

The judicial proceedings of Estonia are still the most efficient and quickest in Europe

30.04.2019 **For several consecutive years, Estonia has been at the second place among Member States of the European Union in a freshly published comparative table of justice systems called “Justice Scoreboard 2019” thanks to the efficiency and speed of the judicial system.**

“The main factor of an efficient judicial proceeding – the length of the proceeding – continues to be very good in Estonia compared to other EU Member States,” Minister of Justice Raivo Aeg said. “At the same time, my clear expectation – and I am definitely working towards it as the Minister of Justice – is to change the organisation of work in the judicial system to reduce obstacles with regard to handling cases on which the public focuses intently and for which there is a clear expectation in society of a faster solution.”

Already for several consecutive years, court cases in administrative and country courts are adjudicated quicker than in Estonia only in Denmark, however, the gap compared to Denmark has decreased since the last year. If we were to look at civil cases separately, then Estonia is the fifth in Europe with regard to the speed of their adjudication, and the second with regard to adjudication of administrative cases.

Estonia is also among the best in Europe with regard to IT solutions, which allow people to submit electronic appeals to the court, follow the progress of a judicial proceeding, or allow courts to disclose necessary information to people, for example, summons. At the same time, the table indicates that there are insufficient number of interactive solutions targeted at citizens which would provide explanations or help people who have to turned to a court. Furthermore, in Estonia, the total expenditure on courts per inhabitant is one of the lowest among EU Member States, remaining near 50 euros per one inhabitant.

“I am very glad that despite a rather tight financing of the judicial system compared to other EU Member States, we have been able to ensure one of the most efficient judicial systems in Europe. At the same time, as seen in the ranking, there is room for improvement in many areas,” Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Villu Kõve said while commenting on the news.

Compared to the last year, the number of court cases has slightly decreased. While in 2016, there were 25 incoming cases per 100 inhabitants, then in 2017, the same indicator was 21. The number of pending court cases has not risen and remains still significantly below the average of Europe.

According to a survey conducted by the Eurobarometer, there has been a small decrease in the public’s trust towards courts. In addition to Estonia, trust towards the judicial system has also decreased in 15 other EU Member States: in Austria, the Netherlands, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, Greece, the Czech Republic, Portugal, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Spain, Bulgaria, Slovakia, and Croatia. According to the survey, the justice system of Estonia remains among the average of Europe with regard to its trustworthiness; about 55% of the people regarded the courts as independent. At the same time, national surveys do not show that the trustworthiness of the court system has decreased. According to a survey conducted among parties to proceedings, 21% of respondents who turned to a court regarded the Estonian justice system as very trustworthy, and 59% of them as rather trustworthy.

The ranking table of administration of justice is prepared by the European Commission and its goal is to provide trustworthy and comparable information on the performance of the justice systems of EU Member States. It does not assess the performance of the Member States’ administration of justice, but the goal is rather to guide the Member States towards improving their administration of justice. The data originate mainly from the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), contact persons of courts, the World Bank, the network of Councils for Administration of European

The judicial proceedings of Estonia are still the most efficient and quickest in Europe

Published on Estonian Forensic Science Institute (<https://www.ekei.ee>)

Courts, and other organisations. The comparative table is available on the [website](#) [1] of the European Commission.

Yesterday, the [Yearbook of Estonian Courts](#) [2] was also published, the pervasive theme of which was the independence of the justice system.

Source URL:

<https://www.ekei.ee/en/news/judicial-proceedings-estonia-are-still-most-efficient-and-quickest-europe>

Links:

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/justice_scoreboard_2019_en.pdf

[2] https://www.riigikohus.ee/sites/default/files/elfinder/%C3%B5igusosalased%20materjalid/Riigikohtu%20tr%C3%BCkised/kohtute%20aastaraamat%20001-208_digi.pdf