# [MD] Media subsidy fund

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On 2 August 2024, the Law on the Media Subsidy Fund entered into force in Moldova, adding to the framework for the promotion of media pluralism in the country.

The budget for the fund is drawn from the annual national budget; from donations, sponsorship and grants from legal entities and individuals in Moldova and abroad; and from other financial sources not prohibited by law (Article 10).

The “priority areas” for the subsidisation of media institutions are established on an annual basis by the Ministry of Culture, based on public discussions (Article 12) and in line with the aims of the law such as strengthening media literacy, investigative journalism and editorial independence; and covering issues related to education, culture and matters of general public interest (Article 2).

The eligibility criteria for the applicants include compliance with the Moldovan Journalists' Code of Ethics; the absence of previous (within the last 12 months) sanctions by the national media regulator, the Audiovisual Council, for serious violations of the Audiovisual Media Services Code; the annual publication of an activity report on its website; and formal registration as a legal entity (Article 12).

According to the law, a new body, the Expert Council, is to become responsible for governing the fund, by developing criteria and conditions for participation in the competition for the allocation of grants, reviewing applications, awarding subsidies, and monitoring the use of funds by the winning media entities (Article 18). The Expert Council consists of seven members. Four of them are to be selected in a competitive procedure by the Press Council of Moldova (recognised by the law as “the national journalistic self-regulatory structure”) or by media civil society organisations. Three others are to be appointed by the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research, and the Ministry of Finance. The law provides for a number of safeguards to avoid conflicts of interest in the selection of members and the functioning of the Expert Council (Article 17).

On 1 August 2024, a meeting of the Press Council of Moldova put forward its candidates for the Expert Council. The Ministry of Culture is still in the process of forming its new Media Policy Directorate that will deal with “ensuring the implementation of the mission of the Ministry of Culture in the media policy fields and media subsidies”. It had to approve the delegates from the Press Council by 2

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August 2024 and must provide the necessary by-laws for the Expert Council by 2 November 2024. The Fund is not likely to start its activity before 2025.

***Statute on the Media Subsidy Fund (cu privire la Fondul pentru subvenționarea mass-mediei) No. 50, 12 April 2024, officially published on 2 May 2024 in Monitorul Oficial No. 192-194 Article246***

***Moldovan Journalists' Code of Ethics, 2019***

https://consiliuldepresa.md/en/page/moldovan-journalist-code-of-ethics

***Announcement on the meeting of the Council of Experts of the Press Council of Moldova to delegate members to the Expert Council, 31 July 2024***

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