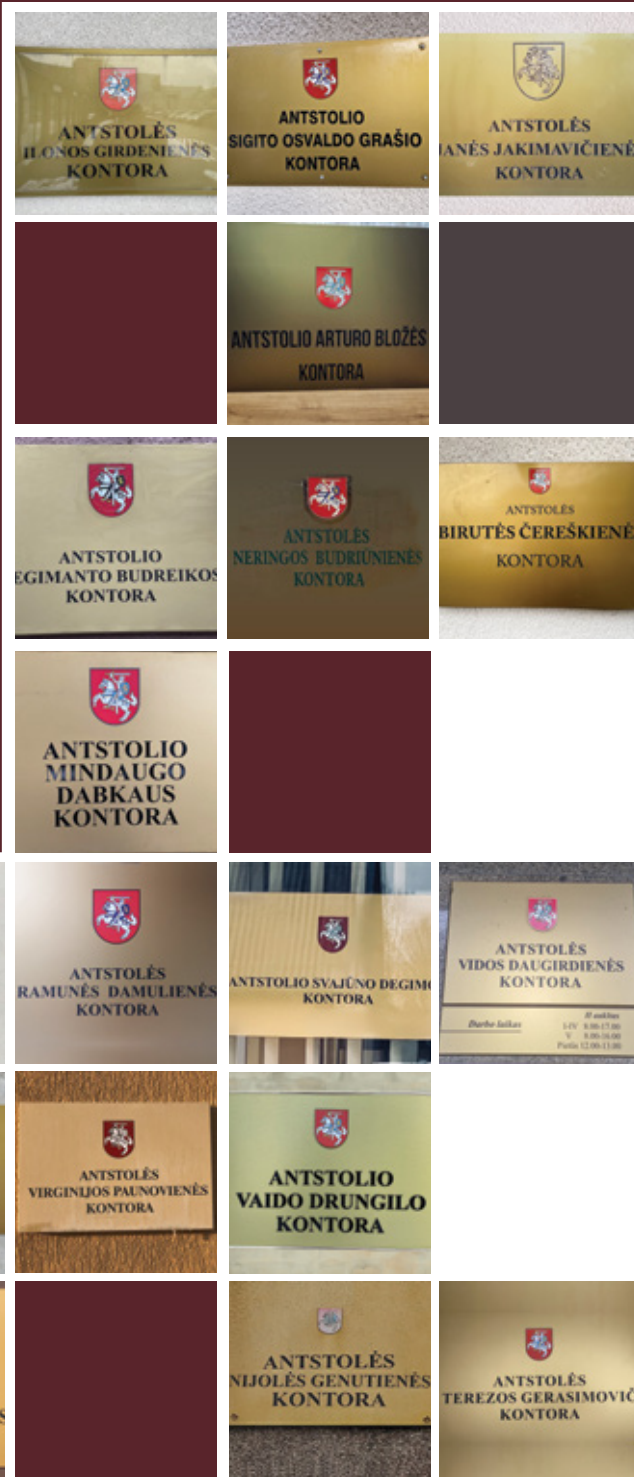
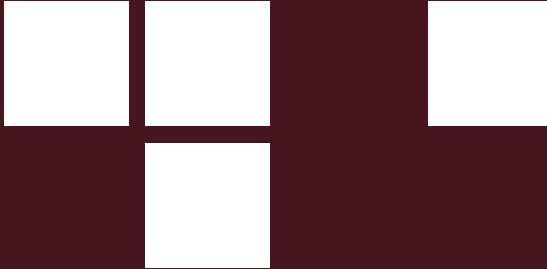


# EXTRACT FROM THE ANNUAL

## ACTIVITY REPORT 2022



# 1. INSIGHTS



**Inga Karalienė**

Judicial Officer  
*Chairwoman of Presidium  
of the Chamber of Judicial  
Officers of Lithuania*

## Ideas build the future

What have been the most important keywords in our association's vocabulary over the past 20 years?

Initially, the most important words were “establishment”, “distrust”, and “complaints.” The establishment of private offices for judicial officers began with just a single computer and chair. The process of creating institutions of professional self-management was challenging, and the association had to withstand enormous public and media pressure regarding the system of private judicial officers, which was responsible for carrying out unpopular enforcement functions. Distrust of judicial officers was fuelled in the public eye, and information regarding complaints against the actions of judicial officers circulated frequently.

Since 2011, distrust has gradually been replaced by trust in the judicial system of Lithuania. This positive development is due to the efforts of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania, who initiated amendments to the provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure. As a result of these changes, complaints regarding the procedural actions of judicial officers are now first examined by other judicial officers. Only after this initial review, if the complaint is rejected, will the court resolve the dispute. The majority of issues are resolved in the offices of judicial officers, leading to a significant decrease in the number of complaints submitted to the courts. In the past seven years alone, the number of complaints has decreased almost threefold. Furthermore, the courts recognize most of the procedural actions of judicial officers as legal after examining the complaints. This is an undeniable indicator of the professionalism of judicial officers. The trust in the professionalism of judicial officers has been reinforced by the increasing number of judicial functions entrusted to them by courts and other public authorities. This recognition is not limited to Lithuania, as other countries reforming their judgment enforcement systems have invited judicial officers from Lithuania as competent experts.

Over time, the words “criteria”, “methodology”, “e. proceedings” have come to dominate discussions about the survival and improvement of the institution of judicial officers. These words and the strategic ideas they represent are our

response to the challenges and crises we face. They have helped create a new reality in which legislative decisions better regulate the essential activities of judicial officers and are more resistant to politicisation.

It took 13 years of work to begin linking the regulation of the number of judicial officers with objective criteria. In April 2016, thanks to the analysis initiated by the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania, the number of judicial officers was reduced to reflect those actually working under the order of the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania. This was the first time during the entire period of activity of private judicial officers that such a reduction had occurred. It has been recognised that population decline is one of the essential criteria for determining the number of judicial officers. This was a significant step forward, but not a systemic solution. Therefore, we continue to consult with the Ministry of Justice on this issue and propose the preparation and approval of a methodology for determining the number of judicial officers. Our position is that the regulation of the number of judicial officers must be linked to their income, the number of new proceedings, and the number of residents in the relevant activity area.

Our journey with e-proceedings began 15 years ago as a strategic initiative. We understood that this was the path to the most effective execution of court decisions at the lowest cost. Working with the State Enterprise Centre of Registers, we developed e-proceedings, and since 2013, electronic auctions have been in operation. In 2015, we achieved a milestone by creating a centralized system for collecting funds from accounts and distributing them proportionally to creditors. Day after day, we have continued to expand the opportunities for parties involved in the recovery process to securely provide and receive information remotely through the Judicial Officers' Information System. Electronic procedures have now become our daily routine. However, it was the COVID-19 pandemic that truly highlighted the benefits of e-proceedings. Despite the challenges, enforcement processes continued smoothly, and we were able to further modernize our practices. E-proceedings have now come into full force, as both the judicial officers and the parties to the proceedings have embraced the possibilities of information technology.

It took 17 years of persistent work for our requirement to set the rates of judicial officers' activities according to objective criteria to be transferred to Article 609 of the Code of Civil Procedure, effective from 1 July 2020. Previously, this article solely listed types of execution costs, but now it determines the principle that execution costs are based on economic calculation and must cover the work costs of the judicial officer's office. However, there is still a gap in the regulation of execution costs, as there is no officially approved and scientifically based pricing methodology. Nevertheless, we are encouraged by the National Audit Office's support of our demand, and its recent state audit report, published on 14 December 2020, recommending that the government establish procedures for calculating the costs of enforcement by the end of 2024. Such procedures should be based on the criteria established in legislation, and would mean that rates are regulated according to a clear methodology. The projects of the rate pricing methodology are already available, having been prepared in cooperation with legal and economic experts. We have since presented it to representatives of the Ministry of Justice and the Government Strategic Analysis Centre.

If we open a news portal, read a newspaper, or turn on the radio or television, is there a high probability of seeing subjective accusations against judicial officers? Never say "never," but such a probability is much lower today than it was 15-20 years ago. The approach towards the judicial officer's profession is now more normal and less scandalous and tendentious. Why is that? This transformation can be attributed to various factors, including the patient efforts of judicial officers to inform the public and journalists about their activities. However, the most significant reason for this change is that problematic issues are now discussed directly with decision makers, rather than trying to prove all truths in the media. The expectations of the parties involved in legal proceedings have always been conflicting. There have always been more people in debt than those seeking to recover their debts. Therefore, expecting understanding and objectivity from the majority of society would be somewhat naive, as our experience shows. Nevertheless, it is necessary to present ideas and solutions to the authorities. After all, decision makers often dictate media trends as well.

A good reputation is like the Earth's protective atmosphere that shields us from meteors and harmful radiation. Each of us must protect the reputation of the judicial officers' institution. We must hold ourselves to the highest standards, as outlined in the Code of Professional Ethics for Judicial Officers, which was updated in March 2013 and amended in April 2014. Given that we work in the field of conflicts, we run the constant risk of committing one mistake among a thousand perfectly executed tasks. In such instances, only a good reputation can protect us from mistrust and misunderstanding. Without a solid reputation, we are vulnerable to the meteoric impact of populist ideas that could have fatal consequences.

***Therefore, let us band together to preserve the name  
of judicial officers and secure the future of our profession!***



## **Marc Schmitz**

*President of the  
International Union  
of Judicial Officers*

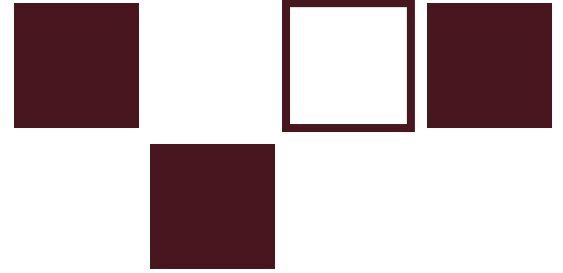
Like its two Baltic neighbours, the relatively small size of Lithuania and its relatively small number of inhabitants have undoubtedly facilitated the implementation of a national policy resolutely oriented towards information and communication technologies and have enabled this beautiful country to achieve tremendous success in this area. The profession of judicial officer in Lithuania shares these achievements and the judicial officers of the whole world have their eyes fixed on the “Baltic model” and therefore on Lithuania.

We welcome the excellent relations that we maintain with Lithuania and our fruitful collaboration since its entry into the UIHJ in May 2000 during the International Congress of Judicial Officers in Athens. It should also be remembered that the Secretary General of the European Union of Judicial Officers (UEHJ), Dovile Satkauskiene, is Lithuanian. This is proof that, for the UIHJ and the UEHJ, there are no small countries!

***The UIHJ and the UEHJ wish a happy 20th Anniversary  
to the National Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania!***







**Prof. Dr. Habil.  
Vytautas Nekrošius**

*Full Member  
of the Lithuanian  
Academy of Sciences*

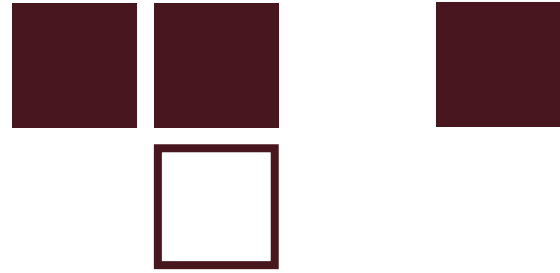
Prior to 2003, the role of the judicial officer in Lithuania was viewed as insignificant, and it was easy to avoid complying with court orders. Consequently, the debt recovery system was largely ineffective.

However, since 2003, these issues have been resolved. Now, the prevailing view is that judicial officers can be overly harsh in their enforcement. However, this perception is more of a created myth than a reality. When debtors cooperate and engage with judicial officers, mutually acceptable solutions can usually be found. It is widely understood that debts must be repaid, as the proverb goes, “Who goes a borrowing, goes a sorrowing.” This practice encourages responsible financial behaviour and is beneficial for Lithuanian civil society as a whole.

The most significant change brought about by the implemented reform is that judicial officers became highly motivated and interested in the results of their work. As a result, the efficiency of enforcing court decisions and other orders has not increased by mere percentages, but by several times!

In recent years, there has been an outburst of populism claiming that judicial officers are the “bad guys” who collect every last cent, among other things. It must be made very clear that judicial officers are merely executing the law and the will of the legislator, and that their honest work is not a disadvantage. If the state believes that some individuals do not need to pay their debts, then it must assume the corresponding obligations and cover the debts for those individuals.

Dear judicial officers, you have weathered many serious storms, and withstood waves of populism and politics in the worst sense of the word. You are like the three hundred Spartans, strong and resilient. Though you may be fewer in number, you are no less powerful. I wish you strength, endurance, and wisdom in your debates with politicians. I believe you have a beautiful, promising, and lasting future ahead of you.



## **Vytautas Markevičius**

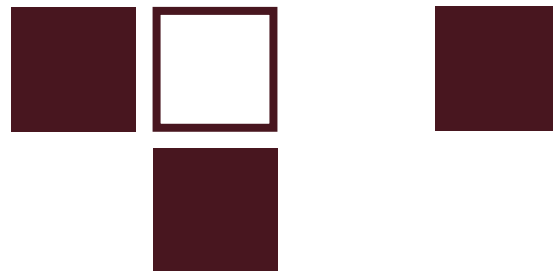
*Minister of Justice of the 12th  
Government of the Republic  
of Lithuania (2001-2004)*

If I were to go back to 2003, I would definitely repeat the institutional reform of judicial officers for two reasons. Firstly, all the prerequisites and conditions for this reform were present at that time. Secondly, the reform has proven to be successful, resulting in a very efficient decision enforcement system today.

Prior to the reform, court executors and then court judicial officers were only able to execute 7% of various decisions after the restoration of Lithuania's independence. However, the current private judicial officers execute more than half of these decisions. Judicial officers successfully carry out the decision enforcement functions entrusted by the state. From my understanding, the majority of orders passed by judicial officers are well received by parties involved in the debt recovery process, and only a very small number of them are overturned in court.

I also appreciate the fact that judicial officers' scope of activities has expanded to include legal assistance. For example, the establishment of factual circumstances can help to shorten legal proceedings, as the parties involved can more quickly and efficiently submit appropriate evidence to the court or other institutions examining the dispute.

I am delighted that over the past two decades, we have had numerous colleagues in the private judicial officer system and throughout our legal system who share a belief in the future of the institutional system of judicial officers. Their dedication has allowed us to create, preserve, and improve what is now an incredibly efficient liberal decision enforcement system. It is no surprise that some foreign countries seeking to emulate democratic values are turning to Lithuanian judicial officers for guidance. I wish you continued success in your meaningful work, and I hope that you continue to strive for even greater improvement in the future!



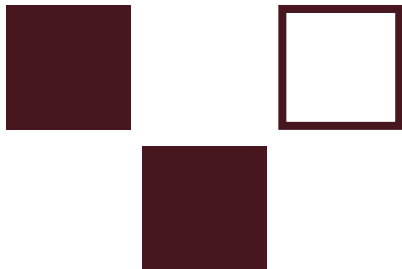
## Ewelina Dobrowolska

*Minister of Justice of the  
Republic of Lithuania  
(from 2020 December 11)*

The profession of a judicial officer is both challenging and critically important to society. When we speak of the expectation of justice, we recognise that a court decision alone is not sufficient. The decision must be executed, and it is the role of the judicial officer that is most crucial for individuals who are not only seeking a fair verdict but often also compensation for damages. Judicial officers play a particularly important role in cases involving the enforcement of human rights. Such cases are sensitive and highly complex, as well as require a skilled and dedicated professional to navigate them successfully. In recognition of their contributions in this area, several judicial officers have been awarded a special award for their merits in the field of human rights by the Ministry of Justice.

Looking at the statistics, we can see that the efficiency of the work done by judicial officers is on the rise. More and more debts are being recovered. The bold move of the judicial officers of Lithuania to shift their activities to the digital realm is already gaining recognition beyond our borders. Not only are our users delighted with this development, but we are also among the leaders on the global stage. We have a wide range of activities that can now be carried out electronically, whether it is conducting auctions or initiating the debt recovery process itself. This has increased people's trust in the system and provided opportunities to perform tasks more quickly and at lower costs. Now that we have an advanced and truly digitised system, it is time to focus on making it even more efficient and convenient for both the judicial officer and the user. I am confident that this is the way forward for us.

As judicial officers celebrate the 20th anniversary of their professional activity, I would like to congratulate them and wish them continued success in their work. It is essential that they remember how vital their role is, and why they do what they do. After all, the judicial officer's function is often to provide assistance to debtors and help them navigate their financial lives through balancing expenses, income and credit obligations. It is crucial that judicial officers remember this function, which serves people and supports the state.



## **Iveta Kruka**

*the Chairwoman  
of the Council of Sworn  
Bailiffs of Latvia*

The Lithuanian and Latvian peoples are brotherly peoples, united at different times not only by the related Baltic language, but also by common values, similar problems to be solved and ambitions to strive for.

After the establishment of the profession of sworn bailiffs in 2003, the enforcement of judgments and the profession of sworn bailiffs have developed similarly in both countries – the competence of sworn bailiffs in the execution of judgments has been expanded, and sworn bailiffs have been entrusted with other duties unrelated to the execution of judgments, such as recording facts, delivering documents, conduct mediation as certified mediators.

In the last decade, both Lithuania and Latvia have invested a lot in the introduction of electronic procedures. The complete transfer of the auction to the electronic environment and the gradual transition to electronic enforcement cases have made the decision enforcement process simpler, more efficient and more accessible to the public.

The experience of Lithuanian colleagues has been particularly valuable to the Council of Sworn Bailiffs of Latvia when assessing the possibilities of expanding the functions of Latvian Bailiffs. Thank you!

***On behalf of the “braliukai” of Latvia, we send greetings  
to our colleagues in Lithuania on the 20th anniversary  
of the Lithuanian Bailiff Institute!***





## **Helen Rives**

*Chancellor of the Chamber  
of Judicial Officers  
and Bankruptcy  
Administrators of Estonia*

The cooperation between Estonian and Lithuanian Judicial Officers has been long-term and very important for both sides - it gives the opportunity to share with colleagues various topical issues related to the enforcement procedure, to prevent possible problems arising in the future and through this to improve the enforcement procedure process. Through cooperation, the best practices are also born, which are the basis for the development and improvement of sectoral legislation.

In September 2022, a meeting of Estonian and Lithuanian Judicial Officers took place in Vilnius, during which both Estonian and Lithuanian enforcement procedures and related problems were introduced. Both Lithuanian and Estonian Judicial Officers recognized that the processes of enforcement proceedings need to be modernized, making them more convenient for both bailiffs, debt collectors and debtors. Above all, information systems need modernization and development. Various professional experiences were exchanged with Lithuanian colleagues and the results of the Lithuanian reform in the distribution of claims were discussed, according to which all claims submitted to enforcement proceedings are subject to central distribution.

During the second half of the day at the Vilnius meeting, a visit to the office of two Lithuanian Judicial Officers took place. Our hosts were the Judicial Officer offices of Vitalis Milevičiaus, Daiva Milevičienė and Robertas Vasiliauskas. In the office of the Judicial Officer R. Vasiliauskas, the Estonian Judicial Officers got acquainted with the unified information system, which enables the preparation and storage of all enforcement documents and allows the Judicial Officers to quickly obtain data from all official registers, and this system is also integrated with the information system of banks, the tax office, the state social insurance board and cash limits. There is no such unified system in Estonia, but we hope to reach it someday."



## **Vitalii Chepurnyi**

*Chairman of the Private  
Enforcement Officers  
Association of Ukraine*

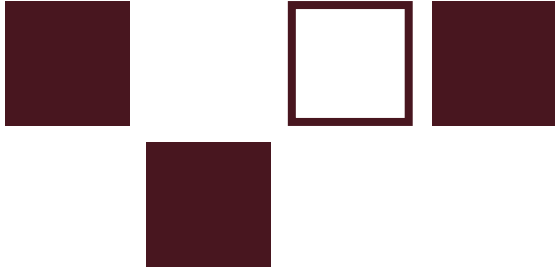
The Private Enforcement Officers Association of Ukraine is delighted to send you the warmest congratulations in relation with the 20th anniversary of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania!

The professional organizations of private judicial officers of Lithuania and Ukraine have been successfully cooperating in recent years. Our colleagues have held several extremely helpful events, having exchanged experience in the field of enforcement procedures and legislation. The experience of Lithuania has contributed a lot to formation of private enforcement officers' profession in our country. Our community is extremely grateful to our Lithuanian colleagues for such a kind and useful help.

Warm relations between our organizations proved once again, when a full-scale war broke into our country in February 2022. The PEOs Association of Ukraine Charity Fund has received from Lithuania vast help for our colleagues, their families, and our military. Numerous equipment items and vehicles were delivered straight to the war frontline due to help of Lithuanian Chamber and volunteers organizations. Our community and our people will never forget your kind help. You are doing a big favor for justice and peace in the world. God bless you for your kind deeds!

The Private Enforcement Officers Association of Ukraine congratulates you on the 20th anniversary and wish you further development and success! Let the rule of law be always immutable in your country. We wish you and your later generations always be in security and never experience such war tests our country is facing right now.

***Let peace, harmony, and prosperity always be with you!***



## **Roman Talmaci**

*President of the National  
Chamber of Judicial Officers  
of Moldova*

We highly value the warm and cooperative relationships we have with the judicial officers of Lithuania. It was they who first introduced us to the experience of working in the private system and inspired our initial thoughts about reforming the enforcement of court decisions in Moldova. This happened in 2007, and a little later, in 2010, colleagues from Lithuania and Romania helped us to implement the reform.

As private judicial officers in Moldova, we have a special appreciation for our colleagues from Lithuania, seeing them as wise and benevolent mentors who generously share their experience.

We wish all of our colleagues and the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania continued prosperity and the greatest possible success.

***Congratulations on your anniversary!***



## **Dovilė Satkauskienė**

*Director of the Chamber  
of Judicial Officers  
of Lithuania*

As we prepare to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our activity, we have been considering various ways to mark the occasion. We asked judicial officers for their insights, and one of them shared a powerful metaphor: an airplane takes off against the wind, not downwind.

I believe this metaphor perfectly captures the nature of our association's activities, and the role played by both the judicial officers and the staff of the Chamber. We are all part of the same crew, and it is only by working together that we can navigate any turbulence that may arise. However, we must also recognise the importance of pursuing our goals with determination and focus. By participating in association discussions, organizing our work effectively, and observing the evolution of the association over time, we gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of building a strong professional community.

Over the past two decades, the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania has played an increasingly important role as a professional association. Expert opinion is now in high demand, with institutions such as the Seimas, Ministry of Justice, courts, and non-governmental organisations turning to us for guidance on amending legal acts or addressing issues related to the activities of judicial officers. This confirms the importance of the association in the legal community. We can be proud that we have evolved and matured over time, constantly adapting to new challenges and changes in the legal landscape.

The Chamber of Judicial Officers has adopted a Code of Ethics that plays a vital role in the activities of judicial officers. This code governs not only the performance of official duties, but also the provision of various services. We have continuously improved and updated the code over time. In addition, we have developed client service standards for judicial officers' offices, which aim to standardise the provision of our services. Our goal is to innovate and approach our work in a friendly manner, so that our clients feel that they are receiving not only professional legal services, but also legal assistance.

As we look ahead to future "flights," we are hopeful that innovation and smart technology will become an integral part of the daily activities of judicial officers. However, we also hope that judicial officers will be able to find a balance between the interests of the various parties involved in legal proceedings.



## Commentary on Part VI of the Code of Civil Procedure – scientific attention to the process of enforcement of court

For the first time in the 20 years since private judicial officers have been operating in Lithuania, a commentary on Part VI of the Code of Civil Procedure has been published on the initiative of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania. The introduction of the publication highlights that the civil process does not conclude with the adoption of court decisions. The implementation of the constitutional principle of the right to judicial defence, as well as the effective protection of subjective rights violated or contested interests protected by law, depends on how court decisions are enforced. Despite the vital role of the enforcement process in safeguarding violated rights, Lithuanian legal doctrine has not devoted much attention to this topic until now. Hopefully, this publication will fill the gap with relevant content for many legal professionals.

The purpose of the commentary is to summarise and systematise the tasks of judicial practice and legal

doctrine related to the enforcement process. The publication was authored by Prof. E. Tamošiūnienė, Prof. V. Višinskis, members of Presidium of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania, judicial officers (I. Karalienė, S. Kastanauskienė, V. Milevičius, L. Lukšys, S. Vaicekauskienė) and D. Satkauskienė, the Director of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania. The reviewers were academician Prof. Dr. Habil. V. Nekrošius and Dr. Ž. Terebeiza. The commentary genre may be the most challenging for the authors because of the potential for constant changes in its basis. Therefore, the authors made an effort in the commentary not only to indicate the main sources of interpretation but also to highlight the value criteria that can reveal and change the content of the legal norm, the legislator's intentions, or the systemic relationships of such a norm with other legal norms regulating the enforcement process.



# The methodology for determining the price rates of judicial officers is the basis of rational pricing

The Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania collaborated with legal and economic experts to develop a methodology for determining fees for the services rendered by judicial officers, as well as specific proposals for revising legal regulations concerning the structure and amount of fees. This pricing methodology was presented to the Ministry of Justice and the Government Strategic Analysis Centre (STRATA), which evaluate the costs of enforcing court decisions and provide recommendations on the methodology for determining such costs.

The methodology, which was prepared at the request of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania, is based on various data points such as the costs incurred by the judicial officer, the number and composition of office employees, the types and quantities of enforcement cases, and the frequency of actions carried out in the administration of separate categories of cases. The methodology also presents a pricing formula and discusses its components and pricing procedure. As per the proposed methodology, the fee for money recovery cases could consist of three parts, including necessary costs, variable parts, and costs for third parties, and would be linked to the

amount recovered. Similarly, the rate for the administration of non-monetary enforcement cases would be linked to the hourly rates for the administration of cases of the relevant category and the rates of the judicial officer's office.

Over a period of three years, not only competent legal professionals and economists, but also a large group of representatives of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania, including members of the Presidium and judicial officers such as I. Karalienė, S. Kastanauskienė, V. Milevičius, L. Lukšys, S. Vaicekauskienė, R. Adomaitienė, A. Maliukevičius, E. Miliauskienė, B. Palavinskienė, J. Petrikas, G. Salickas, E. Sergėjevas, A. Stanišauskaitė, J. Žilinskaitė, and D. Satkauskienė, the Director of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania, worked on the methodology for determining the fees for the work of judicial officers, analysing each element in detail. Therefore, this methodology is expected to be an effective tool for determining reasonable and socially-oriented rates for the activities of judicial officers, ensuring the collection of working capital necessary for the offices of the judicial officers and easing the burden of debt settlement for the majority of debtors.



## We support Ukrainian fighters and professional colleagues in every way

Since the outbreak of war, we have provided almost EUR 56,000 in support to Ukraine in its fight for freedom, which is also our fight. The majority of this support includes specific items needed at the frontlines, where private judicial officers of Ukraine are also fighting. We have also provided financial assistance to those affected by the war.

In June 2022, a large aid shipment was delivered to the defenders of Donetsk. The shipment, which included bulletproof vests and other supplies, was financed by the judicial officers of Lithuania and delivered to the battalion fighting near Donetsk. We would like to express our gratitude to the organisation Praeities žvalgai for preparing and delivering the cargo. In December, a second large shipment was collected and transported with the help of businessman Ž. Zalieckas. The shipment included two vehicles adapted to war conditions, five electric generators, two night vision devices, and 23 radio stations. Additionally, Spauda AB and Firma VITI UAB provided 50 tourniquets, as well as other medical tools and medicines, to the fighters, thanks to the successful mediation of judicial officer A. Naujokaitis.

We provided financial assistance to three Ukrainian women who were staying in Marijampolė by covering

the costs of communal services for a one-room apartment, generously provided by B. Prancevičienė at no cost. In May 2022, we extended an invitation to judicial officers to join the appeal of the Azovstal defenders to the United Nations and UN Secretary General António Guterres.

In October 2022, we sent an appeal to the leaders of the International Union of Judicial Officers (UIHJ) and the European Union of Judicial Officers (UEHJ), urging them to consider approaching international institutions, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to draw attention to the threat to the Institute of Private of Judicial Officers of Ukraine. We highlighted that 10 Ukrainian private judicial officers are defending the values of democracy on the war front, and all other judicial officers are willing to support their country with both professional knowledge and financial aid. The Association of Private Judicial Officers of Ukraine has established a charity fund to collect funds for the Ukrainian military forces and the families of victims. However, to support Ukrainian defenders and their country, private judicial officers must first have work to do. Some have been forced into unemployment, and some Ukrainian authorities consider the problems raised by the Association of Private Judicial Officers of Ukraine as non-priority, dismissing them as concerns of only 300 people. However, as we noted in the appeal, these problems are of a much larger scale, as 117,000 enforcement cases were carried out by private judicial officers before the war. Therefore, we invited the representatives of the UIHJ and UEHJ to actively contribute to the preservation of the private system of enforcement of decisions in Ukraine and mediate by drawing attention to the European Union institutions and the World Bank to ensure the sustainability of international investments in the creation of a democratic legal system in Ukraine. It is worth noting that since 2017, the institution of private judicial officers in Ukraine has been created and improved based on the experience of European Union (EU) countries and using EU funds.





## The Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania will provide assistance to senders of foreign documents starting from July 2022

Starting from 1 July 2022, the unknown address of the recipient will no longer be an obstacle to using the international procedure for serving documents in European Union (EU) countries. The sender of the documents can obtain or verify the recipient's address by contacting the competent authority of the addressee's country of residence or by using the detailed information available on the European e-Justice Portal. The updated Regulation (EU) 2020/1784 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2020 on the service in the Member States of judicial and extrajudicial documents in civil or commercial matters has established a simplified procedure for the service of documents. This regulation also applies to Denmark, which has not joined some of the EU regulations.

The Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania provides assistance in determining the address of the person to whom documents must be served. To do this, data from the Population Register and the Register of Legal Entities are used. In other EU countries, the assistance function will be performed by relevant institutions appointed by the Member States, official registers, or senders can independently determine the recipient's address using information on the European e-Justice Portal. According to D. Satkauskienė, the Director of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania, this new mechanism creates an information assistance mechanism that substantially expands the possibilities for applying the regulation. Previously, the incorrect address of the recipient was one of the most common reasons for returning documents to the sender, but now we have specific practical measures to overcome this barrier.

In 2022, there has been a slight decrease in the need for delivery of foreign documents compared to 2021, and one of the reasons for this is the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. Currently, no requests have been received from the Russian Federation, Belarus, or Ukraine itself.



Last year, the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania received a total of 375 requests to serve judicial and extrajudicial documents from 30 countries worldwide. Among the countries sending the most requests were Germany (80), Poland (68), France (53), Sweden (28), Italy (19), Latvia (19), and Norway (12). During the war, new countries such as Brazil, India, Portugal, Bosnia and Herzegovina also sent documents for delivery. Of the total number of documents received, about 70% were successfully served. However, the most common reasons for non-delivery were refusal by the addressee to accept the document, documents not being in Lithuanian, and incorrect or missing personal identification numbers. In such cases, judicial officers made additional efforts to locate the natural person, such as contacting neighbours or searching for possible contact information for relatives. They also made active efforts to locate legal entities that were not found at their registered address.



## Judicial officer A. Naujokaitis is among those awarded for merits in the field of human rights

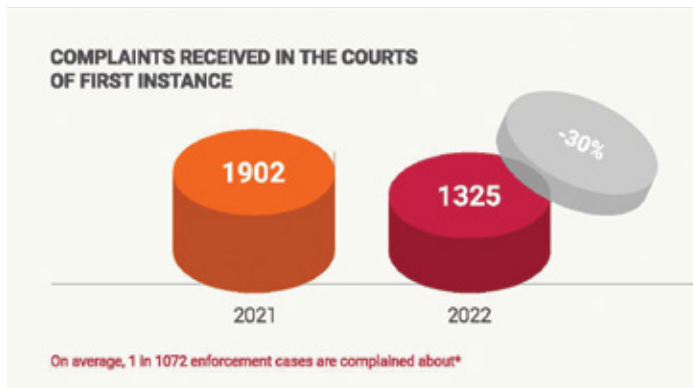
On the 12th of December, a solemn ceremony was held at the Ministry of Justice to commemorate International Human Rights Day and to award 13 legal professionals from various fields for their contributions to protecting, strengthening, and fostering human rights. Among the awardees was judicial officer A. Naujokaitis, who is a member of the Commission for Coordination of Judicial Officers' Support to Ukraine operating under the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania.

In April 2022, A. Naujokaitis initiated and mediated successful cooperation between the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania and the non-governmental organization Praeities žvalgas. Later, Praeities žvalgas also established direct relations with representatives of the charity fund founded by the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Ukraine. This helped to provide much-needed support to a particular Ukrainian battalion, which includes private Ukrainian judicial officers. Items purchased with funds from the judicial officers of Lithuania, such as armoured vests, various technical devices, first aid kits, and bandages, were transported and directly handed over to the battalion fighting near Dnipro.



## The courts recognise most of the actions of judicial officers as legal

In 2022, the number of complaints regarding the actions of judicial officers decreased by 30% compared to 2021. A total of 1,325 complaints concerning the procedural actions of judicial officers were submitted to the courts of first instance in 2022, as opposed to 1,902 in 2021. Out of these complaints, 214 were fully or partially satisfied by the courts, while the remaining complaints were rejected, refused examination, returned to the applicants, or dismissed on other grounds.



## Business correspondence. Consultations and advice on the enforcement of decisions

In 2022, the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania prepared and sent 3,370 letters to various institutions and addressees, presenting the Chamber's opinions, comments, and proposals for draft legal acts, informing responsible institutions about problems that needed to be addressed, and providing information requested by applicants. In addition, 3,398 letters were received and analysed by the Chamber.

Approximately 13 300 letters were received via email, and 13 750 letters were prepared and sent in response to them. The volume of electronic correspondence has been steadily increasing since the beginning of 2021 when the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania assumed the responsibility of digitizing written enforcement documents. Among the letters sent, 1,627 certificates of forced recovery proceedings against specific individuals were included. Additionally, around 160 applicants received information through private messages on the Facebook account of the Chamber of Judicial Officers of Lithuania. Furthermore, approximately 12,200 applicants were consulted via phone, mainly regarding issues related to submitting enforcement documents.

In 2022, a total of 133 posts were published on the *Lietuvos antstoliai* profile, which has been active for

six years. These entries provided information about current affairs of judicial officers and other useful insights while addressing the most frequently asked questions. Some examples of the posts include: *Skolos ir banko sąskaitos. Kaip pasinaudoti MVPD suma?* (Debts and Bank Accounts. How to Use the Amount of Minimum Consumption Needs (MVPD)?), *Reikia paveldimo turto apyrašo. Kur kreiptis?* (Description of Inherited Property is Needed. Where to Apply?), *Ar mažoji bendrija suteikia privilegiją nemokėti asmeninių skolų?* (Does a Small Partnership Give You the Privilege of Not Paying Personal Debts?), *Lengvas būdas (pra)rasti milijoną. Tikra istorija iš antstolio praktikos* (Easy Way to Lose a Million. A True Story from the Judicial Officer's Practice), *Skolininkas dingęs. Bet yra jo turto. Išėjis – kuratorius* (The Debtor is Missing. But There Are His Assets. The Solution is a Curator) and others. The spread of information was improved by publishing many posts on the Facebook profiles of legal news portals INFOLEX and *TeisėPro*, as well as lawyers and legal professionals–mediators. We regularly provided updates on the support of Lithuanian judicial officers to Ukrainian defenders and war refugees, and shared expressions of gratitude from our Ukrainian colleagues, as well as first-hand news about the war. These posts also received significant attention. Currently, the *Lietuvos antstoliai* profile has 3,500 followers and 3,100 likes.





