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The Supreme Court, in cooperation with the Estonian Centre for International Development Cooperation (ESTDEV), organised a study visit to Estonia for a delegation of judges and advisers of the Constitutional Court of Moldova. From 17 to 20 February, the delegation had a comprehensive look at the Estonian judicial system and digital solutions. The key topic of the meetings was the organisation of constitutional review and the impact of European Union law on both judicial practice and legislation.

Ms Domnica Manole, President of the Constitutional Court of Moldova, thanked Estonian colleagues for the warm welcome and the meaningful seminars. She expressed her hope that this bilateral cooperation will continue in the future. "The in-depth insight into how to ask the European Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling helped us to better understand the system of preliminary rulings and how to effectively implement national and European Union law," said Manole. "We were also impressed by the professionalism and commitment of the Estonian experts in effectively upholding the principles of European Union law," added the President of the Constitutional Court of Moldova, summing up the study visit.

On Monday, the interaction between European Union law and Estonian law was discussed at the Supreme Court of Estonia. The debate focused on the request for preliminary rulings in constitutional review and administrative cases. See more [here](#).

On Tuesday, guests were hosted by the Office of the Chancellor of Justice, where Kertti Pilvik, Head of External Relations and Development, gave an overview of the office of the Chancellor of Justice and its main tasks. The Moldovan delegation was particularly interested in the topic of equality – what is the role of the Chancellor of Justice, how does she differ from the Equality Commissioner and how much is this topic discussed in society. The Moldovan judges were interested in the credibility of the Chancellor of Justice in her role of constitutional review, the authority of her proposals in the eyes of society and the addressees. They were assured that, despite the lack of sanctioning possibilities, the Chancellor of Justice's recommendations for legislative changes are taken very seriously and her proposals are incorporated into legislation.

Hent Kalmo, Legal Adviser to the President of the Republic of Estonia, also spoke about the work of the Head of State and the development of the institution of the President over time. The most debated topic was the President's so-called veto right, which means the right not to declare a law and send it to the parliament for reconsideration and decision.



[1] *Seminar at the Chancellor of Justice's Office. Photo: Supreme Court*

At Wednesday's meeting with the Members of the Parliament (Riigikogu), it was recalled that the accession negotiations with the European Union were preceded by a ten-year preparatory period, during which all Estonian law had to be brought into line with European Union law, and it was stressed that the legislative work is continuous and ongoing. At the same time, the Members of the Parliament debunked the widespread



misconception that most of the bills pending in the Parliament are related to European Union law.

[2] *Group photo in the White Hall of the Riigikogu. Photo: Supreme Court*

In the Harju District Court, the largest court in Estonia, guests were given an overview of the organisation of work, length of the proceedings, statistics by type of proceedings and general trends. The guests were impressed by the court's modern working environment and the efficiency of Estonian courts in general.



[3] *The Chairman of the Harju District Court introducing Urmas Viik's work "Black Sun". Photo: Supreme Court*

At a meeting on Thursday with Margit Lauri, Adviser to the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs, a comparison was made of the digital solutions in use for handling cases in Estonia and Moldova. The publication of judgments, including pending judgments, and the confidentiality of personal data were discussed. An insight to allocation of cases, new digital solutions for the coming years and how cyber risks are being addressed was also given. The possibility to translate and summarise documents will be added to the digital case file. Among the risks of digital proceedings, the most likely risk highlighted is that of access



to data being given to the wrong person by mistake.

[4] *Group photo at the Ministry of Justice and Digital Agenda. Photo: Supreme Court*

The visit was rounded off with a visit to the e-Estonia Presentation Centre, where the story of the e-Governance over three decades was presented. Colleagues were delighted to discover that Moldova has adopted digital solutions for public services from Estonia, which they can use in a similar way to us.



[5]

A visit to the e-Estonia Presentation Centre. Photo: Supreme Court

See also the video[6] of the first day at the Supreme Court and the video[7] with pictures of the visit.

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[6] <https://youtube.com/shorts/URibZsn-9Y0?si=Vav-JdBVI7qatc6K>

[7] <https://youtu.be/-cGbELfhO0o?si=XWTS8soNpr4IoN-c>