldova Governance Threshold Country Program "Millennium Challenge", funded by the Millennium Challenge Corporation and administered by the USAID, in all courts of the Republic of Moldova the ICMS was installed.

ICMS is an innovative program intended to build capacity of Moldovan judiciary in fighting corruption, increasing transparency and public access to justice. This software was fully developed and designed to improve court administrative efficiency and integrate functions of automated case management in all courts in Moldova.

ICMS has been intended to automate the organization of work in Moldovan courts. This program allows creation of electronic case files, electronic generation of hearings schedule, random distribution of case files, and automatisation of procedures that otherwise are time consuming and related to judicial statistics reporting.

Therefore, ICMS is used to register and manage all types of cases: *civil, criminal and contraventional*, to track and manage cases throughout their lifecycle, from registration by issuing the decision in the first instance and thereafter until the appeal procedure or recourse in higher courts, such as courts of appeals and the Supreme Court of Justice.

At the moment, an enhanced version of ICMS, namely version 4.1, is used in all Moldovan courts.

Following the implementation of CEPEJ tools in 6 pilot courts with the view to improve the courts administration and enhance the efficiency and quality of justice, the need for changes and possible improvements to the modules, functionality and content of ICMS has been underlined.

Measurement of a court's performance aims at identifying performance trends and patterns of the courts in real time, flagging promptly problems and opportunities, ways to improve the services, informing and guiding to take effective decisions, as well as providing justice in a time efficient and responsible manner to the court users. Or, in order to have an efficient judicial system it is required to have an effective court performance measurement system in place, intended to:

- streamline strategic planning,
- manage human resources, capital and other material resources,
- enhance public accountability of court programs, activities and expenditures,
- stimulate and enhance efforts towards innovation, efficiency and continuous improvement, guaranteeing the independence of the judiciary,
- ensure reasonable access to justice and due process of law,
- ensure effective and efficient courts administration and activities to deliver justice,
- ensure professionalism of justice system representatives and prevention of corruption.

Given that Moldova is a member of CEPEJ, which in its turn is a body of the Council of Europe, we deem it appropriate for the national judicial system to comprehensively integrate CEPEJ tools, thus, integration in

¹ http://csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2009/259 12.pdf

ICMS of CEPEJ performance indicators and some elements of the applied methodology, tested by pilot courts, is absolutely indispensable. Therefore, we recommend the following:

Judicial statistics according to CEPEJ recommendations

The courts activity should be assessed, including from the perspective of compliance with reasonable timeframes for delivery of justice, which is an indicator assessed against the length of cases examination per country and individual court. This evaluation can be accomplished using ICMS data. Thus, it is recommended to develop ICMS as to reflect the deadlines and monitor their compliance, based on the methodology proposed by CEPEJ to the courts. The pilot courts developed and tested various timeframes targets sets for all three levels of jurisdiction. In case of exceeding the tentative target limits, the information system should generate a notification for the court management at reasonable intervals. Below is a table with tentative timeframes and monitoring of their compliance:

Cauzele comerciale pendinte la data de [DATA]									
	Mai puţin de 4 luni	,	Între 6 și Între 12 12 luni și 18 luni		Mai mult de 18 Iuni	Total pendinte			
Cauzele pendinte	317	145	121	107	13	703			
Procent	45	21	17	15	2	100			
Termene-ţintă A	70%	95%							
Monitorizare	-25	-12	17						
Termene-ţintă B		70%	95% restanță %						
Monitorizare		-4	3 2						

In case of exceeding tentative timeframes or before their expiry, the judge and his panel will receive a notification when logging into the information system. In this regard, ICMS is to be adjusted by introducing timeframes and notification system.

At the same time, at certain intervals of electronic case files inactivity (waiting time), ICMS should generate a notification about the excessive length period.

2. By its decision no. 634/26 of 29 September 2016², the SCM approved the quality indicators to accomplish the modernization of the judicial statistics included in the Action Plan of the Government for the years 2016 - 2018. Thus, it is necessary to amend the Regulations on electronic statistical reporting in courts and courts of appeals, approved by the SCM decision no.835/27 of 14 October 2014 to introduce the performance tools and indicators recommended by CEPEJ.

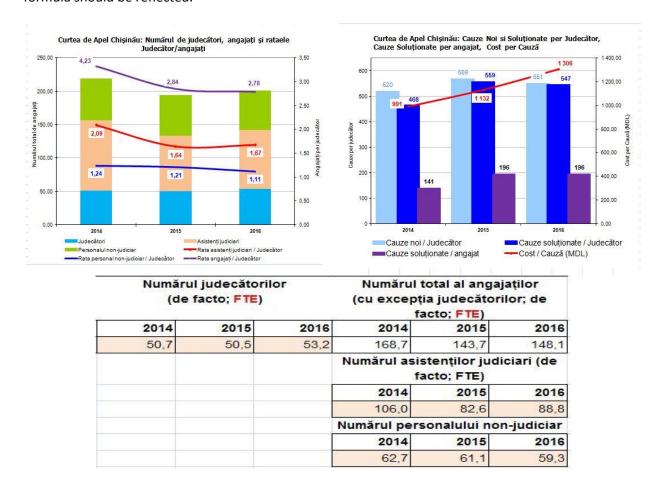
The below breakdown could be used to develop a Regulation on explaining the method of calculation, data collection, terms used etc. Development of the Performance Measurement Module (PMM) and Statistical Reporting Module (SRM) will allow obtaining appropriate graphs and a report on:

- Rate of resolved cases within the reporting period;
- Length (age) of pending cases;
- Examination of cases within established timeframes (refers to cases with pre-established timeframes by existing law);
- Rate of appeals (against the number of cases examined);

² http://csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2016/26/634-26.pdf

- Rate of quashed decisions (against the number of decisions issued);
- Rate of modified decisions;
- Rate of decisions quashed by the ECtHR;
- Length of backlog resolution;
- Caseload per judge;
- Rate of effectiveness;
- Rate of court staff per judge;
- Average cost per case examined;
- Rate of postponed hearings.

Moreover, the number of judges, judicial assistants, registrars and non-judge staff according to FTE formula should be reflected.



The courts Performance Measurement Module is a dynamic tool that shows by means of graphs and tables the performance of each court and every single judge. At the moment, the Performance Measurement Module incorporates six performance measurement indicators:

- rate of resolved cases;
- age of pending cases;
- examination of cases within established timeframes;
- rate of hearings postponed;
- rate of cases resolved during one hearing;
- number of administrative staff per judge.

It is recommended to adjust the following indicators within the "Performance Measurement Module":

➤ Rate of variation in the backlog of pending cases (CR indicator – clearance rate): the number of outgoing cases expressed as a percentage of incoming cases in the given period. This

indicator provides a good insight into how a judicial system (or a particular court) manages its case flow.

➤ Length of backlog disposition (*DT indicator*): relationship between the number of cases resolved and the number of cases pending at the end of a period. The DT indicator measures how quickly the judicial system turns over received cases – that is, how long it takes for a type of cases to be resolved. Thus, it is possible to answer to one of the most frequent question – what is the average length of proceedings.

Age of pending cases (APC indicator): length of active cases pending before a court at a certain moment, measured in years / days from the date of filing of the case. Cases filed with a court, but unresolved, form the backlog of pending cases of a court.

Additionally, the following indicators should be implemented:

- **Case per judge (***CPJ indicator***):** number of a particular type cases per judge in the given period.
- ➤ Case per staff (CPS indicator): number of employees of the court in a year and cases resolved by the same court at the end of the year. It should also reflect the average level of case complexity per judge for the requested period. Similarly, the average level of complexity of electronic case files examined by a judge as of the date of information generated by ICMS.
- > Staff per judge (SPJ indicator): number of employees in a court and the number of judges in the same court in the given period. The efficiency of a court depends on the quantity and quality of human resources. A proper allocation of judicial support staff will increase efficiency and quality of judicial services.
- ➤ Rate of the appealed / under recourse, quashed and/or modified decisions (AR, QMD indicators): rate of the appealed / recourse decisions is expressed as a percentage of appealed decisions related to the total number of decisions in a given period of time. The rate of the quashed or modified decisions is expressed as a percentage of quashed or modified decisions by a higher court as to the total number of decisions adopted in a given period of time. These indicators reflect the limited potential of existing judicial statistics to assess the quality of decisions. The rate of appealed decisions and the rate of recourses allowed (which determines the modification or quashing of challenged decisions) are to be interpreted accurately. For instance, certain case types cannot be subject to recourse. In another respect, the success of an appeal / recourse may not be directly linked to the quality of initial discussions, but should be based on other considerations, such as distinct interpretation of the law by a court of appeals or recourse.
- ➤ Implementation of the performance indicator **Average cost per case**, by setting data transfer from 1C database of each court into the Performance Measurement Module database. Thus, the following formula should be used:

$$C_{DE} = \frac{\Sigma \ Cheltuielilor}{N_{DE}}$$

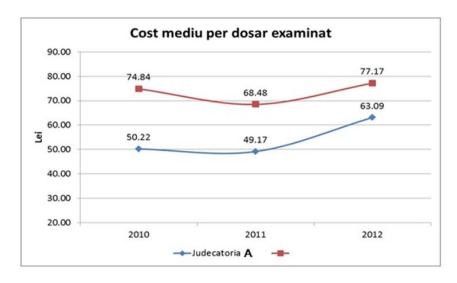
unde

CDE – Costul mediu per dosar examinat.

Σ Cheltuielilor - valoarea totala a cheltuielilor

 N_{DE} – Numarul total al dosarelor examinate intr-o perioada determinata (toate tipuri de dosare).

Thus, a court can calculate and make available average cost calculations per case according to the below example.

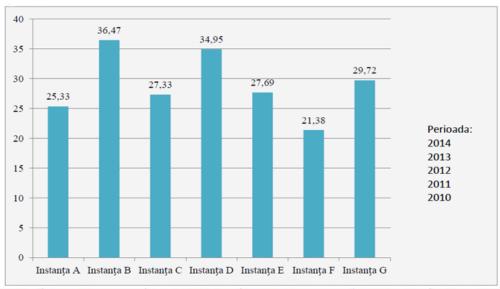


Additionally, upon generation of ICMS reports (from Performance Measurement Module and / or Statistical Reporting Module), the user shall be able to access certain standardised recommendations issued by the system, reflecting concrete actions to be undertaken, depending on the results displayed by the program. This should end up in improving performance at both court and system levels.

- 3. Following implementation of performance indicators recommended by CEPEJ, the Statistical Reporting Module for external users is to be implemented (similar to the online available CEPEJ-STAT³ database). Development and publication of statistical information on the websites aims to provide authorities, stakeholders and citizens with general statistical information about the activity of each court in a simple and easy manner, making some comments to guide citizens in analysing figures / information. The statistics card posted on the courts webpages should contain statistical information about:
 - Rate of variation of pending cases in the backlog;
 - Length of pending cases backlog resolution;
 - Age of pending cases;
 - Case per judge;
 - Case per staff;
 - Staff per judge;
 - Rate of the appealed / under recourse, quashed and/or modified decisions;
 - Rate of postponed hearings.

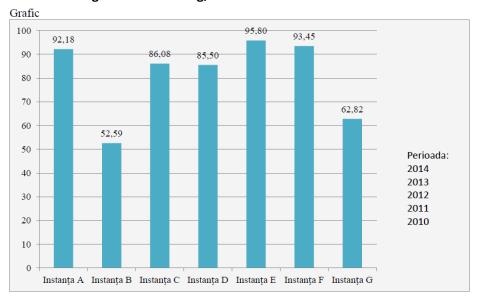
³ http://www.coe.int/T/dghl/cooperation/cepej/evaluation/2016/STAT/02.asp

Graphs and tables should be used to present statistical information, as shown below:



Nr ord	Denumirea instanței	Rata ședințelor de judecată amânate, %	Numărul dosarelor înregistrate	Numărul ședințelor de judecată planificate	Numărul ședințelor de judecată amînate	
1 Instanța A 25,3		25,33%	4302	6479	1641	
2	Instanța B	36,47%	813	1264	461	
3	Instanța C	27,33%	1016	1354	370	
4	Instanța D	34,95%	16010	23533	8225	
5	Instanța E	27,69%	693	939	260	
6	Instanța F	21,38%	2481	3718	795	
7	Instanța G	29,72%	5920	9513	2827	

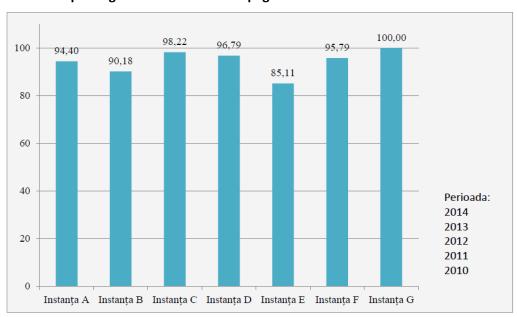
Rate of hearings audio recording;



Tabel

Nr ord	Denumirea	Rata	Numărul total	Numărul	Numărul total	
	instanței	înregistrărilor	al dosarelor	total al	al	
		audio a ședințelor	parvenite ședințelor de î		înregistrărilor	
		de judecată %		judecată	audio	
				desfășurate		
1	Instanța A	92,18%	1639	3493	3220	
2	Instanța B	52,59%	1803	2938	1545	
3	Instanța C	86,08%	1017	1580	1360	
4	Instanța D	85,49%	1988	3462	2960	
5	Instanța E	95,79%	1527	2308	2211	
6	Instanța F	93,45%	1373	2139	1999	
7	Instanța G	62,82%	3300	4500	2827	

Rate of posting decisions on the webpages



Tabel

Nr ord	Denumirea	Rata publicării	Numărul total	Numărul	Numărul
	instanței	hotărârilor pe	al dosarelor	total al	hotărârilor
		pagina web, %	înregistrate	hotărârilor	plasate pe
				pronunțate	pagina web
1	Instanța A	94,40%	1819	1750	1652
2	Instanța B	90,18%	1365	1232	1111
3	Instanța C	98,22%	2580	2300	2259
4	Instanța D	96,79%	2504	2459	2380
5	Instanța E	85,11%	865	799	680
6	Instanța F	95,79%	1626	1590	1523
7	Instanța G	100,00%	1713	1659	1659

4. The calculation table proposed by CEPEJ and successfully used by the pilot courts should be integrated into the ICMS. Extraction of information will be flexible, allowing selection of the comparable years, necessary case categories and / or sub-categories. Statistical data should be easily collected for selected types of cases. On a date scheduled centralized in advance, ICMS will automatically generate (quarterly, semi-annually, annually) statistical reports, with their subsequent archiving.

2016	I Cours	II. Cauze noi	III. Cauze	IV. Cauze	V. Deciziile	VI. Deciziile	VII. Rata de	VIII. Durata	IX. Rata	X. Rata
2010	pendinte la	înregistrate	solutionate	pendinte la	atacate cu	modificate	variatie a	lichidării	deciziilor	apelurilor
	1 ianuarie	pe	pe	31	apel/recurs		stocului de	stocului de	atacate cu	reusite
	1 Idilidano	parcursul	parcursul	decembrie	aportocars	de instanta	cauze	cauze	apel/recurs	Todalio
		anului	anului			de apel	pendinte	pendinte	протгосило	
						/recurs				
1. Total cauze civile										
1a. Restabilirea în funcție										
1b. Desfacerea căsătoriei										
2. Total cauze comerciale										
3. Total cauze insolvabilitate										
3.a Proceduri de bază										
3.b Litigii ce ţin de masa debitoare										
4. Total cauze de contencios										
administrativ										
5. Total cauze penale										
5a. Omoruri										
5b. Furturi										
6. Total cauze contravenţionale										
7. Total alte categorii										
7.1 Procedura specială										
7.2 Ordonanțe										
7.3 Materiale examinate de judecătorul										
de instrucție										
7.4 Materiale p/d executarea hotărîrilor										
judecătorești										
7.5 Cereri cu statul "repartizate"		> <	> <		> <	> <	> <	$\geq \!\! <$	$\geq \!\!\! < \!\!\! \le$	$\geq \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \! \!$
7.6 Cereri la care nu s-a dat curs,				\searrow				\searrow		
refuzate și restituite										
Totalul calculat de cauze										

Upon generation of the above-mentioned statistical report, the following rules of filling-in might be followed:

Total civil cases

- a) all civil cases examined under contentious proceedings;
- b) all cases, irrespective of their stage first instance, appeal, recourse or re-examination;
- c) only cases under examination, excluding requests assigned to the judges which were not accepted (the latter will be reflected under sub-categories 7.5 and 7.6);
- d) in all cases, irrespective of the decision adopted (*resolution, transfer, disposition*), the case file will be classified as judged and filed under the *Resolved* heading;
- e) cases under *Joined* status will be reflected separately of the main case, both at the time of filing and during the rest of the period. Thus, cases with the status *joined* will be included under the category *Resolved*, even if the main case will be pending at the end of the reference period;
- f) the number of cases from sub-categories will be included in the total number of cases under this category;
- g) if necessary, court management will have the possibility to select / reflect other sub-categories as well.

Total commercial cases

- a) the general rules emphasized above at civil cases category shall apply;
- b) the total number shall be calculated minus insolvency cases.

Total insolvency cases

- a) data shall be reflected only for courts of appeals and the Superior Court of Justice, general rules emphasized above at civil cases category shall apply;
- b) initiating applications, which were not accepted shall not be taken into account, they being reflected under sub-category 7.6 from the table;

- c) applications not admitted under Art.22 of the Law on insolvency shall not be taken into account, they being reflected under sub-category 7.6 from the table;
- d) Basic procedures sub-category shall cover the number of cases in compliance with the corresponding categories from ICMS (the possibility to manually introduce the information according to the Register of insolvent debtors shall be allowed, shall be allowed);
- e) Insolvency disputes sub-category shall cover the number of cases deriving from the main case file in accordance with the information from ICMS, such as: bringing to subsidiary liability, attachment validation, administrator action for declaration nullity of the legal acts etc. Upon identification of the number of cases, the electronic case files categories, along with the information under Reviewed by same judge / panel heading shall be considered.

Total administrative cases

a) the general rules emphasized above at civil cases category shall apply.

Total criminal cases

- a) the general rules emphasized above at civil cases category shall apply;
- b) the criminal cases in courts, save materials under the competence of the investigative judges.

Total contraventional cases

- a) the general rules emphasized above at civil cases category shall apply;
- b) procedures registered under indexes 4, 4d, 4r, 4rh and 5r (contraventional cases against individuals and legal entities, revisions, recourses against decisions and judgements in contraventional cases, appeals against decisions issued by competent authorities to resolve contraventional cases according to Art.395 para.(2) of the CC of the RM).

• Total other categories

For judges the total number of materials and procedures registered under indexes: 2p/o, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27 and 28 shall be included.

For courts of appeals and the Superior Court of Justice the following data shall be included: requests for case transfer, conflict of competence and requests for recusal / abstention from lower courts, as well as other requests/ materials that cannot be included under other main categories.

• General sub-categories proposed for "other categories"

Special procedure – all cases /materials registered and examined under Art.279-343/8 of the Civil Procedure Code shall be considered;

Orders – all procedures (civil/commercial) registered and examined under Art.344-354 of the Civil Procedure Code shall be considered;

Materials examined by the investigative judges – materials examined exclusively by investigative judges shall be considered (indexes 10-21);

Materials on execution of court decisions – materials filed with courts under index 25 (requests for execution of decisions in civil cases, requests for appeal against bailiff decision) shall be considered.

Requests under "assigned" status at the beginning and end of the year – will cover the number of requests under "Assigned" status in the reporting period, which following judges' examination were pursued, thus, becoming case files and reflected under the appropriate cases category, or over which no procedure were initiated, were rejected or surrendered, in this case being reflected under sub-category "7.6 Not accepted, rejected or surrendered requests";

Not accepted, rejected or surrendered requests - will cover the number of *de facto* requests which were accepted, were rejected or surrendered during a year, thus, there being no information regarding such requests pending in the reporting period (e.g. 1 January 2016 – 31 December 2016). The number of filed requests should always be equal to the number of resolved requests.

Distribution of cases files

5. In November 2013, in all courts of the Republic of Moldova ICMS version 4.0 was installed. The ICMS does not permit manual assignment of cases by the court president. Taking into account that the cases are distributed to a judge rather on the case complexity level, than the number of cases, determination

of annual reference targets per judge should be considered. This would allow random distribution of case files in full compliance with the optimum case load and complexity, according to the complexity levels system. At the moment there can be significant differences among the amounts of levels of complexity for cases assigned to judges for examination⁴. Thus, the algorithm of cases distribution should be improved. Moreover, the disposition time could be reduced. Thanks to case distribution by levels of complexity, the workload per judge should be relatively uniform and proceedings fairer.

According to p.19 of the Regulation on establishment of uniform levels of complexity for civil, criminal and contraventional cases at the national level, approved by the SCM decision No. 165 / 6 of 18 February 2014, in appeal or recourse cases hearings, the initial level of complexity automatically assigned by ICMS will constitute 50% of the level of complexity established for this type of cases under the Classification of levels of complexity. Implementation of this rule outlined a certain reduction in workload for judges in courts of appeals, so that percentage modification should be considered, as follows: for appeals - 75% (50%), for recourses - 50% (25%), taking into account that cases in recourse are heard in the absence of parties.

6. Currently, ICMS assigns cases in a random automatic way, taking into account only eligible judges, lacking the possibility to assign cases to panels with subsequent identification of incompatible judges and avoidance to make assignment to that particular panel. Under such circumstances, organizational and procedural inconveniences could arise that might lead to delays in the examination of cases. Moreover, this change will ensure distribution of cases in the higher courts or of cases where the law pre-establishes compulsory examination by three or more judges. Therefore, improvement of the random distribution algorithm should be considered.

Operational changes

- 7. At the moment ICMS generates about 80 electronic reports. To extract all reports, one should make the same operations for each report separately. In this regard, ICMS should allow for extraction of more selected reports at the same time, or for some flexible reports that could be adjusted depending on the needs.
- **8.** Review the contents of statistical report forms so that they would reflect accurate and useful data. However, at the moment various functions are introduced into the information system (joining, readjudication etc.), following which statistical reporting is disturbed and manually kept records do not correspond to those generated electronically.
- **9.** Adjust the Statistical Reporting Module to enable reflection of incoming (distributed, but over which no procedures were initiated when preparing the statistical report), rejected and surrendered requests in the electronic ICMS reports. According to the pilot courts, reflection of these materials is useful to analyse the entire workload of judges in the exercise of their duties.
- 10. Taking into account the risk of delay in operating certain procedural actions in ICMS (e.g. taken under submission stage), it is necessary to implement a binding mechanism to respect deadlines, otherwise the lack of such a mechanism may result in inclusion of some incomplete / inaccurate data in the statistical reports.
- **11.** Adjust ICMS with the view to facilitate visualisation of joined case files, along with the main case file. When opening the electronic file, the information about joined cases shall be reflected under "General

⁴ As an example could serve a recent case on the Chisinau Courts of Appeals, established by SCM decision no. 135/7 of 21 February 2017 (http://csm.md/files/Hotaririle/2017/07/135-7.pdf). The Agency for Courts' Administration shall resolve this issue.

data" menu. Development in the Statistical Reporting Module of an electronic statistical report in which data about joined cases should be included.

- **12.** Improve the ICMS "*Remedies*" menu to introduce / reflect information about modified / quashed judicial acts.
- 13. Improve the operation process for ICMS users. Develop the "Employees" menu, so as to make possible extraction of information on the number of judges, judicial assistants, clerks, non-judicial staff by reference to the full-time equivalent (FTE) units. It would be useful to foresee the automatic introduction of information about the periods each employee has worked within a court to obtain as accurate FTE results as possible.
- 14. Develop a mechanism to eliminate manual numbering of case files. ICMS should provide a mechanism where requests for summons / recorded files are assigned unique program numbers used at all court levels (first instance [court], courts of appeals and the Supreme Court Justice).
- 15. Adjust ICMS to automatically fill-in the electronic case cards, which will relieve chancellery staff of the need to manually complete such cards. Furthermore, ICMS should be completed with the review and filling-in of hearings results menu. Implementation of a mechanism that would ensure the introduction without delay of the results of any phase or procedural act in ICMS, so as to facilitate generation of comprehensive and exhaustive statistical reports. Develop certain compulsory fields to be filled-in when introducing hearings results.
 - 16. Improve the "Electronic transfer of requests and case files" menu to facilitate data exchange among different courts, providing opportunity to continue the work with electronic files, eliminating data duplication and reduction of courts staff efforts, with secondary use of data saved in ICMS about requests / case files (general data, litigants, documents). Therefore, by using the "Electronic transfer of requests / cases" menu at the registration stage in ICMS, the employees of courts civil / criminal divisions will have significantly less work, being saved valuable time to fill-in general data about the case, litigants, as well as to scan the case file documents.
- 17. Implement within ICMS a flexible mechanism to manage surveys on satisfaction among the court staff. To examine the possibility of conducting through ICMS of online surveys intended for other target groups (e.g. lawyers, prosecutors, etc.). In the context of introducing functionalities in the judiciary e-Case information sub-system, a survey for sub-system users could be conducted. E-Case allows, among other things, coordination of the agenda of court hearings by participants, creation and management of the online casefile by enabling the parties to have access to it, presentation of evidence and distribution of materials, introduction of electronic summoning mechanism, conduct of videoconferences, etc. Thus, this mechanism could be a useful to improve the accessibility of ICMS prior to making available the judiciary e-Case information sub-system in all courts in the country.
- **18.** Implement within ICMS a translation mechanism (legal acts). This would facilitate the work of the courts translators, thus, the term for case files transfer from one court to another should be considerably decreased.
- 19. With focus on the effective implementation of the judicial information system and taking into account the fluctuation of the courts staff, webinars (training modules) for each category of ICMS users should be developed, to be trained how to operate the information system. At the first logging into the system, a court employee will follow a compulsory distance learning course. Such training is important, including for the courts performance.

