

Data protection – personal data of a party to the case – data available in court information system

The applicant addressed the Court administration requesting the termination of the processing of their personal data in the Latvian Court Information System (database of judgements). The applicant believes that the conduct of administration, whereby it grants judges and court employees access to non-anonymised court judgements, is unlawful. The court administration refused to terminate the processing of personal data in this database.

The applicant addressed the court, requesting to declare the administration's conduct unlawful. It was recognised in the case, inter alia, that the court may process the data it requires to ensure adjudication functions. The objective, which entails data processing for the needs of court work or for carrying out adjudication functions, encompasses those functions carried out in the adjudication process. These activities must be considered in conjunction as a single function and not in isolation from one another. Data processing for ensuring the court's work on the whole describes the purpose of data processing, namely, to perform the adjudication function. Therefore, this purpose shall not be deemed non-specific or unclear.

However, the court's entitlement to process data necessary for adjudication does not imply that data processing may be deliberate or uncontrolled. The Court Administration may not interfere with the court's work; however, it has the duty to control data processing in line with data processing purposes, namely, for ensuring the court's work. The use of the Court Information System for purposes that are inconsistent with the need to ensure the court's work is not permitted. Furthermore, the Administration must make sure that personal data are not processed without need, e.g. why a personal entry may be opened by persons unrelated to the specific case.