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The Yearbook of Estonian Courts [1] published in April is now also partly available in English. The yearbook is dedicated to the development of the judiciary, and includes reading on plans to change the judicial administration model [2] and the need for a court development plan [3]. It also discusses whether, and to what extent, it is possible to use AI [4] in court proceedings.

According to Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Villu Kõve, one could jokingly say that 2023 was the year of working groups, as countless meetings were held to examine all aspects of the judicial system. “That work is by no means finished,” he added. “This year will see us come to our first mid-term reviews, and our aim is to decide on the targets we’d like to reach with the judicial system by 2030.”

The issue of the large-scale generational transition in the judiciary and the difficulties this entails remains very much on the agenda. “Last year saw 18 new judges [5] join the court system, and more than a fifth of all judges now in office started in their positions in the last four years,” Kõve explained.

“In the context of ensuring the succession of judges and finding skilled people to fill posts, we’ve found ourselves increasingly reflecting on what the court is as an employer and, more broadly, whether the judicial system and process are the best they could be when it comes to meeting society’s expectations,” he added. These debates, which are very important for the judiciary, have also found their way into the columns of the yearbook.

The yearbook also outlines the organisation of the court translation service [6]. As is the case each year, the yearbook includes statistics on the work of the courts in the previous year, as well as overviews of the activities of the training council [7] and ethics council [8].

The editorial board for the 2024 yearbook comprised Supreme Court judges Nele Siitam (editor-in-chief) and Vahur-Peeter Liin and Counsel to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Karin Leichter-Tammisto (managing editor).

The English version of the yearbook can be found online [1].

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- [1] <https://aastaraamat.riigikohus.ee/en/>
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