

# TRANSLATION OF WEBSITES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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*This article investigates the translations of websites belonging to state institutions and organizations in the Republic of Moldova. First the legal framework and requirements are surveyed. Then the number of linguistic versions provided, the degree of maintenance of website content in multiple languages are examined, followed by a brief discussion of the main issues in translation of websites of state institutions and organizations in the Republic of Moldova. The methodology incorporates elements of quantitative and qualitative approaches.*

**Key words:** *Website Translation, State Institutions and Organizations, translated content, maintenance of website content, linguistic versions.*

In an interconnected world where borders blur and connectivity knows no bounds, the significance of website translation transcends mere linguistic adaptation. It is the gateway to global outreach, a bridge that connects businesses and audiences across diverse cultures and languages. As the digital landscape expands exponentially, the pivotal role of website translation becomes increasingly pronounced, heralding not just comprehension but fostering engagement, inclusivity, and unlocking doors to new opportunities on a global scale. The translation of websites is an indispensable tool for state institutions and organizations seeking to achieve effective communication, inclusivity, citizen empowerment, and the cultivation of a positive national image and the successful realization of governmental objectives.

Sandrini defines website translation as “the production of a new website which is targeted at another linguistic and cultural community and based on an existing website in accordance with the predefined purpose”. (2008 : 167–91) This implies that the process of website translation involves only linguistic and cultural adaptation of the website content. Pym thinks that “the translation task carried out on websites is not different from the other types of translation; texts are extracted, translated and then reinserted on the website according to the required communicative purpose [...]”. (2011) We agree totally with the Pym’s affirmation because translation of website content involves transferring the source text from a language to another language.

In the case of Moldovan State Institutions and Organizations, we can deliberate on linguistic adaption of website material to inform citizens or visitors about their activity. One key point to consider in our study is the Legislative Framework regarding the websites of Moldovan State Institutions and Central Administrative Authorities. The primary purpose of this research is to create an overview regarding the stipulations of structuring official websites in Moldova, especially the aspects that refer to translation. In this sense, we studied the *Government Decision No 728/ 26-09-2023 on the official websites of the authorities and public institutions and minimum requirements for their social media profiles*. A primary consideration in our study is point 35 of the *Regulation on official websites of public*

*authorities and institutions and minimum requirements for their social media profiles* that stipulates the following: “The information on the official website is published in Romanian. It is recommended to translate the information into an international language”<sup>1</sup>. Reflecting on this stipulation, we can understand that Moldovan State Institutions are not obligated to translate their content in other languages. However, it is interesting to ascertain whether these institutions conscientiously consider the recommendation.

Another reason for analysing the official websites of the authorities and public institutions from Republic of Moldova derives from the political context. On 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2022, the European Council conferred candidate status on the Republic of Moldova. Consulting official website of European Union we identified that it tends to provide information in all 24 EU Languages: “Priority content, legislation, key political documents and some of the other most visited Commission-managed webpages on the ‘Europa’ web domain, such as the ‘Official website of the European Union’, are available in all 24 EU official languages.”<sup>2</sup> Based on EU website language policy, we aim to investigate if Moldovan authorities and public institutions are prepared to adapt their website content to this policy and to assure website translation in at least one EU language.

To shed light on the translation practices of Institutions and Organizations websites in the Republic of Moldova, we conducted a study, with a particular focus on number of linguistic versions they offer and on maintenance of translation of content in all linguistic versions.

In this sense, 58 websites were subject to our analysis, each serving a distinct role within the governance framework of Moldova:

- 1) Websites of 5 Supreme Institutions in the Republic of Moldova that exercise governance: Parliament, Presidency, Government, National Bank of Moldova, Court of Accounts of the Republic of Moldova;
- 2) Websites of 14 Ministries and website of State Chancellery;
- 3) Websites of 30 Institutions subordinated to Ministries or State Chancellery;
- 4) 8 websites of Public authorities. (Appendix 1)

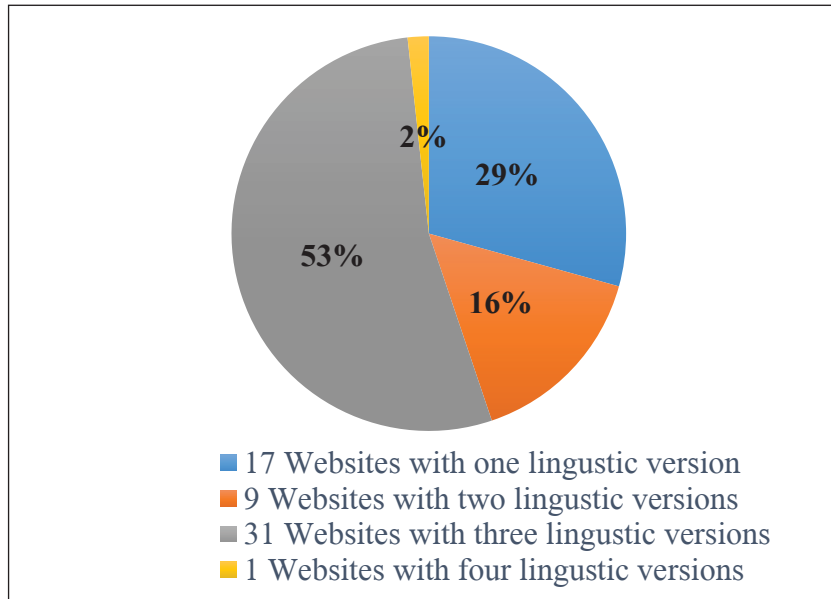
However, we did not apply a stratified sampling approach because all websites should respect *Regulation on official websites of public authorities and institutions and minimum requirements for their social media profiles*.

Expanding on this first purpose of our research, we regard as essential to start with the analysis of websites according to number of linguistic versions they provide. As a result, we deduced that websites of Institutions and Organizations in the Republic of Moldova offer the possibility to access information in one or many languages.

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<sup>1</sup> HOTĂRÂRE Nr. 728 Din 26-09-2023 Cu privire la site-urile web oficiale ale autorităților și instituțiilor publice și cerințele minime privind profilurile de socializare ale acestora. - [https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc\\_id=139673&lang=ro](https://www.legis.md/cautare/getResults?doc_id=139673&lang=ro). Accessed 19 Oct. 2023.

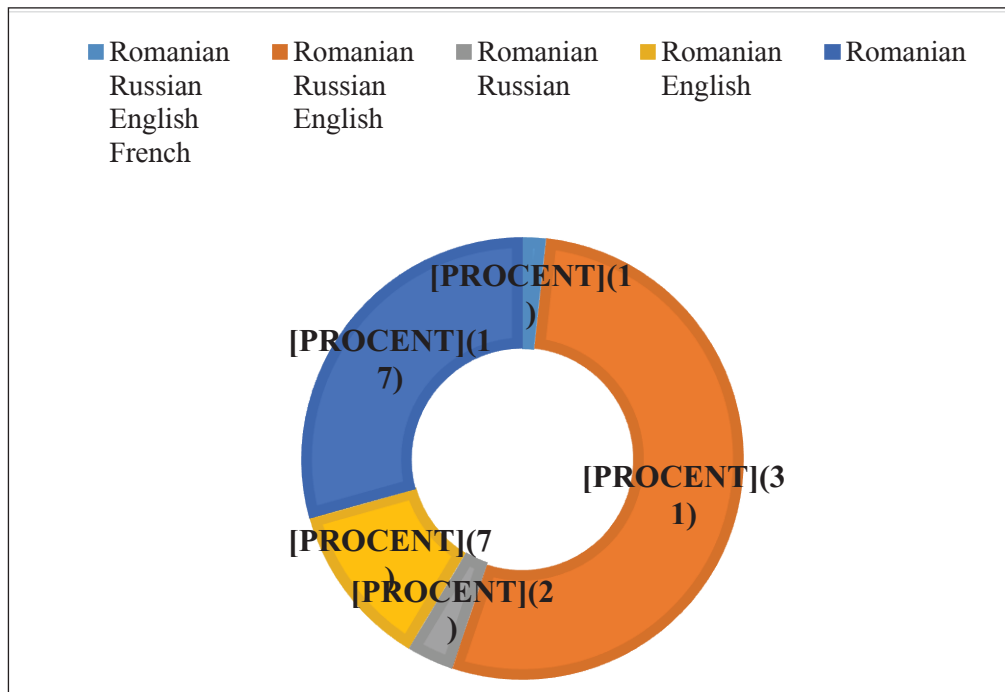
<sup>2</sup> Use of Languages on Our Websites | European Union. [https://european-union.europa.eu/languages-our-websites\\_en](https://european-union.europa.eu/languages-our-websites_en). Accessed 20 Oct. 2023



**Figure 1. Number of websites that provide information in one or many languages.**

After the study of Moldovan websites of state institutions, we noticed that more than half of websites (53%, 31 out of 58) offer a trilingual content, 16% (9 out of 58) of Institutions keep webpages with two linguistic versions and just 2 % (1 out of 58) of websites present to public four linguistic versions. Of the total number of websites, 17 (16%) offer content exclusively in one language.

Expanding upon this observation, we deem it pivotal to extend our study by delving into a more detailed examination of the language versions featured on the websites of State Institutions and Organizations in the Republic of Moldova.



**Figure 2. Language versions of websites of State Institutions and Organizations in the Republic of Moldova.**

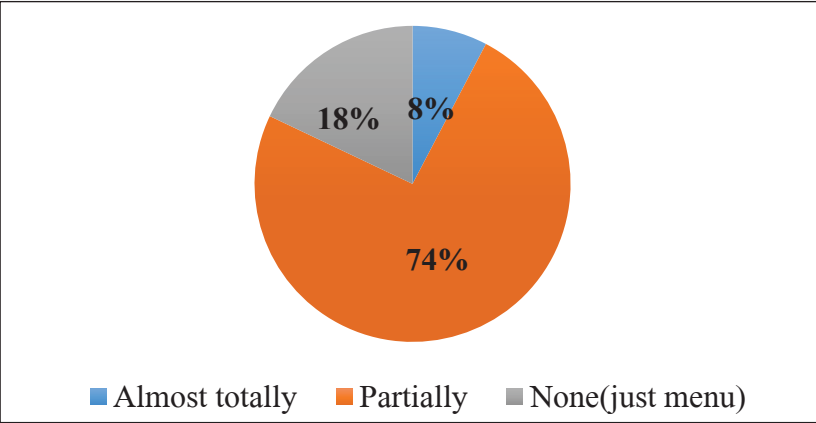
As a result of our examination, we determined that Parliament Website gives the option to consult information in four languages: Romanian, Russian, English and French. 31 (54 %) websites post their content in three languages: Romanian, Russian, English. Among the institutions that offer this possibility, we can list: Government of Republic of Moldova; Parliament of the Republic of Moldova; National Bank of Moldova; Court of Accounts of the Republic of Moldova; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Energy; E- GOVERNANCE AGENCY; Civil Aviation Authority of Republic of Moldova; ENERGY EFICIENCY AGENCY etc.

We observed that 7 Institutions (12%) offer to visitor the possibility to consult information in a Romanian and English version such as: Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Internal Affairs; State Chancellery; Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova; Internal Protection and Anti-Corruption Service; National Institute of Metrology; NATIONAL AGENCY FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. Just 2 (3 %) Institutions (State Labour Inspectorate and Agency for Interethnic Relations) choose to publish information in Romanian and Russian languages. Among the entirety of websites, 17 (29%) provide content solely in the Romanian language, for example: Ministry of Culture; Information Technology and Cyber Security Service; Entrepreneurship Development Organization; National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research; National Agency for Public Health etc.

However, in some cases webpages provide language versions without translation or only partial translation of the content. Moreover, in specific situations, websites propose the switcher of the languages, but the interface is not translated. For example, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry; Ministry of Environment; Border Police; Environmental Protection Inspectorate; National Health Insurance Company etc. websites offer just the button to access English and Russian version, but in fact, webpages do not offer a multilingual translation. Due to these observations, we classified them in the category of websites with one language version.

Our research progresses further as we undertake the critical assessment of the maintenance grade regarding the updating of website content in accordance with the language versions they offer. In this phase, we establish a set of criteria for evaluation, categorizing the maintenance efforts into three distinct levels: “almost totally,” “partially,” and “none” aimed to offer a nuanced understanding of the institutions’ maintenance practices.

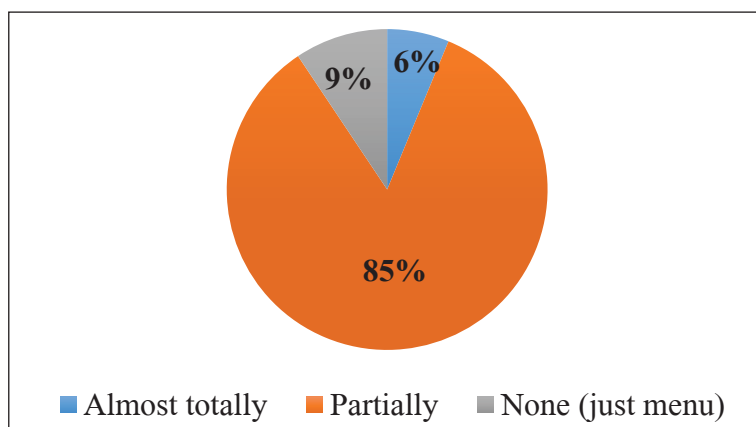
Furthermore, we considered essential to examine the maintenance of updating translation content in each language version separately. We arrived at this idea because there are some websites that actualize information differently according to language version. For instance, General Inspectorate for Migration keeps its website partially updated in Russian, but in English, it offers just the translation of menu. For this reason, we intend to examine English versions of Institutions and Organizations websites.



**Figure 3. Maintenance of updating translation content of English version of websites.**

Firstly, we examined 39 websites that feature an English language version. Consequent to our examination, we determined that just 3 websites (8%) of State Institutions provide updated content in English. Notably, the National Bank of Moldova and the National Bureau of Statistics, National Institute of Metrology of the Republic of Moldova exemplify this practice. Conversely, a substantial majority of Institutions, totalling 74% (29), translate their website content in English only partially. Some examples include Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Energy; Ministry of Labour and Social Protection; Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development; Public Procurement Agency etc. Seven websites (18 %) exclusively provide a translated version of their menu, indicating a limited scope of linguistic adaptation such as The Agency for Energy Efficiency website; State Hydrometeorological Service website; Internal Protection and Anti-Corruption Service website; State Labour Inspectorate website; Ministry of Internal Affairs website; Ministry of Education and Research website; Ministry of Health website.

Furthering the discussion, we propose to examine the maintenance level of Russian versions of institutional websites in Moldova.



**Figure 4. Maintenance of updating translation content of Russian version of websites.**

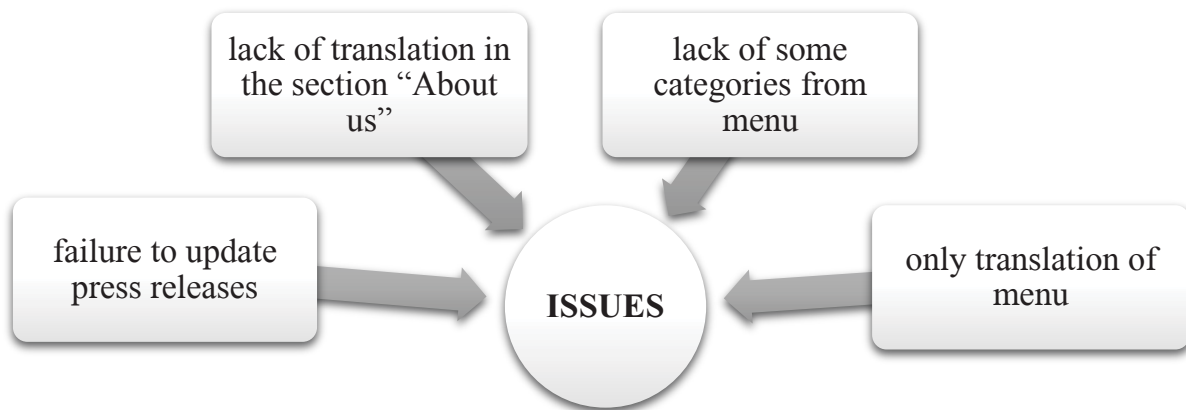
Our research entailed the examination of 32 websites that incorporated a Russian language version. Only two (6%) institutions namely the National Bank of Moldova and the National Bureau of Statistics offer a content totally in the Russian language. Most of the websites, totalling 85% (27) provide a partial translation of their website content in Russian for instance: Civil Aviation Authority of Republic of Moldova website; Agency for Ensuring Resources and Administration of Patrimony website; National Probation Inspectorate website; Institute for Standardization of Moldova website; State Taxes Service of the Republic of Moldova website; State News Agency website etc. The percentage of websites that offer just a translated menu is 9% (3). The Institutions that do not translate their content are Agency for Interethnic Relations; State Labour Inspectorate; Ministry of Education and Research.

Parliament of the Republic of Moldova is the unique Institution that provides the opportunity to access information in four languages. Degree of implication in translating website in these four languages differ. For example, the sections “LEGISLATIVE PROCESS” and “PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL” are not available for English and Russian speakers. Moreover, Parliament does not update media. French version of its website offers just menu translation.

**Table 1. Maintenance of Parliament’s website versions**

Language	English	Russian	French
Maintenance	Partially	Partially	None (just menu)

While examining websites of State Institutions and Organizations in Moldova, we identified several important issues that provide insights into their translation practices and degree of maintenance of language versions.



**Figure 5. Issues identified in translation practices of Moldovan Institutions and Organizations websites.**

The primary and most common issue identified is the Moldovan Institutions and Organizations failure to update press releases. As a case in point, we can analyse website of Government of Republic of Moldova. During the period of our investigation, we observed that the most recent Romanian news post was published on November 19, 2023, whereas the latest news in the English version was released on November 9, 2023, and the latest news in Russian language was published on November 8, 2023.

A secondary problem detected in the examination of websites is the lack of translation in the section “About us”. We think that updating information in the “About Us” section across all language versions is crucial for accuracy, timeliness, and inclusivity. It ensures that users, regardless of language preference, receive current and relevant details, fostering trust, compliance with regulations, and effective cross-cultural communication. As examples, we propose the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the Agency for Court Administration practices. The State Institutions do not provide English and Russian versions regarding team and their structure.

A relevant issue is the absence of some categories from menu in language versions of Institutions and Organizations websites in Moldova. A most common subcategory omitted is the “Careers”. The State Agency on Intellectual Property, the Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization choose to not post announcement regarding job vacancies in Russian and English versions. Ministry of Labour and Social Protection opts to publish information about employment opportunities in Russian and Romanian languages. Another example is the State News Agency website that does not include the category “Transparency” in its English and Russian menu.



We may thusly conclude that website translation does not seem to be a priority for state institutions and organizations in the Republic of Moldova.

To improve Moldovan State Institutions and Organizations' translation practices in the field of websites, a crucial step would be to integrate a dedicated department of translation or the integration of translation responsibilities within the Information Technology and Telecommunication Services department, Document Management Service and Communication Public Relation department. Professional translators incorporated in Institutions' organizations would play a pivotal role in managing content updates in various languages, ensuring consistency, accuracy, and alignment with organizational objectives. This measure would fortify institutional capacity to manage content updates across multiple languages, fostering a well-coordinated and efficient translation process that enhances communication with diverse audiences.

### **Bibliographic references :**

PYM, Anthony (2011), «Website Localizations», In : The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies, edited by Kirsten Malmkjær and Kevin Windle : Oxford University Press, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199239306.013.0028>.

SANDRINI, Peter (2008), «Localization and Translation». In : MuTra Journal, vol. 2, pp. 167–91, <http://www.petersandrini.net/publik/localiz.pdf>.

### **Appendix 1**

<b>No</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Website</b>
1	Presidency of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://presedinte.md/">https://presedinte.md/</a>
2	Parliament of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://www.parlament.md/">https://www.parlament.md/</a>
3	Government of Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://gov.md/">https://gov.md/</a>
4	National Bank of Moldova	<a href="https://www.bnm.md/">https://www.bnm.md/</a>
5	Court of Accounts of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://www.ccrm.md/">https://www.ccrm.md/</a>
<b>MINISTRIES AND STATE CHANCELLERY</b>		
1	Ministry of Economic Development and Digitalization	<a href="https://mded.gov.md/">https://mded.gov.md/</a>
2	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration	<a href="https://mfa.gov.md/">https://mfa.gov.md/</a>
3	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry	<a href="https://www.madrm.gov.md/">https://www.madrm.gov.md/</a>
4	Ministry of Finance	<a href="https://www.mf.gov.md">https://www.mf.gov.md</a>
5	Ministry of Justice	<a href="https://www.justice.gov.md/">https://www.justice.gov.md/</a>
6	Ministry of Energy	<a href="https://energie.gov.md">https://energie.gov.md</a>
7	Ministry of Environment	<a href="https://www.mediu.gov.md/">https://www.mediu.gov.md/</a>
8	Ministry of Health	<a href="https://ms.gov.md/">https://ms.gov.md/</a>
9	Ministry of Defence	<a href="https://www.army.md">https://www.army.md</a>
10	Ministry of Internal Affairs	<a href="https://www.mai.gov.md/">https://www.mai.gov.md/</a>
11	Ministry of Education and Research	<a href="https://mec.gov.md/">https://mec.gov.md/</a>
12	Ministry of Culture	<a href="https://mc.gov.md/">https://mc.gov.md/</a>
13	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection	<a href="https://social.gov.md/">https://social.gov.md/</a>
14	Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development	<a href="https://midr.gov.md/">https://midr.gov.md/</a>
15	State Chancellery	<a href="https://cancelaria.gov.md/">https://cancelaria.gov.md/</a>
<b>INSTITUTIONS SUBORDINATED TO MINISTRIES OR STATE CHANCELLERY</b>		
1	E- GOVERNANCE AGENCY	<a href="https://www.egov.md/">https://www.egov.md/</a>
2	PUBLIC SERVICES AGENCY	<a href="https://www.asp.gov.md/">https://www.asp.gov.md/</a>
3	Information Technology and Cyber Security Service	<a href="https://stisc.gov.md/">https://stisc.gov.md/</a>
4	State News Agency	<a href="https://www.moldpres.md/">https://www.moldpres.md/</a>

5	State Labour Inspectorate	<a href="https://ism.gov.md/en">https://ism.gov.md/en</a>
6	National Agency for Employment Agency	<a href="https://anofm.md/">https://anofm.md/</a>
7	State Tax Service of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://sfs.md/">https://sfs.md/</a>
8	Customs Service of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://customs.gov.md/">https://customs.gov.md/</a>
9	Public Procurement Agency	<a href="https://tender.gov.md/">https://tender.gov.md/</a>
10	Border Police of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://border.gov.md/">https://border.gov.md/</a>
11	General Police Inspectorate	<a href="https://politia.md/">https://politia.md/</a>
12	Internal Protection and Anti-Corruption Service	<a href="https://www.mai.gov.md/">https://www.mai.gov.md/</a>
13	General Inspectorate for Migration	<a href="https://igm.gov.md/">https://igm.gov.md/</a>
14	State Inspectorate for Supervision of Non-Food Products and Consumer Protection	<a href="https://consumator.gov.md/">https://consumator.gov.md/</a>
15	National Institute of Metrology	<a href="https://inm.md/">https://inm.md/</a>
16	Entrepreneurship Development Organisation	<a href="https://www.oda.md/">https://www.oda.md/</a>
17	Institute for Standardization of Moldova	<a href="https://standard.md/">https://standard.md/</a>
18	National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research	<a href="https://ance.gov.md/">https://ance.gov.md/</a>
19	National Agency for Curriculum and Assessment	<a href="https://ctice.gov.md/">https://ctice.gov.md/</a>
20	State Hydrometeorological Service	<a href="https://www.meteo.md/">https://www.meteo.md/</a>
21	Environmental Protection Inspectorate	<a href="http://ipm.gov.md/">http://ipm.gov.md/</a>
22	National Administration of Penitentiaries	<a href="https://www.anp.gov.md/">https://www.anp.gov.md/</a>
23	Agency for Court Administration	<a href="https://www.aaij.justice.md/">https://www.aaij.justice.md/</a>
24	National Agency for Public Health	<a href="https://ansp.md/">https://ansp.md/</a>
25	Agency for Ensuring Resources and Administration of Patrimony	<a href="https://www.army.md/">https://www.army.md/</a>
26	National Inspectorate for Technical Supervision	<a href="https://inst.gov.md/">https://inst.gov.md/</a>
27	National Agency for Motor Transport	<a href="https://anta.gov.md/">https://anta.gov.md/</a>
28	Civil Aviation Authority of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://www.caa.md/">https://www.caa.md/</a>
29	National Office of Social Insurance of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://cnas.gov.md/">https://cnas.gov.md/</a>
30	National Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Research	<a href="https://www.anacec.md/">https://www.anacec.md/</a>
<b>PUBLIC AUTHORITIES</b>		
1	State Agency on Intellectual Property	<a href="https://agepi.gov.md/">https://agepi.gov.md/</a>
2	Medicines and Medical Devices Agency	<a href="https://amdmd.gov.md">https://amdmd.gov.md</a>
3	National Agency for Research and Development	<a href="https://anecd.gov.md/">https://anecd.gov.md/</a>
4	National Food Safety Agency	<a href="https://ansa.gov.md/">https://ansa.gov.md/</a>
5	National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova	<a href="https://statistica.gov.md/">https://statistica.gov.md/</a>
6	Agency for Interethnic Relations	<a href="https://ari.gov.md/">https://ari.gov.md/</a>
7	National Health Insurance Company	<a href="http://www.cnam.md/">http://www.cnam.md/</a>
8	The Agency for Energy Efficiency	<a href="https://www.aee.md/">https://www.aee.md/</a>