

# Lawyers on strike - a sign of democracy in Moldova



*The Republic of Moldova is going through another crucial testing moment for its relatively young democracy. Law 244/2025, which aims to restructure the legal profession, has triggered open conflict between the legislature and the legal profession, exposing cracks in transparency and consultation mechanisms.*

At the heart of the crisis is an amendment introduced and adopted by parliamentarian Efimia Bandalac without prior consultation with the Union of Lawyers of Moldova (UAM). Union representatives suggest that the text directly affects the organizational autonomy of the UAM, limiting the mandates of its leaders and barring certain lawyers from holding office.

The independence of bar associations is not a corporate whim, they say, but is a fundamental pillar of the rule of law, recognized by both the Council of Europe's recommendations and the UN Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers.

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The Union of Lawyers reacted by accusing serious violations of the Law on Transparency of Decision-Making and the Law on Legal Acts. Reform, they say - however well-intentioned - cannot be legitimate without a transparent, participatory and consultative process.

As a result, as of today in Republic of Moldova: general strike, legal aid suspended in the courts, public and institutional pressure on the Presidency. Everything is converging towards a moment of decision: will President Maia Sandu promulgate this law or not?

On July 25, the Extraordinary Lawyers' Congress could decide to escalate the protest. At the same time, support from the National Union of Romanian Bar Associations (UNBR) and the People's Advocate is further fuelling this antithesis in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova.

The lawyers' demands, set down on paper, seem clear:

- The legislature does not change the architecture of a profession without consultation;
- The executive does not ignore public calls for fundamental rights;
- And independent professions - such as the legal profession - are not reduced to the status of subordinates of the state.

If Law 244/2025 is enacted, the Republic of Moldova will not be in conflict with the legal profession itself, but with part of a self-styled autonomous system, which for the past three decades has protected networks of obscure, corrupt and in many cases Russian-aligned interests.

Far from being an external wake-up call, this legislative reform is rather an internal cleansing signal - a legitimate attempt by the Moldovan Parliament to introduce transparency, deadlines and accountability into a professional body that has been consistently hostile to reform, real justice and European rapprochement.

This subtly contrived crisis is not about how many seats a dean can have. It is about the courage of a state to reform its institutions, even in the face of an ankylosed and discredited professional body that has often played the role of a defender of oligarchic and anti-European interests. It's about Moldova's ability to emerge from a post-Soviet past in which "professional independence" was a screen for impunity.

In 2025, true democracy is not about preserving compromised structures, but about opening them up to citizens, accountability and the law. The Moldovan Parliament is taking exactly that step - and it should not back down. Especially now. When the destiny of the Romanian Nation is being forged in the corpus of great international diplomacy.