



**CENTRUL  
PENTRU  
JURNALISM  
INDEPENDENT**

# REPORT

2025

[www.cji.md](http://www.cji.md)

The Independent Journalism Center (IJC) is the first media organization to provide assistance to journalists and media institutions in the Republic of Moldova, with the aim of contributing to the consolidation of a free and viable press through projects that offer training in **journalism** and **public relations, media campaigns, advocacy, research, and media education.**

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# I Training and assistance:

strengthening standards for a quality press

In a year when budgets were cut and the number of challenges to press freedom increased, the IJC stood by journalists and newsrooms, supporting them in providing the public with accurate and relevant information. Through training, grants, competitions, and research, we have strengthened the standards of responsible journalism and reaffirmed that ethics and professionalism remain fundamental.



# About results in figures



# 10

## media institutions and projects

supported by grants to attract a new generation to the profession, promote civic activism, and cover elections

# 3



## important studies

launched for a better understanding of the media field

# 19



## awards

given to journalists at the Tulip Press Awards and the Annual Press Club Gala

# 1

new



## protest

organized at the Russian Embassy in support of press freedom and persecuted journalists



# 1

## policy model

on the ethical and transparent use of AI in the press, made available to newsrooms

# Grants for the press: training, involvement, and elections

Despite the financial difficulties faced by the media sector in 2025, we chose to invest in people, editorial offices, and bold ideas. Throughout the year, ten media institutions and projects benefited from 12 grants, which supported initiatives aimed at attracting a new generation to journalism, promoting civic activism, and contributing to accurate and responsible coverage of the parliamentary elections.

 **10**  **12**  
institutions grants

In the context of the September 2025 elections, TV8, Cu Sens, Ziarul de Gardă, Tuk, Nordinfo, Most, and MediaCub played an essential role in informing citizens. The editorial teams produced content that explained the candidates' profiles and programs, tracked political campaign financing, and reported attempts at electoral corruption or fraud. By verifying facts and debunking false narratives, these teams helped combat misinformation and expose propaganda networks, providing voters with accurate and reliable information.

tv8.md



spune adevarul  
zdg  
ZIARUL de GARDĂ

TUK

BANG  
BANG!

NORDINFO

M  
MOCT

KLUMEA

ELITA TV

ALBASAT

Klumea and Nordinfo actively promoted civic engagement, encouraging citizens to participate in the electoral process and to critically inform themselves about their voting options. At the same time, Cu Sens, Elita TV, and Albasat received small grants to integrate people eager to practice journalism into their newsrooms. This initiative helped motivate a new generation of journalists, ready to take on the challenges of the profession.

Through this support, we encouraged newsrooms to remain active, relevant, and connected to the needs of their communities, even in a context marked by financial uncertainty and external pressures. Thus, the grants were not only a source of resources, but also a tool for strengthening independent, responsible, and civically engaged journalism.

# Ethical and transparent use of AI in the press:

a policy model made available to newsrooms

Since the „explosion” of ChatGPT, artificial intelligence (AI) has become a kind of „colleague” to us. More and more media institutions are integrating these tools into their editorial work, but not all newsrooms have clear rules to ensure transparency and ethical use of these technologies. To support them, the IJC has developed a model internal policy on the use of AI, encouraging newsrooms to adopt and adapt it to their own realities. The goal: responsible use of new technologies without compromising professional standards. The model was discussed and analyzed during a [workshop dedicated to the ethical and transparent use of AI in journalism](#), attended by 18 media managers and journalists.




Workshop dedicated to exploring the policy model on the ethical and transparent use of AI in journalism. December 5, 2025

# Transparency and ethics in the AI era:

## TV8 has adopted the policy model proposed by the IJC

In 2025, TV8, one of the largest newsrooms in the Republic of Moldova, faced a question that is essential for digital media: how can artificial intelligence be used without losing public trust? The workshop organized by the IJC provided Sergiu Niculiță, program director, with clear and applicable rules for managing AI-generated content.



*We must be honest with the public. We cannot combat AI-generated misinformation if we do not clearly inform when we use such tools.*

**Sergiu Niculiță**

Sergiu Niculiță, program director at TV8, participant in the workshop on December 5, 2025

The model proposed by the IJC was adopted and implemented in the newsroom to improve editorial processes and existing internal regulations. Each employee is required to sign the updated policy and apply it in their daily work.

For TV8, adopting the IJC model is a concrete step toward editorial responsibility. For the IJC, the editorial office's example shows that practical recommendations can transform theoretical principles into real actions that impact the quality of journalism and public trust.



**Training and assistance**  
2026 through images



# About violence against women in the media

with responsibility and professionalism

In 2025, together with the Women's Law Center, we supported the training of journalists who are committed to reporting on domestic violence with respect, empathy, and professionalism.

During **the training session** „Beyond Sensationalism: How to Report Professionally on Violence Against Women,” reporters from several newsrooms learned how to accurately document such cases, focusing on the dignity of the victims rather than drama or sensationalism. Journalists were encouraged to avoid stereotypes and use language that does not blame the victim.

Subsequently, participants documented cases of domestic violence and published articles, with the best ones receiving awards.



*The training gave me a clearer perspective on the severity of violence against women in the Republic of Moldova. I understood how important it is to show solidarity with victims, to offer them support and to avoid situations that can amplify their trauma. The experience of these sessions shows how necessary it is for society to get involved in recognizing and combating forms of abuse.*

**Alexandru Statnii, journalist, Moldova 1**



Training session “Beyond sensationalism: How to report professionally on violence against women?”  
October 9-10, 2025

# Press Freedom Days:

we wrote on behalf of those who can no longer speak

During **Press Freedom Days**, our voices became the voices of those who have been silenced. Under the slogan „We write on behalf of those who can no longer speak,” members of the media community and civic activists **joined** us in front of the Russian Embassy in Chisinau to protest against the war and express their solidarity with journalists who have been persecuted, arrested, or killed for choosing to tell the truth.



Flash mob held in front of the Russian Embassy in the Republic of Moldova. May 6, 2025

In this way, we paid tribute to our colleagues who lost their lives because of the war in Ukraine and sent a message of support to those who continue to write under pressure, fear, and threats. On a panel placed in front of the embassy, participants in the action left dozens of messages on behalf of silenced journalists. Here are just a few:

*All dictatorships eventually fall. We will be here to write about it. Russia, take your hands off journalists!*

*The truth cannot be hidden behind bars.*

*Journalism is not a crime, but in Russia the truth comes at a high price, sometimes even with your life.*

The messages formulated by the participants in the action were sent to the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Chisinau to remind them that freedom of the press and freedom of expression are fundamental rights.



*When we say ,We write on behalf of those who can no longer do so,' we are referring to journalists in Ukraine and other countries who lost their lives doing their job, but also to those who went to the front to defend their country or died in other circumstances, also because of the war. Had there been no war, they would have continued to write, document, and inform. We also refer to our colleagues convicted in Russia for having the courage to tell the truth and who are now unable to write. We write on their behalf so that their voices are not lost.*

**Nadine Gogu, Executive Director, IJC**

# Memorandum on press freedom

Also on Press Freedom Days, the IJC launched [the Memorandum on press freedom in the Republic of Moldova](#) for the period May 3, 2024 – May 3, 2025, supported by eight other non-governmental media organizations. The memorandum highlights the fact that, despite some legislative initiatives, the working conditions of media institutions have remained unchanged. The key problems identified relate to the intensification of online attacks and harassment of journalists, especially during election campaigns, but also to other forms of pressure on reporters, exercised in particular in Gagauzia and on the left bank of the Nistru River.



# Tulip Press Awards 2025:

human rights promoted through responsible journalism



Award ceremony for the winners of the fifth edition of the Tulip Press Awards. May 13, 2025

In 2025, the collaboration with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Chisinau continued to support journalists who highlight human rights in their press coverage. The fifth **edition** of the Tulip Press Awards competition was launched in the context of Press Freedom Days as a gesture of appreciation for the professionalism of those who choose to reflect on difficult stories. Thirty journalists entered the competition, submitting materials addressing sensitive human rights issues. **The award ceremony** was preceded by discussions on the role of the media in educating the public, raising awareness, and promoting respect for human rights in the Republic of Moldova. Six journalists were awarded the Tulip Press Awards trophy in the Video and Online/Print Media categories.

Also in 2025, for the first time, two special mentions were awarded as encouragement and recognition of efforts to promote fundamental human rights through quality journalism.

# With #narativ in Edineț, Cahul, and Taraclia

The traveling exhibition #narativ, dedicated to human rights, arrived in Edineț, Cahul, and Taraclia in 2025, after being launched in Bălți and Comrat in 2024. The exhibition, organized in partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Chișinău and the Piko Creative Agency, highlights the efforts of journalists who have covered various aspects of human rights in their work over the past five years as part of the annual Tulip Press Awards competition.



Opening of the #narativ photography and illustration exhibition at Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu State University in Cahul. October 8, 2025

The exhibition was complemented by illustrations and photographs from the fifth edition of the [Tulip Press Awards](#) competition held in 2025. The launch of the #narativ exhibitions was followed by discussions on human rights, disinformation, critical thinking, and youth involvement in the development of society.

# „Journalists of the Year” Gala:

Excellence that brings us together



Winners of the 2025 Journalists of the Year competition. December 18, 2025

In 2025, we marked 31 years of activity for the IJC and the 31st edition of the Press Club’s Annual Gala. At the end of the year, we brought together the journalistic community to celebrate and **reward excellence in the press**. In a year marked by new challenges, journalists continued to tell stories that matter. The 87 entries in **the competition** confirm that the independent press has the strength and resources to bring relevant topics to the forefront: from stories about people and places to thoroughly documented investigations that reveal uncomfortable realities, abuses, and injustices. We awarded eight prizes in six categories: Investigation, Reporting, Longread, TV/Radio Program, Podcast, and Photography, as well as three special prizes: Hope of the Year, Excellence Award, and Ambassadors of Critical Thinking.

## the space where we documented change in the press

In 2025, at Media Today we continued to closely analyze the media sector, which experts say is „pluralistic in form but fragile in practice.” We documented worrying trends: newsrooms surviving on shrinking budgets, increasingly fragmented audiences, and an unpredictable advertising market.

A common thread throughout the year was the media’s effort to reinvent itself, especially at the local level. We wrote about newsrooms seeking solutions to remain relevant in their communities, but also about the obstacles they face. We closely followed initiatives to align media legislation with EU standards and translated substantial changes, such as those made to the Audiovisual Media Services Code in the summer, into accessible language. We published guides and recommendations for accurate election coverage, reported on sanctions imposed by the Audiovisual Council, online political advertising, and the role of digital platforms in the election.



On the other hand, to help our colleagues in the profession, we promoted useful recommendations for journalists: how to deal with online harassment and attacks of all kinds, or how to report on minors, people with mental disorders, and women in vulnerable situations.

Last but not least, we paid attention to developments in the international media, wartime journalism, global reports on press freedom, and journalists’ working conditions. All of these were featured on Media Azi in 2025.

# Data, analysis, and perspectives for a stronger press

To support the press, it is not enough to offer only grants, training, or awards. Sometimes, the most important support is clarity. That is why, in 2025, the IJC invested time and effort in research to help the media community better understand where it is and where it is headed. We launched three essential studies for the media in the Republic of Moldova: the Media **Audience Study**, the Media **Needs Study**, and **a new study on the media market**, which analyzed the realities and trends of 2025. Together, these studies provided newsrooms, partners, and decision-makers with a clearer picture of media consumption, industry challenges, and market sustainability.

In the context of the parliamentary elections, our role was also one of monitoring. The IJC analyzed how ten television stations covered the election campaign, ensuring compliance with legislation and the Code of Ethics in informing viewers. **The four reports** published became not only an X-ray of media behavior, but also an important self-regulatory tool, contributing to the consolidation of standards in sensitive election periods.



Photography: Elena Covalenco

# Legal assistance, advocacy, and public policy:

rights protected, laws enforced

For over three decades, the IJC has supported the press in the Republic of Moldova, creating a safe environment in which journalists can do their job without undue pressure or interference.

In 2025, we focused our efforts on defending their rights, improving media legislation, and monitoring its enforcement so that the law works in support of the profession and the public.



# About results in figures



over

# 50

## free legal consultations

provided to newsrooms and media professionals

# 7



## strategic cases

managed for the protection of journalists and editorial offices

# 23

## rapid responses

to cases of violations of journalists' rights

# 22

## lawyers and attorneys

trained to strengthen the press defense network



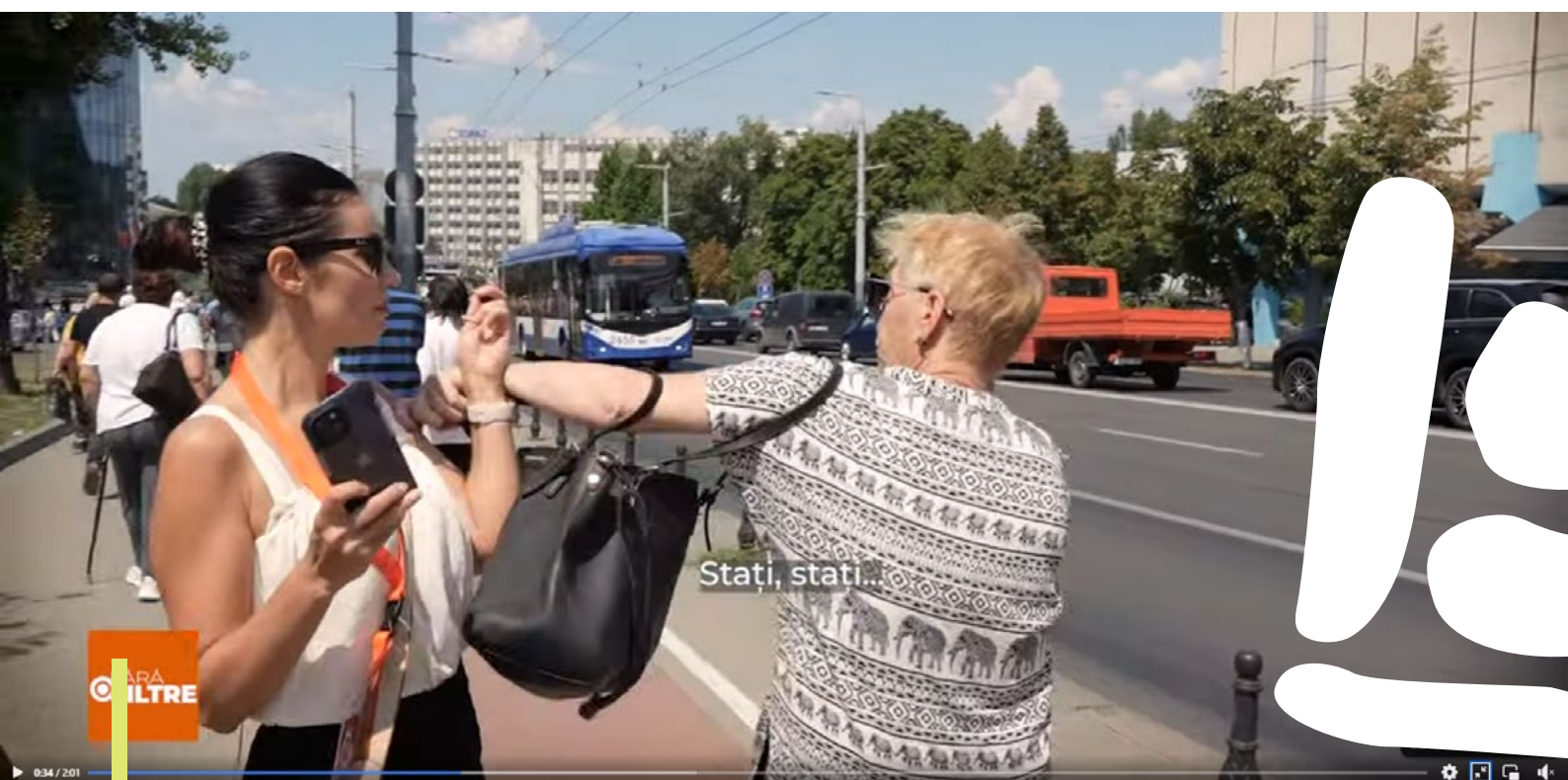
# 1

## study

providing an overview of the media landscape and assessing key developments and vulnerabilities

# Annual press diagnosis

Traditionally, the IJC scans the media ecosystem in the Republic of Moldova to see where the press needs support. In the first month of 2025, [we published the ninth edition](#) of the Index on the State of the Press in Moldova (ISPM), a reference tool that shows vulnerabilities, highlights positive developments, and offers concrete recommendations for authorities, regulatory institutions, and media actors. More than a diagnosis, the ISPM is a public policy guide for strengthening press freedom.



Journalist Veronica Gherbovețchi was the target of intimidation and physical attacks at the August 5 rally held in support of Bashkan Evghenia Guțul. Source: Fără Filtre

## Solidarity in the face of abuse

Throughout 2025, the IJC constantly monitored respect for journalists' rights and reacted promptly whenever our colleagues' rights were violated. In collaboration with partner media organizations, we documented and [publicized](#) 23 cases of restricted access to information, intimidation, or other practices that affected freedom of expression.

Each complaint was taken further, at the national or international level, to increase the visibility of these situations and public pressure on the responsible authorities. In several cases, civil society reactions led to the initiation of investigations or the review of abusive decisions, a sign that rapid intervention and solidarity matter.

# Defending public interest journalism in court

In addition to public reactions to abuses, we continued to stand by newsrooms and journalists who ended up in court for documenting topics of public interest. In 2025, we handled seven cases, five of which were initiated or taken over during the year.

An important result was achieved in the case of Aurica Podgurschi vs. TV Nord, in which the court of first instance **dismissed** the action for alleged defamation, confirming the legality of the journalistic approach and the public interest of the material. We also continued to provide assistance in cases from previous years that are still pending, including cases involving the intimidation of journalists and disputes arising from the publication of materials of public interest.

New cases in 2025 include cases concerning verbal **attacks** by Mayor Ion Ceban against several journalists, online threats against journalist Veronica Gherbovețchi (Fără Filtre), as well as strategic litigation concerning access to information and RISE Moldova investigations. Each case means more than just a court file. It means protecting journalism that is uncomfortable but important.

## Legal support when it matters

For many journalists, the first step when facing pressure or obstacles is a call or message to the IJC. In 2025, legal advice remained one of the most requested forms of support: we provided over 50 free consultations to newsrooms and media professionals, particularly in cases involving restrictions on access to information of public interest, legal assessment of materials produced in the electoral context, abusive prior requests, or threats of legal action.

Beyond consulting, we provided support in drafting complaints to authorities, legal responses, and court filings. In addition, through the 16 articles published in the „Press **Lawyer**” section, we transformed legal norms into clear and practical explanations, adapted to the real challenges faced by journalists. Thus, legal advice was not only a reaction to the crisis, but also a preventive tool.

# When online harassment of the press becomes a criminal case and a signal for society as a whole

In 2022, journalist Viorica Tătaru received a private message containing a direct death threat: „Someone will put a bullet in your head for asking questions.” Viorica wrote to us for legal assistance. We encouraged her to file a complaint, provided her with the relevant legal framework and applicable legal references, and explained the procedural steps and options available to her. With our support, the journalist filed a complaint with the police, and the case resulted in the opening of a criminal file. The investigation was temporarily suspended because the person in question was abroad, but the case was resumed after his arrest upon entering the country in 2025. The defendant admitted his guilt.

For the journalist, the case was confirmation that such acts should not be ignored. For us, it was further proof that prompt and well-founded legal assistance can turn an act of intimidation into a precedent for accountability.



Moreover, he made a public appeal urging other social media users not to resort to aggressive messages against journalists:

***„I apologize for what I did wrong. It will not happen again, and I do not want others to end up like me. Do not repeat my mistake! All mistakes are punishable by law. It is very strict.”***

Viorica Tătaru, one of the beneficiaries of the free legal assistance program offered by the IJC

# Vigilant about legislative changes

In 2025, the IJC was present where decisions are made: in the consultation and development of public policies in the media field, within the parliamentary working group and in dialogue with regulatory authorities. Our expertise contributed to the adjustment of legislative drafts so that they respond to the real needs of the press and reduce the risk of arbitrary enforcement.

Also this year, **we published** a thematic report on the mechanisms for suspending and withdrawing audiovisual licenses. The analysis highlighted vulnerabilities and made recommendations for increasing transparency and strengthening procedural guarantees, transforming data and observations into useful tools for balanced regulation.

# From law to practice: training for press freedom

To make legal assistance more accessible and effective for journalists, the IJC continued to invest in training legal professionals. In partnership with the Lawyers Training Center, we organized a program dedicated to media law, focusing on access to information and freedom of expression. As a result, **22 lawyers and attorneys** deepened their skills in providing effective support to newsrooms and reporters in risky situations, contributing to the consolidation of a strong network for the defense of the press in the Republic of Moldova.



Training session on access to information and freedom of expression. April 15, 2025

# Media education:

equipping with tools that cultivate critical thinking

In 2025, we strengthened media education as an essential pillar of a healthy society. We supported teachers through training, launched video lessons adapted for students with hearing impairments, successfully piloted an integrated approach to media education in core subjects, and launched the digital platform Media Education. Platforms developed or supported by the IJC, such as the [cuMINTE podcast](#), the third edition of the Media Education Forum, Media Education Week, and the [PikPok.online@guguță](#) show tour, have created new spaces for dialogue, giving everyone the opportunity to reflect on the role of information in our lives.



# About results in figures



# 15

## video lessons

launched for students with hearing impairments, making media education more accessible

# 1



## campaign

promoting inclusion, bringing inspirational stories and messages of solidarity to communities

# 9

## years

of media education taught in schools, for generations resilient to disinformation

# 40

## websites

analyzed twice a year to guide the public towards credible sources

# 3255

## students

discover the power of critical thinking through Media Education in the 2025-2026 academic year

# School and media education:

## a nine-year journey

In the 2025-2026 school year, media education reached its ninth year of teaching in schools in the Republic of Moldova. Throughout this journey, we have encouraged and supported teachers to actively engage in promoting media literacy in schools.

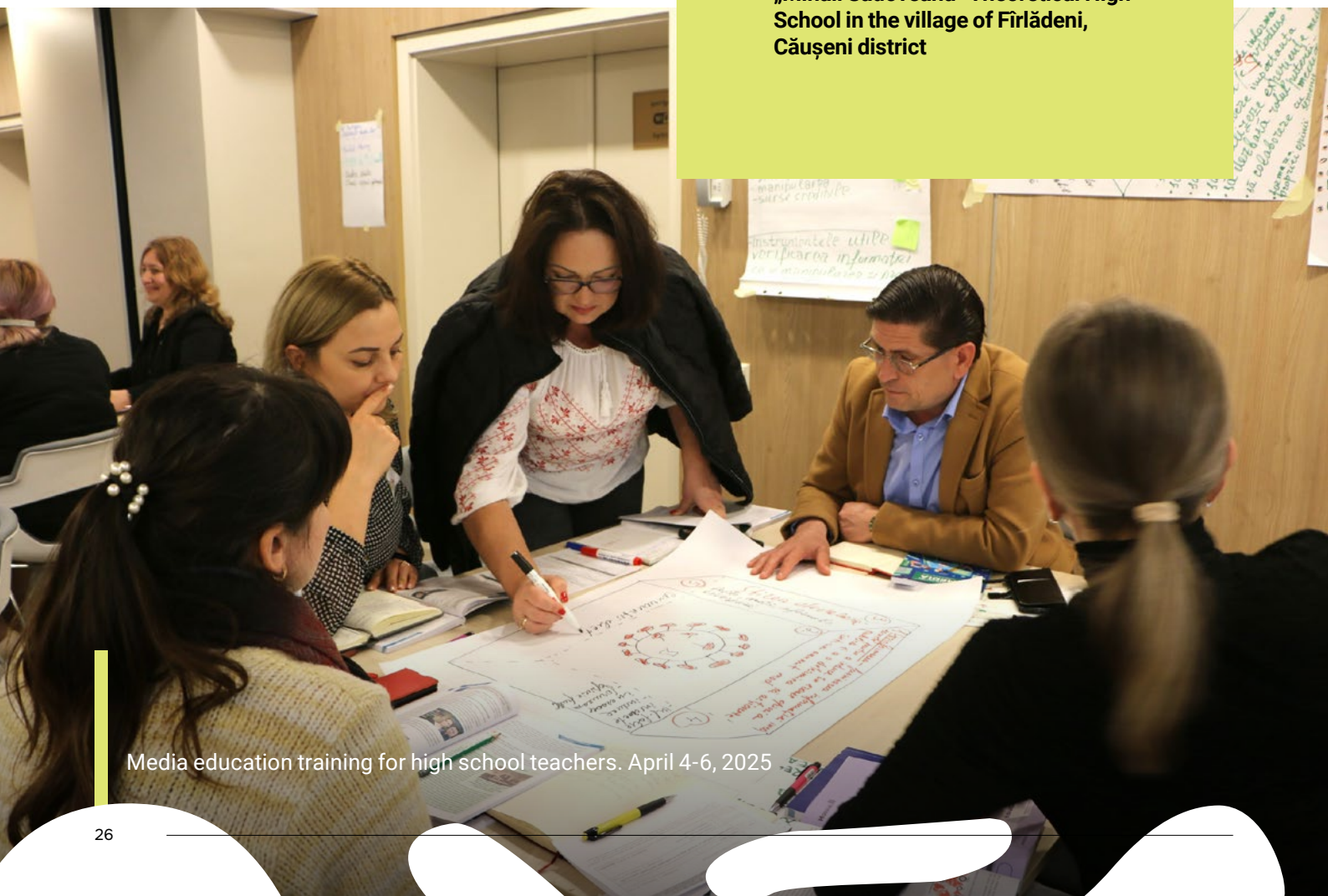
Currently, 108 teachers who have completed IJC training programs teach the optional Media Education subject to 3,255 students in 122 classes in 76 schools across the country. Of these, 65 are taught in Romanian and 11 in Russian.

During the year, we **trained** 21 high school teachers using the updated version of the Media Education textbook, printed in 2024. The training sessions provided teachers with the opportunity to develop new media skills to teach the subject with confidence in high school.



*Media education develops skills in anyone, regardless of age. Not only students, but also adults do not have sufficient knowledge to ensure their safety online. The virtual space greatly influences the way children think today, and we are obliged to help them navigate safely.*

**Liubovi Cucovici, teacher at the „Mihail Sadoveanu” Theoretical High School in the village of Fîrlădeni, Căușeni district**



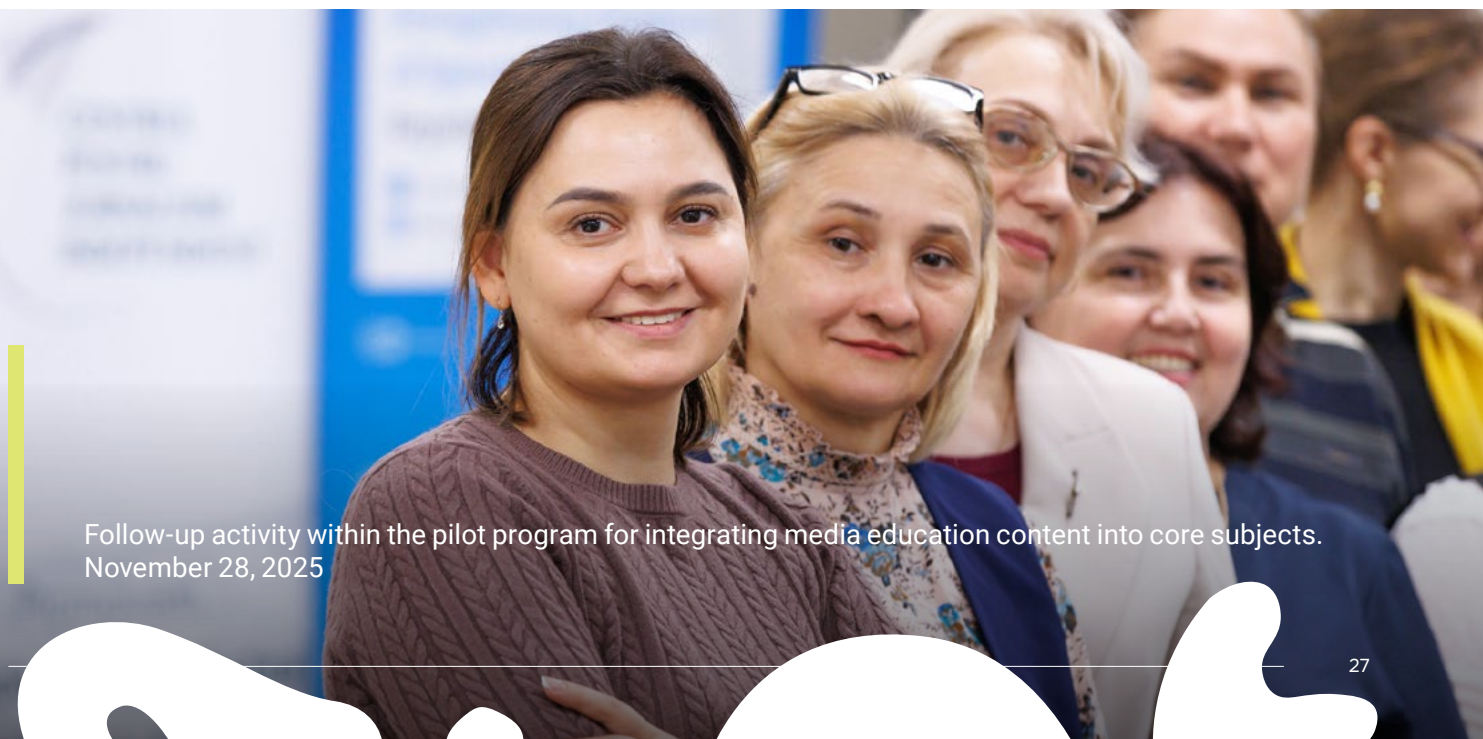
Media education training for high school teachers. April 4-6, 2025

# More accessible media education

After the IJC reprinted the updated Media Education textbooks in Braille in 2024, in 2025 we took a new step towards truly inclusive media education: we launched [15 video lessons](#) dedicated to students with hearing impairments. The lessons are adapted for all three school levels—primary, middle school, and high school—and offer diverse content in the field of media education. Interpreted in sign language and accompanied by distinct visual elements, the video lessons represent a bridge that removes communication barriers and promotes every student’s right to equal access to quality knowledge.

# Integrated approach to media education, successfully piloted

After three years of exploration and experimentation in classrooms, the piloting of the integrated approach to media education in Romanian language (6th grade) and English language (10th grade) classes was successfully completed in 2025. In the third year of piloting the integrated approach, teachers from selected institutions received [training](#) and mentoring from trainer Natalia Grîu and Lithuanian Media Education Project Manager Arminas Varanauskas. The two summative activities, carried out in [May](#) and [November](#) 2025, demonstrated that media education can be easily integrated into core subjects, providing students with dynamic, interactive, and, most important lessons connected to current information realities. As a result of the piloting, five modules were developed and presented to the Ministry of Education and Research, to be used in the curriculum development process. Meanwhile, over the last three years of study, more than 1,600 students from 32 educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova have been guided by 62 teachers to develop their critical thinking and media literacy skills in the subjects of Romanian language in the 6th grade and English language in the 10th grade.



Follow-up activity within the pilot program for integrating media education content into core subjects. November 28, 2025

# When English class becomes a lesson for life

For Rodica Aculov, an English teacher at the Mihai Eminescu Theoretical High School in Cimișlia, integrating media education into 10th grade was more than an experiment: it was an opportunity to develop life skills. Convinced that students need to learn to think critically in a world oversaturated with information, she turned English classes into spaces for discussion and exploration. Students analyzed phenomena such as greenwashing and brainwashing, created podcasts, vlogs, and reports, stimulated their creativity, and strengthened their self-confidence.

Rodica Aculov has developed nine lesson plans with elements of media education and now teaches the optional course Video Storytelling, demonstrating that school prepares students for life and that critical thinking is one of the most valuable skills for students.



*Media education teaches students to ask questions, analyze, and make informed decisions. When you see what they can achieve, you understand how necessary these initiatives are.*

**Rodica Aculov**

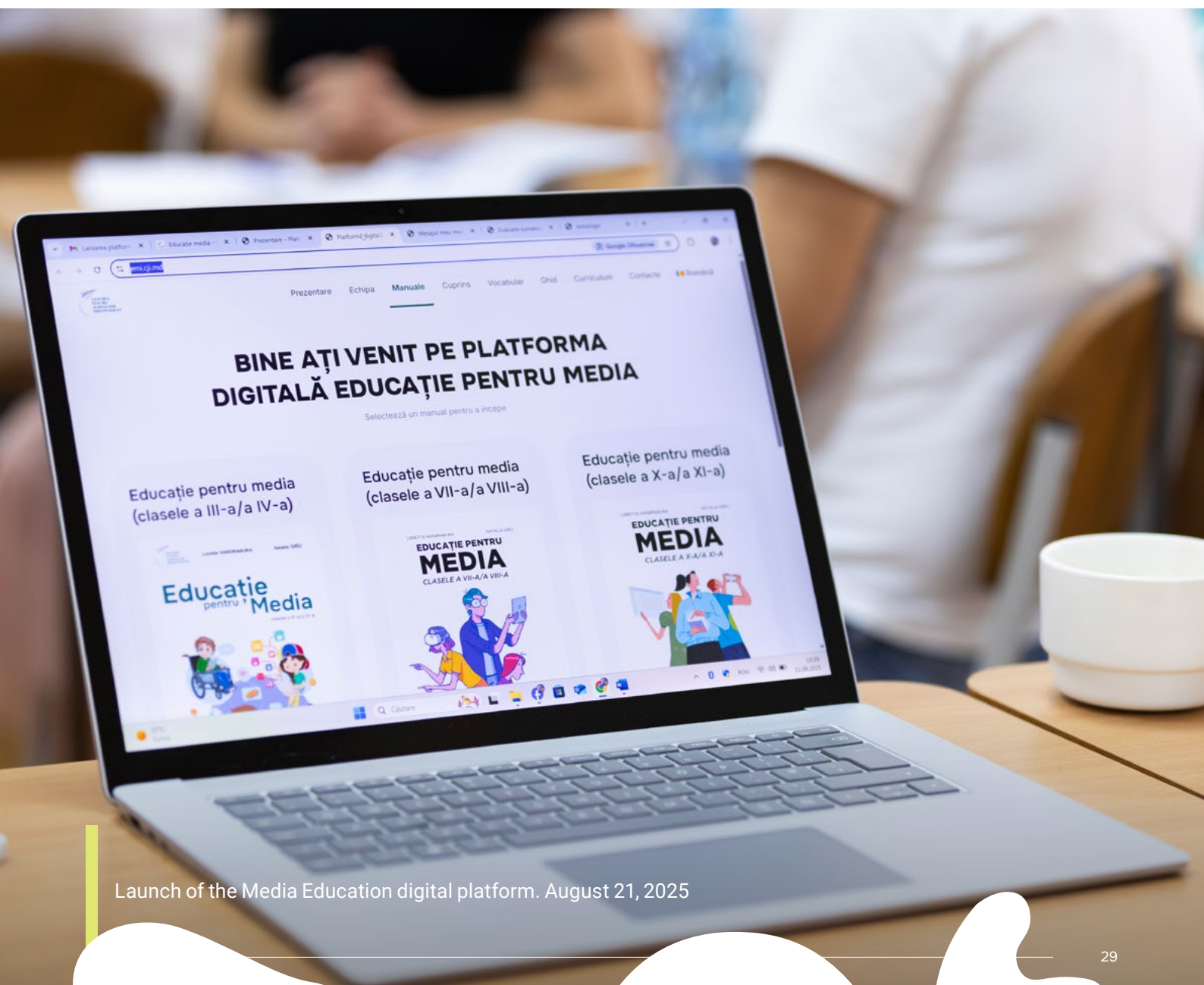
Rodica Aculov, one of the teachers who has integrated media education concepts into English language teaching

# Media education,

closer to students through  
the digital platform

Starting in September 2025, students studying the optional subject Media Education will benefit from a new tool – **the digital platform** of the same name. It hosts the electronic version of the Media Education textbooks in Romanian and Russian for each level of education (grades III-IV, grades VII-VIII, grades IX-X). The platform is also intended for teachers, whether they teach the subject as an optional subject or integrate media education content into compulsory subjects. The development of the platform was the result of a joint effort by the IJC, authors Loretta Handrăbura and Natalia Grîu, and a dedicated IT team. Now, just a click away, the platform is available to all internet users, providing easy access to Media Education resources.

At the end of 2025, as part **of the** „Media Education: Keeping Up with Trends” **campaign**, several teachers created videos and posts showing how **printed** and **digital** textbooks can be used effectively to transform the learning process into a more interactive experience, tailored to the digital interests of the younger generations.



Launch of the Media Education digital platform. August 21, 2025

# The Media Education Forum:

third edition

In October, we held the third edition of the Media Education Forum – **Moldova Media Literacy Forum**. It was a platform for dialogue and collaboration, bringing together decision-makers, experts, teachers, and other actors involved in the educational process. The forum facilitated the exchange of ideas and experiences, providing an opportunity to analyze trends and perspectives in the field and to **present** best practices, modern teaching methods, and innovative solutions that make lessons more attractive to students. In this way, the event became not only a space for discussion, but also a source of inspiration for the community of teachers who promote critical thinking. At the end, participants adopted a resolution reconfirming the importance of strengthening efforts for media education.



*I felt that every voice present mattered, that together we can transform media education into a pillar of democracy. All the experts offered ideas and examples worth following, from national policies and innovative methods to success stories from the Baltic States, which demonstrated that media education can become a shield against manipulation and disinformation. I left this event with the firm conviction that media education is no longer a luxury, but a vital necessity for the education of younger generations.*

**Elena Lungu-Jalbă, teacher at the Onisifor Ghibu Theoretical High School, Chișinău**



Media Education Forum. October 24, 2025

# Media Education Week:

## eight years in Moldova

Every October, media education takes center stage, and in 2025 we marked **a new edition** of Media Education Week, an event dedicated to promoting media culture in schools. Teachers who teach the subject worked with students to create a real „media exploration week”: interviews, visits to newsrooms, meetings with journalists, drawing contests, quizzes, trips to the library, flash mobs, and film screenings. All these activities stimulated the students’ curiosity and gave them the opportunity to critically analyze the information they consume on a daily basis.



Drăgălin Rusu, a seventh-grade student at Școlii Middle School in Dondușeni district, winner of the contest „Media education helps us #thinkcritically.” November 2025

During the week, we also launched **the digital poster contest** „Media education helps us #thinkcritically,” in which middle school students creatively expressed their ideas about how media education helps them stay informed, recognize fake news, think critically, and use digital technologies responsibly.

The **eight winning posters** showed how students turn learning about media into an active and relevant experience.

# „Video(s)cool: create and inform!”

a competition to promote critical thinking

To bring media education and critical thinking closer to students, in the spring of 2025 we challenged high school students to participate in **the contest** „Video(s)cool: create and inform!”. Young people were encouraged to create educational and creative video content for social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok), arguing why we need to be vigilant when surfing the internet, how important it is to check the sources from which we get our daily information, explaining what disinformation is and how it affects us. The students turned this new challenge into an opportunity to create video content with useful messages for themselves and their peers. After evaluating the materials, we selected nine winners from a total of 37 participants and 50 videos. The authors of the best materials were awarded tablets, bookstore vouchers, backpacks, board games, and personalized diaries.

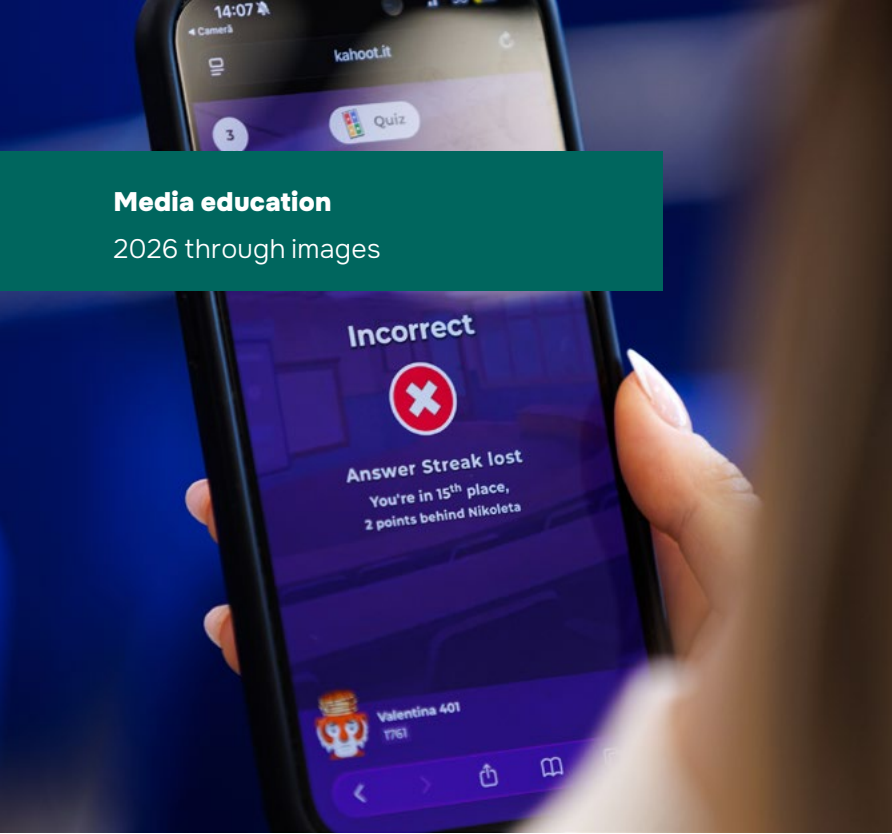


37 participants  
50 videos

Logos for 'Centrul Independent de Jurnalism Investigativ' and 'Centrul de Informații și Comunicare' are visible.



Constanța Neaga, Mirela Mocan, and Bianca-Lavinia Darie from the Onisifor Ghibu Theoretical High School in Chișinău took third place in the Video(s)cool: Create and Inform! contest. June 2025



## Media education

2026 through images



# Critical thinking, a shield against manipulation and misinformation

On May 9, 2025, Europe Day was celebrated in Chişinău under the slogan „Peace, Prosperity, Dignity – Europe is You!” We joined in the cultural and educational events, bringing media education directly to the community. The audience, of all ages and speakers of Romanian and Russian, had the opportunity to participate in a contest with prizes, in which they tested their knowledge of media literacy, disinformation, and critical thinking. Smiles, excitement, and curiosity shaped the atmosphere, and each correct answer was a small victory.



The audience tests their knowledge of media literacy. May 9, 2025

# Future journalists and teachers honed their critical thinking skills through media literacy training

In 2025, we continued to organize media literacy training for future journalists and teachers. At Moldova State University, discussions focused on **the challenges** posed by fake news and disinformation through artificial intelligence. At Alecu Russo State University in Bălți, future journalists **explored** together the responsibility of disseminating information in the public sphere and the dilemmas of contemporary journalism. At the same time, two other sessions dedicated to information literacy and media education were held at the Ion Creangă State Pedagogical University in Chişinău. Pedagogică de Stat „Ion Creangă” din Chişinău.



Media education workshop at UPS „Ion Creangă”. September 19, 2025

In total, about 250 undergraduate and graduate students participated, either in person or online, in these interactive workshops, **consolidating the knowledge acquired** in communication culture and media education courses and preparing to become professionals capable of navigating the current information flow with discernment.

# PikPok.online@guguță:

## media education through theater

In 2025, the actors of the „Guguță” Municipal Puppet Theater continued their tour of the educational show [PikPok.online@guguță](#), reaching two new Russian-language institutions – Gymnasium No. 77 in Cricova and Kindergarten No. 184 in Chișinău. Through the story, over 200 children discovered how the online environment works and learned, alongside the characters, to navigate the virtual space with caution. The show, part of the theater’s repertoire, was produced in collaboration with the IJC team, which supported the creation of Romanian and Russian versions. Thanks to this partnership, in 2024–2025, the theater offered 21 free performances for nearly 2,200 preschoolers and schoolchildren across the country, bringing media education closer to children through entertainment and captivating stories.



The play [PikPok.online@guguță](#), performed at Gymnasium No. 77 in Cricova. March 18, 2025

# Interministerial Plan on Information and Media Literacy:

## measuring progress

One year after the approval of the Interministerial Plan on Information and Media Literacy by the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Culture, we conducted the first monitoring of how the commitments are being implemented. As the initiator and promoter of the document, the IJC assessed the coordination, planning, and communication processes between the responsible institutions, finding that they are still in their early stages. Through this monitoring exercise, the IJC reconfirmed its role as a key player in promoting and strengthening public policies in the field of information and media literacy, formulating concrete recommendations to ensure the document's long-term continuity and effectiveness.



# Digital security:

## we have learned to protect our own online space

Because digital security remains a challenge for many, in February 2025 the IJC organized three online sessions dedicated to this topic for journalists, media education teachers, students, and civil society representatives. The 126 participants learned practical methods of authentication, phishing prevention, and account protection on popular platforms, gaining essential knowledge for their online safety. Through these trainings, participants strengthened their digital skills and were able to immediately apply the solutions in their professional work.

## analyzing the press, educating the public

**Mediacritica** has maintained its role as a press watchdog, focusing on media education for the public. We provided practical tools for understanding and analyzing information: a series of reels on manipulation techniques and ethical violations, guides for recognizing fake images and videos, explanations about the use of artificial intelligence in disinformation, and how pseudo-experts, self-proclaimed analysts, or astrologers spread toxic messages online. The #PeÎNȚELES section remained a space where we translated complex topics into accessible language so that the public could quickly understand key issues.

At the same time, we monitored the implementation of the Interministerial Plan for Information and Media Literacy, analyzing how schools, kindergartens, libraries, universities, youth centers, theaters, and regulatory authorities put the plan's objectives into practice. We assessed the work of the Center for Strategic Communication and Countering Disinformation and the state's initiatives to respond to external information interference, weighing up existing tools, legal gaps, and difficulties in communicating with major digital platforms.



# The cuMINTE podcast, for a sharp mind



After moving to a new studio in 2024 and switching to a video format for [the cuMINTE podcast](#), in 2025 we had 13 episodes with guests who explained how critical thinking is formed and how we can protect our information space. We discussed education, humor as a social tool, artificial intelligence and its risks, hate speech, propaganda through film, viral manipulation in election campaigns, and journalism as a form of civic resistance.

From teachers, journalists, and strategic communication experts to government officials, each episode tried to bring clear perspectives on one of the biggest challenges of today: how to stay lucid and resilient in a chaotic, uncertain, and increasingly polarized reality. We did not offer quick fixes to the more than 32,000 people who followed our podcast on YouTube, but we gave them an extra chance to put what is happening into context and, therefore, to better understand the world around them.

## Navigating information:

monitoring, social networks,  
and online credibility

In 2025, disinformation reached new heights in the Republic of Moldova, and its impact was strongly felt in the election campaign. Much of the IJC's efforts focused on understanding and documenting the phenomenon in the digital space, where it circulates most rapidly: on social media. For the first time, we monitored disinformation narratives on Facebook, TikTok, Telegram, and YouTube, trying to answer key questions: what messages are circulating, who is promoting them, and how widespread are they? The result was a series of 15 analyses and reports highlighting the dominant themes of the campaign, recurring narratives, cases of deepfakes and artificially generated content with high potential for negative impact, as well as regional peculiarities in Gagauzia and the Transnistrian region. The monitoring sparked widespread interest in the Moldovan and Romanian press, being picked up and quoted by dozens of media outlets and mentioned in the Focus 28 newsletter of Romania's Digital Forensic Team, as well as on the Bulgarian–Romanian Observatory of Digital Media (BROD) platform, part of the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO).

We also traditionally evaluated over 40 news sites in the Republic of Moldova, updating their credibility ratings on the [Media Radar](#) platform. The analysis involved examining thousands of political, social, and economic news items based on clear criteria: text quality, presence of contact details, website accessibility, publication of editorial policy, and adherence to ethical standards. The credibility ranking serves as a compass for citizens, providing them with a clear guide on the extent to which they can trust one site or another.

And, as every year, the IJC continued to document ethical violations and worrying trends in the online and traditional media, as well as on the public broadcasters Moldova 1 and TV Gagauzia.

# „Inclusion starts with me”:

a campaign about people, emotions, and change

„There is no progress without respect for human rights,” „Every person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their disability,” and „Being different is absolutely normal” – these were some of the messages of the „Inclusion starts with me” campaign, run by the IJC between March 2023 and March 2025.

Through a series of **video stories**, the IJC gave a voice to heroes with different life experiences who managed to promote a better world, beyond barriers and obstacles of any kind, becoming true **models of civic engagement** for their communities. The campaign also supported journalists by providing them with valuable guidance on documenting and reporting on vulnerable groups in the Media Azi program and in analyses published on the IJC, Mediaticritica, and Media Azi platforms.



*The fact that some of the products created as part of the campaign were the most distributed in CJJ's history is an indicator that we were on the right track, and the hundreds of comments found under some of the video materials are proof that the public resonated with the campaign's messages and that such topics are of great interest.*

**Nadine Gogu,**  
Executive Director, IJC



# Responsible journalism can change mindsets

With this conviction, we supported two media outlets that addressed various aspects of social inclusion through the grant competition „Partnerships for a More Inclusive Society.” These are the editorial offices of Suntparinte.md and Studio-L television in Căușeni, which documented remarkable stories, bringing to light topics that are rarely discussed and offering the public a variety of content: multimedia materials, video and photo reports, TV shows, and debates.



*We managed to explore inclusion through the lens of different categories and proposed solutions—about children growing up in prisons, people struggling with substance abuse, support groups for parents of LGBTQI+ children, etc. The public responded with messages of support and solidarity, clear proof that responsible journalism can change mindsets and bring people together.*

**Cristina Roșca, editor-in-chief, Suntparinte.md.**



In July 2025, the IJC presented the results of its research on **“Vulnerable and marginalized groups in relation to the media: access, consumption, and media literacy.”** Now in its second edition, the research provides relevant data on the experiences and needs of vulnerable groups in accessing information, their level of trust in the media, the type of information they seek, their preferred media sources, their perception of disinformation, and their level of access to media education activities.



Elveția.



CENTRUL  
PENTRU  
JURNALISM  
INDEPENDENT

## STUDIU

### Grupurile vulnerabile și marginalizate în raport cu mass-media: acces, consum și alfabetizare media



Chișinău 2025

# Projects implemented in 2025 and donors/ partners

1. **„Resilient press, informed voters: protecting Moldova’s elections from disinformation,”** funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Moldova. Activities: providing grants to media institutions; monitoring media content and social networks during the pre-election and election periods of the parliamentary elections; updating the Mediaticritica and Media Azi platforms.

*Implementation period: June 2025 – November 2026.*

2. **„READ – React, Expose, and Act against Disinformation,”** implemented in partnership with International Media Support (IMS), funded by the European Union. Activities: training programs for teachers; campaign to promote the Interministerial Plan on Information and Media Literacy; media education workshops for students; legal assistance for media outlets and journalists.

*Implementation period: January 2024 – December 2025.*

3. **„Promoting social cohesion in Moldova by encouraging inclusion and reducing discrimination,”** funded by the Swiss Government. Activities: a multimedia lab and a hackathon with the participation of socially vulnerable and marginalized groups, resulting in the creation and launch of tools, applications, and platforms to promote diversity and inclusion; information activities and media education workshops for representatives of socially vulnerable and marginalized groups.

*Implementation period: January 2022 – May 2025.*

4. **„Promoting media literacy among citizens through quality media content,”** funded by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR). Activities: creating and publishing materials to cultivate critical thinking on the Mediaticritica platform; promoting media literacy resources developed by the IJC among media consumers; creating the cuMINTe podcast.

*Implementation period: July 2024 - February 2025.*

5. **Tulip Press Awards,** funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Activities: organizing a competition for journalists.

*Implementation period: March - May 2025.*

6. **„Media education and literacy and optimization of newsrooms,”** funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, implemented in partnership with Internews. Activities: tour of the PikPok. online@guguță show in Russian, staged by the Guguță Municipal Puppet Theater, in the southern, northern, and central districts of the Republic of Moldova; training for Guguță Theater actors in media education to develop media skills among viewers.

*Implementation period: March 2024 – October 2025.*

7. **„Advancing media and information literacy in Moldova,”** including phase II, implemented with the support of International Media Support (IMS) and financial support from the Government of Denmark. Activities: development of an interministerial plan on information and media literacy; monitoring of the implementation of the interministerial plan by public institutions; organization of the third edition of the Media Education Forum; production of the cuMINTE podcast.

*Implementation period: October 2023 – August 2025; September 2025 – December 2026.*

8. **„Advancing media education and supporting the media in the Republic of Moldova,”** implemented in partnership with Internews, funded by Sweden. Activities: revision of the content of media education textbooks for primary, middle, and high school levels in Romanian and Russian; promotion of media education through training for teachers based on the revised content of the textbooks; digitization of the optional Media Education course; adaptation of the content of Media Education textbooks for people with hearing and visual impairments by publishing textbooks in Braille for people with visual impairments and producing videos subtitled and/or translated into sign language for people with hearing impairments; organization of the third edition of the Media Education Forum; research on the media market; legal assistance provided to the press, etc.

*Implementation period: February 2023 – May 2026.*

9. **The Google Global Partnership Program,** funded by Google, implemented by Internews in partnership with the Independent Journalism Center. Activities: organization of three online sessions on digital safety.

*Implementation period: November 2024 – February 2025.*

10. **„Get the Trolls Out!”**, funded by the Institute for Media Diversity. Activities: monitoring traditional media and social networks; reporting hate speech.

*Implementation period: December 2023 – April 2025.*

11. **„Strengthening media literacy skills in the Republic of Moldova: Piloting an integrated approach in formal education,”** funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), implemented in partnership with Deutsche Welle Akademie. Activities: piloting the integrated approach by infusing media education concepts into English lessons in 10th grade; train programs for teachers; holding Media Education Week; promoting the optional Media Education course in schools in the Republic of Moldova by organizing the competition „Media Education – a priority in my school,” 4th edition.

*Implementation period: March – November 2025.*

12. **„Empowering citizens: combating disinformation through media literacy and critical thinking,”** funded by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR). Activities: creation and publication of materials to cultivate critical thinking on the Mediacritica platform; monitoring of social media during the election campaign; creation of the cuMINTE podcast.

*Implementation period: July 2025 – February 2026.*

13. **„Fostering social cohesion and trust through media literacy and inclusive media content,”** funded by Switzerland. Activities: grants for media institutions; media education training for representatives of civil society organizations; production of video content and the cuMINTE podcast.

*Implementation period: October 2025 – June 2026.*

14. **„Truth Connects: amplifying media literacy and engaging youth to counter disinformation,”** implemented in partnership with the Moldova School of Journalism, funded by Norway through the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR). Activities: production of video content focused on promoting media literacy and critical thinking; competition for schoolchildren; training for students of the Moldova School of Journalism.

*Implementation period: March–September 2025.*

15. **„Support for independent media in Eastern Partnership Countries,”** implemented by BBC Media Action. Activities: contribution to improving journalistic content

*Implementation period: February 2024–March 2026.*

16. **„Critical Support for Independent Media in Moldova (CRIMM),”** funded by the UK’s International Development Program through Internews. Activities: providing two grants for creative content aimed at promoting civic engagement among citizens of the Republic of Moldova.

*Implementation period: June – December 2025.*

17. **„Informed decisions: legal protection and media education,”** funded by the Austrian Embassy in the Republic of Moldova. Activities: assisting journalists with legal fact-checking during the election campaign; supporting media education at the primary level by printing a batch of media education textbooks.

*Implementation period: June–October 2025.*

18. **„Youth voice against disinformation and propaganda: developing media for young people,”** funded by the Swedish Institute (SI) as part of the SI Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme, implemented in partnership with Internews Ukraine and Casa Media Fanzingo in Sweden. Activities: organizing online and offline courses for young journalists and students from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, aimed at developing their skills in professionally addressing issues related to disinformation and propaganda; providing mentoring and financial support for the production of thematic materials, which will be published on a platform dedicated to the project; organizing a study visit to Sweden.

*Implementation period: December 2025 – December 2026.*

19. **„Media Advocacy Action for Moldova (MAAM): empowering Moldova’s public watchdogs to safeguard media freedom,”** funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Central European Initiative – CEI, in partnership with Centro per la Cooperazione Internazionale/Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa (OBCT) in Italy, Active Watch in Romania, and the European Federation of Journalists. Activities: organizing a workshop on journalist safety and anti-SLAPP legislation, drafting an alternative report on press freedom in Moldova, in the context of the country’s EU accession process, contribution to the development of the Rule of Law Mechanism by the Civil Liberties Union for Europe and to the development of an advocacy plan for the protection of press freedom in Moldova.

*Implementation period: April 2025 – December 2026.*

20. **„Media Enabling Democracy, Inclusion and Accountability in Moldova (MEDIA-M),”** funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UK, implemented in collaboration with Internews. Activities: training programs for journalists, activities to promote media education, grants for new opportunities, media monitoring and research.

*Implementation period: May 2017 – January 2025.*

# General Assembly of Members

Alexandru CANȚÎR

Angela SÎRBU

Nicolae NEGRU

Corina CEPOI

# Members of the IJC Board

Mariana RAȚĂ

Ana GHERCIU

Galina VASILIEV

Ilie CHIRTOACĂ

Ion PREAȘCA

Lilia IONIȚA

Veaceslav PERUNOV

# The IJC team in 2025

**NADINE GOGU**

Executive Director, IJC

**ANASTASIA NANI**

Deputy Director, IJC

**INA GREJDEANU**

Director for Strategic Development, IJC

**MARIANA TABUNCIC**

Program Manager, Media Training and Assistance Program

**VICTORIA ȚĂTARU**

Program Coordinator, Media Training and Assistance Program

**VICTORIA DODON**

Editor-in-Chief, Media Campaigns and Publications Program

**ELENA ROBU**

Content Manager, Media Campaigns and Publications Program

**MARIA LAZAREVIC**

Social Media Manager

**CRISTINA DURNEA**

Program Manager, Media Policy, Legislation, and Research Program

**ZINAIDA SAVENCO**

Legal Officer, Media Policy, Legislation, and Research Program

**EUGENIA GARBUZ**

Financial Director

**ELENA GRIGOR**

Accountant

**VASILE LAȘCO**

Driver-Administrator

# Financial report 2025

Projects	Balance 2024 €	Received €	Spent €	Balance 2025 €	Funding
Strengthening media literacy skills in the Republic of Moldova: Piloting an integrated approach in formal education	4.558	30.495	32.621	2.432	Deutsche Welle Akademie / German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Media education and literacy, and optimization of newsrooms	3.230	16.374	19.604	0	Internews / Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Tulip Press Awards	9.800	0	9.800	0	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Informed decisions: legal protection and media education	0	5.000	5.000	0	Austrian Embassy in the Republic of Moldova
Advancing media and information literacy in Moldova, including phase II	16.425	103.403	98.150	21.678	International Media Support (IMS) / Government of Denmark
Advancing media education and supporting the media in the Republic of Moldova	7.003	205.986	182.732	30.257	Internews / Sweden
Media Advocacy Action for Moldova (MAAM): empowering Moldova's public watchdogs to safeguard media freedom	0	6.913	248	6.665	Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs / Central European Initiative – CEI / Centro per la Cooperazione Internazionale – Osservatorio Balcani Caucaso Transeuropa / Active Watch Romania / European Federation of Journalists
READ – React, Expose, and Act against Disinformation	-14.550	80.136	88.625	-23.039	International Media Support (IMS) / European Union
Critical Support for Independent Media in Moldova (CRIMM)	0	34.200	36.000	-1.800	Internews / UK International Development Program
Resilient press, informed voters: protecting Moldova's elections from disinformation	0	343.333	334.857	8.476	Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Moldova

Truth Connects: amplifying media literacy and engaging youth to counter disinformation	0	36.099	36.099	0	Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) / Norway
Empowering citizens: combating disinformation through media literacy and critical thinking	-5.726	40.594	31.610	3.258	Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR)
Support for independent media in Eastern Partnership Countries	2.579	16.427	21.259	-2.253	BBC Media Action
Support for Independent Media	9.025	-9.025	-	0	Embassy of the United States of America in the Republic of Moldova
The Google Global Partnership Program	2.942	663	3.605	0	Internews / Google
Vibrant Information Barometer	0	2.640	2.640	0	IREX
Media Enabling Democracy, Inclusion and Accountability in Moldova (MEDIA-M)	8.036	3.906	11.942	0	Internews / US Agency for International Development (USAID) / United Kingdom
Get the Trolls Out!	58	4.791	4.849	0	Institute for Media Diversity
ProElect - Promote accountability in electoral processes in EaP through increased participation and capacity of civic actors	0	1.082	1.082	0	European Policy Research and Advocacy Centre / Equal Rights & Independent Media (ERIM) / European Union
Promoting social cohesion in Moldova by encouraging inclusion and reducing discrimination	42.994	16.617	59.611	0	Switzerland
Fostering social cohesion and trust through media literacy and inclusive media content	0	58.895	21.652	37.243	Switzerland
Services provide	-	3.000	3.000	0	
Percentage designation – 2%	277	325	277	325	
<b>IJC Reserve Fund</b>	<b>161.015</b>	<b>26.685</b>	<b>35.060</b>	<b>152.640</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>247.666</b>	<b>1.028.539</b>	<b>1.040.323</b>	<b>235.882</b>	



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