

August 25, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

The CEELI Institute is pleased to share its newly released ***Guidelines on Alternatives to Extraordinary Judicial Vetting***.

Created for judges, by judges, this CEELI publication is the result of the work of 35 judges from Central and Eastern Europe, reflecting a range of perspectives and national experiences. The Guidelines are accompanied by a ***Compendium of CEE Experiences***, which describes how different jurisdictions have addressed alternatives to judicial vetting in practice. This publication builds directly on our 2024 Guidelines on Judicial Vetting, which described the principles, safeguards, and practices for those rare circumstances where full-scale vetting may be warranted. This new publication and accompanying compendium present sustainable measures that can reduce the need for full-scale vetting by strengthening existing accountability frameworks. When used together, these resources offer both immediate and long-term solutions for strengthening judicial integrity, helping policymakers, judicial councils, judicial academies, academics, and legal practitioners balance judicial integrity and independence.

Drawing on comparative experiences, international standards, and recent case law, the new Guidelines cover:

- Enhanced regular accountability measures, including transparent appointments, performance evaluations, integrity and security checks, and asset declarations.
- Targeted extraordinary alternatives, including exceptional reforms such as the advisory role of international experts and monitored appointment and dismissal processes, to be used only when regular mechanisms fail.
- Disciplinary systems with clearly defined thresholds of misconduct, proportionate sanctions, procedural safeguards, and protections against political misuse.

The relevance of this work is clear: many jurisdictions in our region are under pressure to restore public trust in the judiciary. These Guidelines support reforms that strengthen judicial independence and produce lasting improvements. We invite you to review the Guidelines and consider their application in your jurisdiction. The Guidelines and the accompanying Compendium are also available at <https://ceeliinstitute.org/resource/guidelines-on-alternatives-to-extraordinary-judicial-vetting> in English, while translations of the Guidelines to Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Polish and Romanian will be added in the coming month.

You can find other relevant resources available electronically at <https://ceeliinstitute.org/resources> - e.g. our recent publication for judges “**A Guide to Protecting the Rule of Law in European Courts Amid Democratic Backsliding**”. This comprehensive guide explores the critical role of European courts (ECtHR and EUCJ) in safeguarding the rule of law across the region. It provides judges and judicial associations with detailed analysis of recent rulings, offering practical pathways for legal redress in the face of political pressures. Access the guide to better understand and utilize European court decisions to protect judicial independence.

We hope you find these publications helpful. Please let us know your feedback.

Respectfully,



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