



# Strategic Plan of the University of Tartu School of Law for 2018-2022

*Adopted by the resolution of the School of Law council on 12 June 2017*

## I MISSION

The mission of the School of Law is to shape the scientific foundations necessary for the functioning of the Estonian legal system; to educate highly qualified, responsible lawyers necessary for performing the constitutional functions of Estonia through internationally recognised high-level research and science-based teaching; and to guarantee the internationally competitive future academic generation of Estonian lawyers.

## II VISION FOR THE YEAR 2022

The School of Law is Europe's leading innovative centre of legal science and legal education, where high-level and internationally competitive studies and teaching, and research and development is conducted for the functioning of the Estonian legal system.

## III VALUES

In its activities, the School of Law adheres to the core values of the University of Tartu, i.e. science-based activities, academic freedom and autonomy, openness to new ideas, cooperation, a human-centred approach and individual development, responsibility.

## IV OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

### 1. STUDIES

#### **Bachelor's and master's studies**

- 1.1. Students at the School of Law value learning and are capable, motivated, hard-working, and active. To achieve this objective:
  - 1.1.1. Different methods are used to introduce options for studying at the School of Law;
  - 1.1.2. Admission criteria are applied that ensure the admission of the most capable student candidates;
  - 1.1.3. New ways to recognise the best students are implemented.
- 1.2. The curricula of the School of Law correspond to the needs of the society. To achieve this objective:
  - 1.2.1. Curricula are developed in cooperation with employers;
  - 1.2.2. Topics for master's theses in all areas necessary for the functioning of the Estonian legal system are offered;

- 1.2.3. The focus is laid on science-based studies, ensuring that compulsory courses are generally taught by regular members of the teaching staff;
  - 1.2.4. Practitioners and international visiting teaching staff are involved in teaching;
  - 1.2.5. Acquisition of international study experience is encouraged;
  - 1.2.6. Transition to an integrated bachelor's and master's curriculum is planned.
- 1.3. In teaching, the needs of different learners are taken into account, and modern teaching methods and materials are used. To achieve this objective:
    - 1.3.1. Law is taught both in the regular and the open university form of study;
    - 1.3.2. In addition to creating a strong theoretical foundation, the students' practical skills, incl. general skills, are developed;
    - 1.3.3. Teaching staff are encouraged to use e-learning methods;
    - 1.3.4. The principles of the University of Tartu's Good Practice of Teaching are observed;
    - 1.3.5. Teaching staff are encouraged to participate in activities that enhance their teaching competence;
    - 1.3.6. Textbooks on the compulsory courses of law are compiled and updated.
  - 1.4. The students' learning process and professional development is supported. To achieve this objective:
    - 1.4.1. The development of students' learning skills and raising their awareness about the organisation of studies is supported;
    - 1.4.2. Cooperation with employers is enhanced to facilitate the intermediation of traineeship and job offers;
    - 1.4.3. The skills of the support staff in advising and counselling students are developed.

### **Doctoral studies**

- 1.5. Doctoral studies enable to educate the future generation of legal scholars necessary for teaching and research at the School of Law. To achieve this objective, master's students are encouraged to continue studies in doctoral studies in areas that are important for the School of Law.
- 1.6. The number of regular student places in doctoral studies increases. To achieve this objective, the School of Law:
  - 1.6.1. Applies for an increase in the number of doctoral student places financed from activity support;
  - 1.6.2. Looks for private and public sector financing outside the activity support to open new doctoral student places;
  - 1.6.3. When applying for research grants, plans the funding of doctoral student places.
- 1.7. Doctoral students publish more articles in international journals (incl. as co-authors) that contribute to the completion of the doctoral dissertation. To achieve this objective:
  - 1.7.1. Possibilities that develop academic writing skills and support doing research abroad are more efficiently introduced to doctoral students;
- 1.8. Doctoral student's supervisor is involved in the process of preparing the publication and more attention is paid to the completion of co-publications of doctoral students and supervisors.

1.9. At least a half of doctoral students complete their doctoral studies within the standard period of study or within two additional years. To achieve this objective:

1.9.1. Doctoral students' progress is constantly reviewed and the defence of at least four doctoral dissertations is ensured every calendar year;

1.9.2. If necessary, the School of Law helps the doctoral student find a supervisor who assists in the best possible way in completing the dissertation.

## **2. RESEARCH**

2.1. The School of Law prioritises and develops the priority fields of research, while ensuring the sustainability of fields of research that are necessary for the functioning of the Estonian legal system. To achieve this objective, at least one research fellow's position is ensured in priority fields of research.

2.2. The School of Law is internationally strong in the following fields of research and science: international law (incl. Russia-oriented studies), comparative study of legal cultures and systems, IT law (legal issues in the digital world). To achieve this objective:

2.2.1. At least one research fellow's position is ensured in priority fields of research;

2.2.2. Research centres are established in priority fields of research.

2.3. Academic staff of the School of Law reinforce international contacts and enhance their international research experience. To achieve this objective:

2.3.1. The funding options of various mobility programmes are used more intensively;

2.3.2. In order to enhance teaching staff mobility, a teaching staff substitution system is developed;

2.3.3. Internationally recognised researchers are involved in activities aimed at the achievement of the faculty's objectives, both through long-term job placements, post-doctoral programmes, etc., as well as shorter visits and visiting lectures.

2.4. Academic staff of the School of Law publish more high-level publications that are influential and significant in Estonia and in Europe. To achieve this objective:

2.4.1. Papers co-authored with internationally recognised researchers are published;

2.4.2. A system of supporting and recognition of research activities is worked out;

2.4.3. Researchers' publications and other results of research are more actively presented to the general public;

2.4.4. In order to make research more productive, allocations to the assistants' fund are increased and research assistants are employed.

2.5. Academic staff of the School of Law are more efficient and effective in applying for grants and in project writing and management. To achieve this objective:

- 2.5.1. Internationally recognised researchers are involved in projects;
  - 2.5.2. Faculty-provided opportunities for project writing and management are more intensively used;
  - 2.5.3. Staff members are encouraged to develop their project writing and project management skills.
- 2.6. Besides papers published in international and Estonian sources, the teaching and research staff of the School of Law participate in the legislative process (incl. as members of committees preparing a draft act, as members of expert groups or individual experts), compiling draft acts, statement of grounds and explanatory memorandum, and commentaries on law acts.

### **3. SCHOOL OF LAW AND SOCIETY**

- 3.1. Law is valued equally with other disciplines and the system of research funding takes into account the specific nature of law. To achieve this objective, it is more resolutely explained that law is of national importance, a national science worthy of increased funding that allows to maintain and further the democratic and rule-of-law foundations of the Republic of Estonia.
- 3.2. Academic staff of the School of Law participate in shaping a legal environment that strengthens the rule of law, supports innovation and entrepreneurship, and in solving other important societal problems as experts. To achieve this objective:
- 3.2.1. The academic staff of the School of Law participate in legislative drafting as experts;
  - 3.2.2. Collaboration with public sector partners is enhanced;
  - 3.2.3. The general public is more intensively informed of the competences as well as the results of research and expert work of the School of Law;
  - 3.2.4. Investigation of legal topics important for the Estonian society and the public discussion of problems is initiated;
  - 3.2.5. The academic staff actively participates in discussions on topical societal matters.
- 3.3. The School of Law increases the impact and visibility of its activity in the society. To achieve this objective:
- 3.3.1. A qualified marketing specialist is involved in the activities of the School of Law;
  - 3.3.2. If possible, the staff communicate with the public as representatives of and speaking in the name of the School of Law;
  - 3.3.3. Information on new publications, completion of research studies, and overviews of defended master's and doctoral theses is made public via the School of Law's website and other channels.
- 3.4. The best legal continuing education in Estonia is provided to different target groups. To achieve this objective:
- 3.4.1. Part-time study programmes are developed;
  - 3.4.2. Continuing education programmes are developed in cooperation with employers.

### **4. ORGANISATION**

- 4.1.1. The School of Law is a development-oriented, unified and inclusive organisation. To achieve this objective:
- 4.1.2. The internal culture of the School of Law is developed and maintained;

- 4.1.3. A structured and purposeful internal communication is ensured;
  - 4.1.4. Support staff is encouraged to develop their professional knowledge and skills.
- 4.2. The salary of the teaching staff of the School of Law is comparable to that in highly qualified legal professions; the Estonian court system and its pay scale are used as a reference system. To achieve this objective:
- 4.2.1. The issue of low salaries is raised more resolutely both in the public and in the university;
  - 4.2.2. Additional funding sources are searched for.
- 4.3. The School of Law has modern working conditions, and satisfied and motivated members. To achieve this objective:
- 4.3.1. Up-to-date learning and working conditions are ensured, and information centres and leisure spaces are developed both in Tartu and Tallinn;
  - 4.3.2. The human resources strategy of the School of Law is developed.
- 4.4. The School of Law guarantees full-time teaching staff for all areas of law that are necessary for the functioning of the legal system in Estonia. To achieve this objective:
- 4.4.1. The regular teaching staff's dedication to full-time teaching and research is appreciated, and the balanced development of the School of Law is ensured;
  - 4.4.2. The furthering of the academic career of regular teaching staff is favoured;
  - 4.4.3. Successful teaching and research assistants and master's students are encouraged to start work as regular teaching staff at the School of Law.

## **V IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

1. For the implementation of the strategic plan, annual action plans are adopted.
2. Director of the School of Law arranges the implementation of the strategic plan.
3. Once a year, the director presents a report on the implementation of the strategic plan to the council of the School of Law.
4. On the proposal of the director, the council approves the next year's action plan and the corresponding budget.