

Information regarding the training referred to in Article 11 (1) of the Regulation

- **Judges**

The training strategy and annual training program for judges are drafted by the Supreme Court and approved by the Judicial Training Council, which is one of the judges' self-governance bodies.¹ In addition to judges, it is comprised of representatives of the Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs, and the University of Tartu.

Training of judges is regulated under Section 44 of the Courts Act.² Training is based on the strategies for training of judges, annual training programs and the program for judgeship examination.³ The training needs and results of the assessment of the effect of the training are considered when preparing training programs. For assessing the training needs and the effects of the training, all available sources of information about the court system are applied. Those sources are, above all, communication with judges and court officials, also with other persons and institutions which have contacts with courts, feedback on trainings, case law analyses, questionnaires, researches etc.⁴

The aim of training judges is to improve and update their professional knowledge and skills. Training includes mostly legal training and skills training. Legal training is divided into training for civil judges, criminal judges, and administrative law judges. If judges are interested, they can participate in training in other areas as well. Additionally, law clerks, consultants, advisers, and assistant judges can attend judges' training. It is also considered important to include prosecutors and attorneys in legal training. If there are openings, officials of the Ministry of Justice and Digital Affairs, the Office of the Chancellor of Justice, and the Chancellery of the Estonian Parliament may sometimes also participate in judges' training.

The annual training plan sets out the subjects of the training, the lecturers and the duration of the training. Lecturers are acknowledged specialists from Estonia and abroad. Additionally, judges can also participate in training courses abroad offered through the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN).

¹ Training of Judges <https://www.riigikohus.ee/en/training-judges>

² Courts Act <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/521032025001/consolide/current>

³ Training strategy and annual training programs (in Estonian)
<https://www.riigikohus.ee/et/kohtunike-omavalitsuskogud/koolitusnoukogu>

⁴ Methodology for identifying training needs among judges and analysing training outcomes (in Estonian).
https://www.riigikohus.ee/sites/default/files/3.%20V%C3%A4lisveebi%20sisu%20materjalid/Kohtunike%20koolitusvajaduse%20v%C3%A4ljaselgitamise%20ja%20koolituse%20tulemuste%20anal%C3%BC%C3%BCsimise%20metoodika_kinnitatus_28-04-2025.pdf

The judges' training strategy for 2025–2027 is based on the previous training strategy for 2021–2024⁵, Estonian judges' Code of Ethics⁶, and the values of Estonian courts.⁷ It is also based on the guidelines for judicial training of relevant international organizations.

Given the growth of digital proceedings and technological developments, the judicial training strategy emphasizes the importance of supporting the development of judges' IT skills. To develop digital competences, the strategy sets out that:

- I. judges' skills and knowledge of technological developments are kept up-to-date;
- II. judges are offered the opportunity to participate in discussions and training on conducting virtual court sessions;
- III. judges' participation in artificial intelligence training (including abroad) is supported;
- IV. training on cybercrime is organized.

To use digital technology successfully, several training courses on legal information databases have been organized. These courses incorporate practical exercises to develop users' skills in navigating and utilizing databases such as EU-Lex, HUDOC, CURIA, xLaw, and the KS platform, as well as other search engines essential for judicial work.

To ensure that judges have immediate access to essential training materials upon assuming office, a digital gateway in Moodle has been introduced for new judges. The digital gateway allows judges to independently complete six courses which among other things cover topics such as the digital case, document metadata and its deletion, as well as template creation and keyword search within the Court Information System. Additionally, training courses on work processes and team management have also covered the capabilities of the Court Information System, an information management system used by Estonian courts, as well as the use of various templates that help simplify work.

In 2023, the search functionality of the judges' training website's video library and training materials was improved with the creation of a search engine, allowing all recordings, slides, and other resources to be easily located by subject area.

The judicial training website (password protected and accessible only to judges and judicial clerks who work in the court system) currently hosts a total of 137 training videos. Of these, 31 were added in 2023, 15 were added in 2024, 14 were added in 2025, and 11 have been added in 2026. The video collection is continuously expanding.

The cooperation project "Baltic Network of EU Law Experts" commenced between the Supreme Court of Estonia, the European Academy of Law, and partners from Latvia and Lithuania. As part of the project, two online training courses were held in 2024, focusing on the

⁵ Training strategy 2021–2024 (in Estonian)

https://www.riigikohus.ee/sites/default/files/3.%20V%C3%A4lisveebi%20sisu%20materjalid/Kohtunike%20koolituse%20strateegia_2021-2024.pdf

⁶ Estonian Judges' Code of Ethics <https://www.riigikohus.ee/en/estonian-court-system/estonian-judges-code-ethics>

⁷ <https://www.kohus.ee/en/estonian-courts/estonian-court-system>

online tools of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and legal databases (EUR-Lex, CURIA, HUDOC, etc). Furthermore, in 2025 two webinars were also held within the framework of the project. Webinar on “Digital Skills: Focus on Electronic Evidence” addressed issues related to the collection and use of digital evidence in criminal proceedings, while the other webinar introduced the European Criminal Records Information Systems (ECRIS), and its use.

In addition to the above, training was provided in 2025, where the operating principles of large language models (artificial intelligence) were introduced, as well as methodological aspects of process analysis and automation, followed by practical exercises.

Training courses on legal information databases, as well as law and technology are also planned for this year to develop judges’ knowledge and skills in the use of AI in the administration of justice.⁸ At the most recent meeting of the Judicial Training Council on 16 February 2026, it was decided to support the development of AI capabilities within the court system, and organize training sessions in 2026–2027. As part of a pilot project, Copilot training session will be held for all judges of Pärnu District Court in April 2026. The aim of the training is to teach judges how to use the capabilities of MS365 and to gather feedback on the needs of the court system. In addition, the Supreme Court provides AI training for its staff and is planning to purchase Copilot licenses for court work.

For the decentralized IT system, we have offered training sessions organized by the Commission to internal court trainers and made Commission’s video materials available to all users. Additional training session in Estonian for courts was held in April 2026. Access to video content will be shared with notaries.

During the last five years, 57% of training sessions were held in person, 13% online, and 30% in hybrid format. Last year, the corresponding figures were respectively 68% in person, 3% online, and 29% in hybrid format.

- **Other court officials**

Strategic documents that set training priorities for other court officials include the Estonian Courts Development Plan 2024–2030⁹, and the judicial training strategy for 2025–2027. To provide support to judges and help ensure high-quality justice, court officials must also receive training on topics related to digitalization.

Each year, a centralized training plan is prepared for court officials, covering the following training activities:

- Virtual spaces and MS Teams for virtual court sessions (target group: all court officials, including judges);
- Audio recording software Salme and court session equipment user training (target group: mainly court secretaries);

⁸ Training program for 2026 (in Estonian)

<https://www.riigikohus.ee/sites/default/files/Koolitusn%C3%B5ukogu/Koolitusprogramm%202026.pdf>

⁹ Estonian Courts Development Plan 2024–2030 (in Estonian) <https://www.kohus.ee/dokumendid-ja-vormid/esimese-ja-teise-astme-kohtute-arengukava>

- Court Information System user training (target group: all court officials, including judges);
- Training in basic skills in using AI (target group: all court officials).

Training is provided on a need basis, either on-site at court houses or online, and includes participants from different courts. Trainers from the court system are primarily used, alongside specialists from IT development center, such as the Centre of Registers and Information Systems (RIK), and the Estonian Information and Communication Technology Centre (RIT).

- **Prosecutors**

Training of prosecutors is based on annual training programs. The training program of the Prosecutor's Office is developed on an annual basis. Each year, the training program for the following year must be finalized by 1 October.

Training needs within the Prosecutor's Office are primarily identified during performance assessment interviews with prosecutors and other staff members. These discussions provide valuable insight into both individual and organizational development priorities. In addition, training needs may also arise from other sources, such as upcoming legislative amendments, new directives, and the priorities of the Prosecutor's Office.

The training plan is reviewed and approved by the Prosecutor's Office Training Council. Its preparation, including collecting input, analyzing training needs, and coordinating the approval process, is in is the responsibility of the Office of the Prosecutor General.

Developing the digital competence of prosecutors is an important priority. Training courses are regularly organized in the use of Prosecutor's Information System. Training sessions on the use of legal databases, artificial intelligence, and other technological tools are also provided. Additionally, prosecutors can also participate in training courses abroad. The main partners in this area are the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), the Academy of European Law (ERA), and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL). There has been no specific training on the use of videoconferencing and the decentralized IT system at the moment. When planning future training, the Training Council will also take into account the objectives set out in the Judicial Training Strategy for 2025–2030.