

Janis Bordans: "Constructive dialogue is required between the state and the church"

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Press release

On Thursday, 3 October, the meeting of the Council of Mental Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Arturs Krisjanis Karins, was held, where several issues related to the activities of religious organizations were reviewed. Cooperation between religious organizations with the State Revenue Service was discussed during the meeting, in particular, the progress achieved in relation to establishment of a common understanding regarding the requirements of accounting and compliance with it in religious organizations.

Janis Bordans, the Minister of Justice, raised the issue about correct arrangement of accounting of donations received by religious organizations in June of the current year, when meeting with the heads of traditional confessions, particularly taking into account the measures performed by the State Revenue Service in several Catholic churches.

After the meeting the Minister of Justice Janis Bordans emphasized: *"We are on the right track. The first step is made in order to facilitate common understanding about the work of religious organizations and the procedure according to which accounting and utilisation of received donations is performed. It should be easily understandable and simplified. I am satisfied that this issue was raised also on the level of the Council of Mental Affairs."*

"The parties shared the same opinion that more active and closer cooperation is necessary, promoting understanding about the specifics of the activities of religious organizations, including also from the part of law enforcement authorities. Therefore, a constructive dialogue and closer cooperation is important", J.Bordans emphasized.

In order to bring clarity about correct arrangement of accounting in religious organizations as soon as possible, this issue was discussed already in the Advisory Council of Religious Affairs lead by the Ministry of Justice, where the initial agreement was reached between the representatives of the Ministry of Finance and the State Revenue Service, on the one part, and representatives of religious unions (churches), on the other part, it is necessary to develop the methodological material for organization of accounting and application of the relevant requirements of regulatory enactments with the support of the Ministry of Justice.

The Ministry of Justice has sent to religious organizations the methodological material currently prepared by the State Revenue Service, asking to provide recommendations for improvement thereof. This material will serve as guidelines for application of legal norms, in particular in situations, which are not directly stipulated in regulatory enactments.

Also the issues of preservation and maintenance of sacred heritage were discussed during the meeting, including allocation of the funds of the State budget for the Programme for Funding of Sacred Heritage. Besides, also further cooperation with the Central Statistical Bureau was discussed, ensuring preparation and organization of the population census in 2021.

[PHOTO of the State Chancellery](#)

<https://www.tm.gov.lv/en/article/janis-bordans-constructive-dialogue-required-between-state-and-church>