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## The latest Yearbook of Estonian Courts focuses on the evaluation of judges' work and providing feedback

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The main topics of the Yearbook of Estonian Courts [1], published in April, are the disciplinary proceedings of judges, the evaluation of their work and the provision of feedback. You can read about the compliance of disciplinary proceedings with international standards [2], the evaluation system of judges in Slovenia [3], the self-evaluation of judges [4] and feedback culture [5].

According to **Villu Kõve**, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the judicial system has had a busy, difficult and even turbulent year. “A draft court administration model has been completed, with plans to transfer court administration tasks that are currently under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs to the judicial system,” said Kõve. “The Council for Administration of Courts approved the Court Development Plan for the years 2024–2030, which is a significant step forwards in mapping the main goals of the judicial system. We discuss in detail how to make the judicial system and proceedings more efficient, streamline the workload and create the necessary conditions for the implementation of artificial intelligence.”

One of the main goals of the Development Plan is to create a strong personnel policy, which would ensure both the personal independence of the judge and the independence of the court as an institution. “We need to seriously consider how to find a qualified workforce and ensure the high competency of the existing personnel,” said Kõve. “Last year, the Disciplinary Chamber of judges and the Supreme Court en banc decided on several fundamental issues that will develop the standards applicable to the judiciary as well as disciplinary proceedings more broadly.”

According to the Yearbook Editor-in-Chief, Justice of the Supreme Court **Nele Siitam**, the topic selection of the Yearbook aims to provide insight into the judicial system itself, contemplating how to improve through various self-evaluation and feedback methods. However, this undoubtedly affects all those who turn to court, as the long-term goal is to ensure the high-quality administration of justice through competent and motivated judges. “The articles in the Yearbook show that the Estonian judicial system and judges are aware of their responsibility to society and are open to ideas on how to strive faster, higher and further under the conditions of limited resources,” said Siitam.

As always, the Yearbook of Estonian Courts [6] contains summaries of statistics reflecting the work of the courts in the previous year and overviews of activities of the Estonian Association of Judges, the Consultative Council of European Judges, the Disciplinary Chamber [7], the Training Council and the Ethics Council of judges [8], the Council for Administration of Courts [9] and the Judge's Examination Committee.

This year's editorial board of the Yearbook included Editor-in-Chief Nele Siitam, Supreme Court Justice; Karin Leichter-Tammisto, Legal Adviser to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Estonia; Mati Maksing, Chairman of Civil Chamber of the Tallinn Circuit Court; Kadri Palm, Judge of the Tartu Administrative Court; Liivi Loide, former Chief Judge of Tartu District Court; Language Editor Sten Lind, Judge of the Tallinn Circuit Court; and Managing Editor Ave Hussar, Head of the Supreme Court personnel and communication department.

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