LATVIA (EIGHTH MEETING)

Training on corruption prevention, ethics and integrity within the judiciary

Latvian Judicial Training Centre provides further education for judges and persons employed in the judiciary. Each year Latvian Judicial Training Centre provides a new training program that is approved by the Court Administration. In these trainings matters regarding conflict of interests, corruption, ethics and the role of a judge are regularly included.

Since 2014 the annual training program for newly appointed judges always includes matters regarding the role of a judge and ethics. Latvian Judicial Training Centre carries out the annual training program that is financed by the state and organizes other events that are co-financed by the European Commission and other partners.

Wide training sessions for persons employed in the judiciary and chairman’s of courts regarding matters of corruption were organized on year 2014 and 2015 within the project “interdisciplinary trainings for persons employed in the judiciary and representatives of other legal professions regarding origin of financial and economic crimes” that was co-financed by the European Commission.

In accordance with Article 98, Section 5 of the Law of Judicial Power a judge has the duty to continuously enhance his or her knowledge throughout his or her career as a judge. In accordance with the rules of Judicial Qualification Board within the assessments of the fulfilment of professional duties of judges the assessment of participation in qualification raising events etc. is made.

In the framework of the national level plan Strengthening the human resources capacity and development of competencies of persons employed in the judiciary and law enforcement for 2015-2020 it is foreseen to carry out trainings with a focus on ethical standards with respect of officials of the judiciary in order to raise the quality and efficiency of the legal environment.

The Latvian Judicial Training Centre provides regular training for judges and employees of courts. In 2014 the Latvian Judicial Training Centre concluded agreement with the Court Administration and in accordance with this agreement it will provide trainings for judges, candidate judges and employees of courts for next 10 years.
The annual budget in 2016 for these trainings was 167,757 EUR. Trainings on issues of ethics, the role of judge and corruption prevention are included in educational programs on regular basis. In 2016 trainings for candidate judges and newly appointed judges are carried out 28 days and one of those days is devoted to such issues as ethics, the role of judge and corruption prevention. The training programs regularly include matters regarding the role of a judge, ethics, corruption in judiciary. Since 2014 in the annual training programs matters regarding the role of a judge, ethics, corruption in judiciary are always included. On 22 August, 2016 six judge candidates attended three training lessons *The Role of a Judge and Ethics*.

According to the information provided by the Court Administration in 2015 the European Social Fund project Justice for Growth was started aiming to provide training for officials of judiciary – judges, court chairs, court employees, prosecutors, court experts, officials of law-enforcement, bailiffs. Among wide range of training subjects there is a special training planned with focus on judiciary ethics. Tailor made training is planned for court chairpersons. Additionally in the framework of the project it is planned to review the Judicial Code of Ethics.

Within the project (approximately within a year) it is planned to develop a model of competences to ensure a united and objective criteria for judges, candidate judges and other persons employed in the judiciary that will be used to ensure the work of personnel management, personnel selection and in order to determine the needs for further trainings. By developing the catalogue it is planned to determine that trainings regarding matters of corruption and ethics are regular and mandatory.

**Training on corruption, ethics and integrity, tailored to prosecutors**

In accordance with amendments in Article 5, Section 3 of the Office of the Prosecutor Law that came into force on 1 January, 2013, a prosecutor has the responsibility to regularly improve his knowledge and professional skills that are needed in order to perform his duties. The requirements of the Office of the Prosecutor Law make permanent and long lasting grounds for the training system for prosecutors, certainly including the need to be educated in matters regarding corruption, conflict of interests, ethics and integrity issues. Since 1 January, 2014 the Offices of the Prosecutors regularly carries out assessments of the fulfilment of professional duties of prosecutors. Within this assessment quality of a prosecutors actions and functions, participation in qualification raising events etc. is analysed.

In accordance with the reported information from the Prosecutor's General Office (prosecuting corruption crimes) in 2016 trainings on corruption prevention as well as ethics and integrity are carried out for prosecutors and candidate prosecutors. On 19 April 2016 ten candidate prosecutors attended lecture on prosecutor’s’ role and ethics. The lecture was arranged by Prosecutor's General Office in cooperation with the University of Latvia.
In May 2016 six prosecutors attended training on countering corruption and organized crime in Baltics. This training was arranged by the Federal Investigation Bureau of the USA. In February 2016 two prosecutors took part in conference arranged in the framework of the project *Reducing Corruption: Focusing on Private Sector Corruption* by the Ministry of Justice of Estonia. In June 2016 one prosecutor took part in exchange program *The Role of Prosecutor in Countering Corruption and Promoting Integrity*. The program was ensured by the National Attorneys’ General Training and Research Institute of the USA.