



TÁRSASÁG A
SZABADSÁGJOGOKÉRT

SZABAD

ANNUAL REPORT
2017

SZABAD.

FREE CITIZENS MOVE THE WORLD.

THEY ARE THOSE WHO FIND A WAY EVEN IN THE REPRESSIVE SYSTEMS TO STAND AGAINST INJUSTICES.

THEY ARE THOSE WHO DARE, WANT AND CAN CHANGE.

THEY CANNOT BE IGNORED, SILENCED OR SUPPRESSED.

WE AND THE WHOLE SOCIETY NEED SUCH PEOPLE WHO ARE CAPABLE OF BECOMING AMBASSADORS OF FREEDOM. BECAUSE IN THEM THERE IS THE OPPORTUNITY.

WE PROTECT AND SUPPORT THEM AT HCLU.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

WE CAN DO IT.

IT'S UP TO US.

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IMPRESSUM

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If you want something done, do it yourself. If not...

'The state does not do its job: we live amidst a constant campaign, while there is hardly any governing being done' we wrote in our report last year. Change, however, can be initiated even by a small group of citizens if the representatives they elected for public service are not doing their job. Last year's observation is even more true for 2017: during this year full of 'national consultations', the government continued dealing with important social issues by implementing extravagant provisions instead of comprehensive reforms. The news about the horrible state of health care and the workforce shortage appeared repeatedly. Although according to statistical data poverty has decreased, a quarter of the population is still affected by at least one dimension of poverty. Further, the government was silent about the numerous sexual harassment scandals against women in Hungary which involved abuse of power. The abuse of power is apparent in the treatment of public funds as well: every week there is another corruption scandal, news about people close to the government who became rich overnight. The state prosecution does not take any real steps against the main protagonists of the corruption scandals.

RECOVERY IN SAFETY

We started dealing with the problem of hospital-acquired infections in 2016, when we discovered that in Hungary more people die due to hospital-acquired infections than in car accidents. By now many have become aware of the severity of the situation thanks to the work we have done together with our partners. Because the state does not provide specific figures, we launched a lawsuit to force it to provide this information broken down by hospitals. Some of these infections could be avoided by proper financing and monitoring performed by state organs. We have contacted the public authorities with over a hundred complaints to compel them to take the issue of hospitals generally, and hospital-acquired infections, specifically, seriously and provide safe patient care. Additionally, we showed, through individual stories, how infections threaten patients being treated at state healthcare institutions.

For the third year in a row, we are mapping the child-friendliness of hospitals in our 'I'm coming with a child' campaign. We have experienced improvement in several areas over the past three years: citizens increasingly get to exercise their rights. Even though the Ministry has not responded properly to our suggestions, the rights and the opinions described in the campaign are being applied in more and more places. It must be emphasized that, in 2017, every hospital we contacted answered our questions. We have also experienced a quality shift in that currently we are being contacted by the hospitals, instead of us searching for information. There are only two hospitals remaining where the parent staying with a sick child must pay a so-called companion fee. At the same time, in several places a parent staying with a child under 14 years receives meals and a bed, often for free. In an increasing number of institutions there are shared care units where the parent automatically receives a bed next to their child. Apart from these improvements that allow for optimism, there are still serious concerns about access to information. In most cases, only printed patient package leaflets are

provided and there is no individual patient information - especially not for children. It is clear, however, that improvements are possible in this area too, examples of good practice can be found. In some hospitals children are informed about what awaits them using comic books, coloring books and story books; in others, videos or a favorite stuffed animal are used.

**“PHYSICIANS ARE
GOOD BUT THE CON-
DITIONS ARE
TERRIBLE.**

**PARENTS HAVE TO
SLEEP ON A CHAIR OR
A DIRTY MATTRESS”**

FEEDBACK FROM A PARENT

**“WE HAD TO MOVE
TO THE INTENSIVE
CARE DEPARTMENT,
WHERE HE’S GOT A VI-
RUS IN ADDITION TO
THE STILL UNKNOWN
INFECTION.”**

FEEDBACK FROM A PARENT

A LITTLE HELP IN GREAT TROUBLE

During this year's holidays we paid special attention to those families who spent Christmas in a hospital. We launched our campaign 'Holidays in a hospital' in October and from the proceeds we created parcels that make hospital stays easier. They included hand sanitizer, games about patient rights, color pencils, coloring books, and, of course, a guide about patient rights for parents. During the campaign, we asked actors, musicians and famous people to make the holidays more beautiful for sick children by reading them a tale. In November, we collected 641 200 forints from a charity ball, the total of which was spent on making a thousand parcels and sending them to twelve hospitals with the help of our volunteers.

IF YOU LIVE WITH HIV, DOCTORS MIGHT REFUSE YOU CARE

In the first half of 2017 we made a survey about the experiences of people with HIV in health care. The online survey was filled out by over 50 people, which is a reasonably large number of the number of currently registered infected people. The survey showed that the majority of those infected are satisfied with their HIV-related care but otherwise their experiences with health care are devastating. Many reported obvious discrimination or cases when medical care was refused to them because of their HIV status. As a result, over half of the respondents decided not to inform their GP about their condition. Because of these experiences, people with HIV are often afraid to trust doctors and this may badly influence both their own health and the proper functioning of health care. However, thanks partly to the several years of HCLU's work, a significant change is expected in dental care: care guidelines and protocols were modified so that they would provide real protection for every patient.

Support towards self-sufficiency

Even though municipalities keep introducing new regulations of local governments that punish the poor, in 2017 we forced 25 municipalities to modify such regulations. For years, we have been examining and contesting local regulations targeting the poor. Through these ill-advised regulations, the municipalities exclude from social care those who need it the most based on such absurd criteria as whether the grass in the garden is higher than 15 cm or if firewood is kept 'in an organized pile' in the garden. This year, we have attacked a total of 76 provisions of social regulations across 55 municipalities.

Municipalities must not threaten citizens!

In 2016, we initiated a procedure against the municipality of Tiszavasvári because it allowed and supported the extremist group called 'League of Honour' that harassed Roma families living in the town by organising so-called site marches. In response to our request, the Equal Treatment Authority (ETA) concluded that the municipality violated the requirement of equal treatment. The municipality of Tiszavasvári appealed the ETA's decision in court, but the court agreed with the ETA. This decision is important because it clearly states that municipalities cannot use extremists to threaten and discipline citizens. This exemplary decision may put a stop to municipalities who - under the slogan of Roma integration - threaten and discipline people living in deep poverty instead of providing real opportunities.

A HISTORICAL HCLU VICTORY:

The court ruled that Roma people in Gyöngyöspata were discriminated against

In 2011 the police in Gyöngyöspata did not stop extremist anti-Roma organizations who, for weeks, threatened its Roma inhabitants under the guise of 'policing' at the gypsy row', thus violating the local Romas' right to equal treatment. HCLU initiated public interest litigation suit against the Police Headquarters of the County of Heves, based on the Equal Treatment Act. On 8 February 2017, the Curia declared its final decision that in 2011 the police in Gyöngyöspata discriminated against local Romas by not taking the appropriate steps against extremist organizations.

HUMANE ACCOMMODATION FOR EVERYONE!

People living with disabilities often live in crowded mass institutions, locked away from the world. The process of replacing these institutions with community living facilities, i.e. deinstitutionalisation, would make it possible for citizens with disabilities to live an active life and to enjoy equal rights to others. However, at the end of last year, it became obvious that this goal cannot be reached. NGOs, including HCLU, continue to use all means available to them to attempt to achieve the original goals of de-institutionalisation

Everyone is willing to kill for their child, right?

Sára loves reading Harry Potter and Winnie the Pooh. Her inheritance claim could not be processed unless her mother would 'clarify her legal status'. Sára was over 22 at the time and her mother found placing her under guardianship was unnecessary and humiliating; Still, she was forced to do so.

'Sára fell in love; they were planning a wedding but an incapacitated person is not allowed to get married. I will not disregard my own daughter by lying to her and throwing a fake wedding. How could I expect the society to try to consider her equal, if I am not doing so? This is why I turned to HCLU, an organisation that stands up for the right of the disabled and that can easily navigate the legal maze. I would not have had enough money for several years of litigation.

I was aware that I have next-to no idea about my legal rights; seeing how the state machine is grinding us down and my daughter and I are sentenced to guardianship for life made me frustrated and desperate.

My only hope was that there would be help and there would be a solution! It would have been impossible without HCLU' support. It makes me incredibly contented that my daughter is being judged realistically, based on her actual abilities..

Sára was released from general guardianship and is happily engaged. We don't know yet if there will be a wedding. Sára would like it. She finally has the right to decide!

I would like to advise every parent to get more information about their rights and if they get stuck to ask for help from e.g. HCLU, as it is an independent, fair, and supportive organization. It is not easy, anyway, but if you have a 'defender', like we had HCLU, you are finally not afraid to make your voice heard.'

ERIKA, SÁRA'S MOTHER

By the end of the year, we represented eleven people - six adults living with severe or multiple disabilities and the mothers of five disabled children - in a lawsuit regarding personal rights. In the cases of the six adults, their families care for them, primarily their mothers. Even though it would be the state's obligation - as defined by international and Hungarian law - to provide community housing for them, there are no available living facilities that suit the international requirements. The only option for parents would be to place their children in one of the bigger institutions tens or hundreds of kilometers from their homes. However, these institutions generally have inhumane living conditions and it would be extremely difficult for the families to keep in touch. Currently they are looking after their children at home, doing work that is a psychological, physical, and mental burden. In addition to the aforementioned stresses that taking care of a disabled family member causes, the work required often prevents them from entering the traditional labor market for decades.



Sára Safranek

Let Imi go home!

Imi currently lives in a mass institution together with people living with disabilities. He loves books and films about trains. He would like to move home to his family but the Child Welfare Agency would not let him.

“We contacted HCLU as a last resort, as we were helpless after the continuous rejections from the Child Welfare Agency and the official organs connected to it. They rejected our claims due to laws and regulations. We did not understand then and still do not understand why Imike cannot live with us if he likes being here with us. At the same time, he has a hard time at the institution and does not like it there. The hardest for him is when we are taking him back to the institution; he does not understand why he has to stay there, why he cannot stay with us. It is hard for him to be locked in all the time, and the fact that he is treated like a disabled person.

Because HCLU is willing to represent us, we can see the light at the end of the tunnel! We have received help in both oral and written form, and support to keep holding on which we needed a lot.” Without them, we probably would have given up!

The case currently continues at the Administrative Court of Szeged.

We recommend those who are in a similar situation to contact HCLU without hesitation! Ask for their help, don't give up, hold on!

GYÖNGYI T., WHO WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IMI WITH HER

THERE IS STILL HOPE

Hungarian drug policy has been characterized for years by its punitive attributes. The law provides equity for cannabis products prescribed for medical use. In 2017, we helped those who sought out our legal services to exercise their rights.

HELP INSTEAD OF PUNISHMENT

The effects of the anti-NGO campaign are palpable in many areas: passive administrative offices and authorities do not do their jobs despite recommendations from NGOs. Moreover, these authorities make life difficult for numerous organizations. However, there are still certain public organs that are willing to cooperate even with those organizations that have been attacked repeatedly, recognizing the expertise they provide. Since its foundation in 2012, we have been members of the Task Force Against Hate Crimes, a working group consisting of NGOs and experts which enjoys fruitful cooperation with the anti-hate crime expert line of the National Police Headquarters. We have organized a conference entitled 'Efficient state responses to hate crimes' together with the Doctoral School of Law Enforcement of the National University of Public Service, where numerous representatives of the police, public prosecutors, judges and other experts in the field have participated and held speeches. Furthermore, according to the task force's experience, the result of several years of cooperation is visible by virtue of the fact that investigations are closer in standard to international requirements.

Why do I keep having to prove I am not a monster?

Adél's favourite film is *All about my mother*, and she really likes books about the lives of Coco Chanel, Édith Piaf, Audrey Hepburn, and Marilyn Monroe. Adél was recently threatened on Facebook because of her transgender identity. She felt she could not leave it at that.

"The hardest thing for me was receiving a death threat because of my identity, my self. It helped a lot that I was able to go to the police with a lawyer, with a lawyer from HCLU, which, I think, made them take my case more seriously. The investigation is over and my case has been forwarded to the prosecution office with a motion for prosecution.

I recommend to those who have found themselves in a similar situation to report their perpetrators. As far as I know, mine was the first report about a crime against a transgender person. This shows that transgender people are afraid and they do not trust the current Hungarian system."

ADÉL

A GUARD DOG OR LAP DOG?

An indispensable asset for all democracies is the control that the citizens can exercise over public authorities. In countries such as Hungary, where the state does not effectively carry out its control function, the importance of the democratic public and civil control is even greater than usual. In a dysfunctional system, the checks and balances are, at least in part, performed by critical citizens and press. Therefore, after taking over the independent institutions responsible for checks and balances, the Hungarian government is targeting not only institutions of the democratic public but it is also using all available measures to constrain the access to information necessary for exercising democratic control and forming critical opinions.

A citizen who wants to get information from reliable sources needs to work hard.

Propaganda products pretending to be news are replacing media. This year the printed and electronic media accessible to the majority of citizens have increasingly come under the control of oligarchs with ties to the government. Editorial freedom has apparently been abandoned by many newspapers which display centrally generated content instead. An incredible amount of public money is devoted to misinforming citizens and to inspiring hatred and fear. The government has 'information campaigns' full of fake, manipulative information and irrational content that uses the fundamental fears of the citizens to try to divert attention from distressing poverty, crises of education and health care, and systemic corruption.

Today, if someone wants to explore a national or local corruption case and get data of public interest, they have to prepare to pay hundreds of thousands or even millions forints for it, for years of litigation, and, perhaps, even if they win in litigation, the law will be changed so that it cannot happen again. **The Hungarian state spends millions on legal provisions that conceal data of public interest;** it employs expensive law firms to represent it in unnecessary, years long and certainly losing lawsuits.

The fundamentals of critical thinking must be acquired at school. **Good education is necessary for the formation of self-confident adults who can make up their own mind and, if necessary, take action.** Unfortunately, the highly centralized Hungarian education system is less than capable of educating citizens to be committed to democratic values, active in public life and cooperate with others. According to the recently published results of PISA tests (which are conducted every three years), for example, the performance of Hungarian students is below the average when it comes to the so-called collaborative problem-solving. The achieved scores showed a remarkably strong correlation with the socio-economic situation of students and schools in Hungary.

Despite these roadblocks, many citizens do not give up. In 2017, a number of people who had not spoken previously on political matters voiced an opinion. A new generation of activists combined with the formerly politically inactive and conservative citizens gathered on the streets during spring demonstrations, university forums and other protest events. **After these demonstrations and for first time in HCLU' history, we helped the protesters who needed legal assistance by providing a phone number that could be called around the clock and was redirected to our lawyers.** We provided legal representation for those protesters who have been subject to criminal and infringement procedures. One of the best-known cases was the criminal proceedings against Gergő Horváth, the activist who spilled washable paint over the President's office on the day the CEU law was signed. The trial itself and the work of the HCLU lawyer were followed live on the internet by thousands. As is clear from these examples, HCLU provided and continues to provide legal support to those citizens who **wish to exercise their right to freedom.**

**„WHEN 4 POLICEMEN COULD NOT SEVER 2
STUBBORN CHICKS CLINGING TOGETHER
WITH A PVC PIPE, WELL, THAT WAS NOT A
BAD FEELING. AND THE FACT THAT MEAN-
WHILE I WROTE HCLU'S NUMBER ON ME,
THAT WAS REASSURING, QUITE SO. BUT
UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS NOT OVER YET.”**

- FACEBOOK POST OF A CITY PARK GUARD

Those citizens who would receive public-interest data that they requested only after paying hundreds of thousands or millions of forints have continued to pursue their right to legitimately-requested information. They are debating in court whether it is justifiable to demand these fees. HCLU provides them free legal representation. Currently, it appears as if our perseverance has been successful: more judges are reaching verdicts that either restrict or directly exclude the possibility of demanding compensation for providing public-interest data, some judges have even held that informing citizens is an obligation of public service bodies.



DO NOT BE AFRAID!

Zsombor is a physician and he sought out HCLU because he believed that the Hungarian Medical Chamber is restricting the freedom of expression and, additionally, its operations are not transparent and not conducted in a manner worthy of public bodies.

'THE WORST FOR ME WERE STUPIDITY AND IGNORANCE THAT I HAD TO FACE DURING THE TRIAL. IN ANY CASE THE HCLU REPRESENTATION MADE A POSITIVE IMPRESSION ON ME, WE MANAGED TO FIND A GREAT LAWYER WHO WAS VERY OPEN TO THE ISSUES OF PUBLIC INTEREST. WE ARE DONE WITH THE FIRST INSTANCE, WE WON THE LAWSUIT. THOSE WHO FIND THEMSELVES IN A SIMILAR SITUATION I ADVISE TO TAKE ACTION, PUBLIC LIFE CAN BE RECLAIMED ONLY THIS WAY.

DO NOT BE AFRAID!

*ZSOMBOR,
HCLU CLIENT IN A FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION CASE*

FIGHT BY ALL MEANS!

István, an aggrieved party in the Questor investigation, sought representation from HCLU in this very complicated and far-reaching case. We represented him in a lawsuit concerning the publishing of public-interest data.

'WE LOST THIS BATTLE, THE JUDGES OF THE FIRST AS WELL AS THE SECOND INSTANCE REACHED VERDICTS CONTRADICTORY TO THE BASIC LAW AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT WAS NOT WILLING TO RECOGNIZE THE FACT THAT BASIC LAW WAS VIOLATED. THE HARDEST THING FOR ME WAS AND STILL IS THAT I FELT DEPRIVED, ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION.

IT TAKES TIME TO PROCESS SUCH A LOSS. OUR LOSS AND MY LOSS IS NOT ONLY MATERIAL BUT ALSO MORAL AND THEREFORE ALSO PSYCHOLOGICALLY STRESSFUL. AGAINST THAT, IT ONLY HELPS IF YOU FIGHT AGAINST INJUSTICE. HCLU WAS HELPING IN THAT.

I ADVISE THOSE WHO ARE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION TO FIGHT BY ALL MEANS!'

ISTVÁN,

HCLU also fights for freedom of the press by standing up for those journalists who create new independent newspaper; by challenging the consolidation of media; and by combatting the government's attempts to turn the press into a propaganda tool. In this regard, HCLU represented the staff of Népszabadság (which was shuttered in 2016). In 2017, our lawyers proved both in labor court and during corporate legal proceedings that the publisher acted illegally and that even under Hungarian law they had illegally shut down the newspaper. HCLU published an opinion piece on Index.hu about the legal position of propaganda dressed up as press focusing particularly on whether said propaganda falls under the right to freedom of press. The subsequent debate made clearer the boundaries between democratic press and propaganda as well as the legal implications of these boundaries.

This is actually a petty lawsuit

'I've been writing and editing the site www.bicske.blog.hu for more than 10 years. This is just mine, I work on my own expense, with my own tools, without any remuneration, for local information, practically alone. Previously, I worked as a journalist. At the age of 26 I won the Dr. Tamás Szegő Award of National Association of Hungarian Journalists (MÚOSZ). At the age of 30, I received Flekk 2000 Award in 2000 at the MÚOSZ headquarters – the latter on the Day of Hungarian press. I found HCLU because the government in Bicske sued me for two – in my opinion – harmless and true commentaries.

I've never had a libel suit so being taken on by HCLU is a great honor for me, this is not just a formality.

The message that this lawsuit brings is very painful: a citizen of Bicske should not express critical opinions because those public sector executives whose monthly salaries run in millions will sue them for millions.

Did they believe that I or my legal representative would not go to trial?

Or that I would not stand for myself?

Or that I wouldn't have the money for it? (That one they got right.)

Or that I would be discouraged from writing and scared for good?

They did not succeed. We won the lawsuit at the first instance.'

ANTAL IZING, JOURNALIST

The government has been handing over increasing numbers of public schools to churches which endangers the availability of ideologically neutral education for all children. However, Parents and students are not without remedy if they want to decide the fate of their school. HCLU has informed many parents and parental communities that no public school can go into church ownership without the support of the majority of parents (or older students). Moreover, upon using HCLU's legal advice, parents have reported success stories to us: Parents have and can prevent a school from being transferred to a religious institution with specific ideological beliefs.

Additionally, in 2017, children and young adults also demonstrated that they can stand up for their interests and rights. High school students wrote open letters and protested to the ombudsman against changing the high school graduation system without giving time to prepare for it and against an amendment which enabled schools to ignore their special needs students. **HCLU helped the protesters by publishing a professional statement on these matters.**

IF YOU CAN'T DO IT WITH A NICE WORD...

It is axiomatic that in true democracies citizens and non-governmental organizations who oppose the government's views are free to express their opinions. **Therefore, when it comes to debates on public affairs the government must respect everyone's right to do it.** By 2017, however, it became apparent that the Hungarian government considers opposing opinions attacks against the nation itself and thinks that the people who voice these opinions should be excluded from debating public affairs. This current governmental policy lead to smear campaigns targeting prominent personalities and their supporters who oppose the government.

Loud smear campaigns against opposition politicians and activists have become a common element of public life in 2017. Also this year, for the first time, an ex-politician, a theater director and an activist were targeted as posing national security risks. Information about sexual orientation or family members was used in these campaigns and in several cases the accusations were lies. These campaigns happened and continue happening because of the coordinated involvement of politicians and several state and government-friendly media.

A new wave of the anti-NGO campaign that has been going on for years now swept through the country in 2017. In January, one of the vice-presidents of Fidesz said: "The Soros empire maintains its pseudo-civil-societies so that they can impose the global big capital and the world of political correctness onto national governments. These organizations should be restrained by all means and I think they should be removed from here. And now I feel that an international opportunity has arrived to do so." He added that "they want to participate in big politics even though they lack any kind of legitimacy."

"Moreover, a national consultation included the following question about NGOs: More and more foreign-supported organizations operate in Hungary with the aim of interfering in the internal affairs of our country in an opaque manner. These organizations could jeopardize our independence. What do you think Hungary should do?"

The suggested responses were as follows: "[a] Require them to register, revealing the objectives of their activities and the sources of their finances. [b] Allow them to continue their risky activities without any supervision." In the summer, the National Assembly passed a law based on the Russian Foreign Agent Act under which foundations and associations receiving funds from abroad for any reason, if they cross a certain limit, are obliged to register themselves as 'foreign-sponsored organizations.' A list of these organizations would be published and then the label 'foreign-sponsored organization' should be included on their website and in their publications.

Violations in public service

In 2017, many people deliberately broke laws to draw the public's attention to social injustices and inequalities. **One of the most important public expressions of the year was civil disobedience, in which many people participated, including HCLU, when it decided against implementing the provisions of the unlawful civil law.** Civil disobedience is the nonviolent unlawful behavior of citizens that is motivated by the conviction that some public action is unfair and that they want to make a change. HCLU lawyers represent in court a large number of people who committed civil disobedience. These clients believe that the committed violation of law is not socially dangerous but socially beneficial.

**„I WOULD BE PROUD TO BE CONVICTED
OF ROWDYISM TODAY SINCE WHAT KIND
OF PEOPLE COMPLY WITH A LAW THAT IS
AGAINST THEM.”**

*-- GERGŐ VARGA, A CLIENT OF HCLU
HIS LAST WORDS IN COURT*

HCLU deliberately violated the law in order to make the unlawful law fail: this way we could reach national and international courts capable of reaching verdicts on the legality of the law on foreign funded NGOs based on legal arguments. Together with other organizations we attacked the law at the Constitutional Court and at the court in Strasbourg. Additionally, we are also involved (as an intervener) in a lawsuit concerning the foreign agent law affecting Russian civilians. We are also planning more cases for next year.

Don't listen, report!

People who, in public interest, draw attention to injustices and violations also take a personal risk. Whistleblowers disclose information or circumstances (often, but not limited to, fraud or corruption) which they believe should be changed or abolished in order to benefit the community or the society as a whole. It is risky because such people are often persecuted. One example is a client of HCLU, András Horváth, a former employee of the tax authority who made public the misdemeanors of the tax authority. Despite his report, the authorities did not investigate the misdemeanors but he became a criminal suspect instead. This investigation lasted for nearly four years and was ultimately concluded by the prosecutor's office in 2017 since there was no crime with which our client could be charged. But, more importantly, following the proposal of HCLU's lawyer, the prosecutor's office also said that no criminal proceedings could be initiated against whistleblowers even if they had to break laws in order to make their reports.

HCLU'S SUCCESS: NO CRIME HAS BEEN COMMITTED BY THE ETHICAL HACKER IN THE SCANDAL OF BUDAPEST TRANSPORT CENTER (BKK)!

In July 2017, our client bought a pass for 50 HUF in BKK's online ticketing system due to a system error. He never used this pass and obviously acted in good faith when he immediately reported the error to the company. However, instead of thanking him, the investigating authorities showed up at his house and searched it. We successfully represented the 18-year-old boy christened by the press the 'ethical hacker'. The prosecutor's office said that our client did not commit a crime and does not pose a danger to the society.

Organize, let your voice be heard and stand up for your rights!

Since the very beginning, we have been helping people who are active and wish to stand up for themselves and for their community. This year we launched a one-year human rights training program to protect the rights of people with disabilities. In the training, people with disabilities and their parents can learn how to organize themselves effectively, how to recruit members, how to communicate with the media and decision-makers and how to stand up for their rights successfully.

In 2017, in Miskolc, we held seminars for local and neighbouring civil organisations which provide help for people living in deep poverty, especially for the Roma. These seminars were three two-day events and were on several topics, including communication, fundraising and empowerment.

In addition, we launched a rural training program for local civil organisations dealing with child protection and disability issues. The primary purpose of these training sessions is to increase the participants' ability to enforce their rights but also to create long-term working relationships between the participants and HCLU. The first training session was held at the end of 2017 in Eger and next ones will be held in 2018 in Salgótarján and Miskolc.



Stand up for yourself, I did!

Anikó reads a lot and if she is feeling down, she always reads a novel by István Fekete called Vuk. Anikó applied for an officially advertised job at a school. Although she had all the necessary qualifications she did not even reach the interview stage and the person the school hired does not have pedagogic qualifications. Moreover, the school director clearly stated that he did not find Anikó's posts with political and public content on social media acceptable.

"In this situation I clearly felt and knew that they cannot do this to me and they did me injustice but I did not know where, to which forum or authority I could turn. Then I wrote to HCLU's legal aid address where I described in detail what happened to me. Within a short period of time I received an answer and we started the proceedings against the school by turning to the Equal Treatment Authority (ETA) in order to establish infringement. There we succeeded. The hardest thing for me was the injustice itself and the fact that I cannot freely express an opinion because it disadvantages me. At first it was difficult too that the whole situation caused ambivalent feelings among my close friends and family members. Later, of course, everyone supported me but their first reactions were more like 'It does not make any sense, it only disadvantages you more and it has really no sense'. It is difficult to swim against this current of apathy.

HCLU made it easier for me to go through the process, I guess on my own I wouldn't have known what to do and how to do it. The process itself and the media coverage after the decision were difficult as well but I got help and did everything of my own volition, I experienced it very positively I was not compelled to do anything, I could freely decide what to take on and how to tackle it. The ETA issued their final decision that clearly stated that I was discriminated against because of my political views and urged the school to abandon this practice.

Those who are in a similar situation I would advise that if they truly experience injustice and objective discrimination, they should not let it go and they should try to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the remaining democratic system. Secondly, they should ask for help and they should not be afraid of the publicity."

ANIKÓ

STAFF MEMBERS

Without them 2017 would have been less free.

Thanks to our staff we stand for freedom in conference rooms, trainings, conferences, professional discussions, press, city universities and small villages as well day by day.

Márton Asbóth, Balázs Bartakovics, Flóra Benkő, Zoltán Bognár, Róbert Bordás, Ilona Boros, Dalma Dojcsák, Dániel Döbrentey, Borbála Fernezelyi, Gabriella Harmat, Arno Hegedűs, Szabolcs Hegyi, Tivadar Hüttl, Eszter Jovánovics, Stefánia Kapronczay, Tamás Kardos, Mátyás Kálmán, Anna Kertész, Anita Koncsik, Attila Mráz, Dominika Milanovich, Anna Rubi, Norbert Schmidt, Attila Szabó, Máté Szabó, Péter György Szegi, András Széles, Judit Torma, Anita Tóth, Réka Várkonyi, Réka Velényi, Beatrix Vissy, Judit Zeller

Our lawyers:

Levente Baltay, Péter Erdey, Zoltán Fazakas, Tünde Fekete, Gábor Juhász, Katinka Nehéz-Posony, Gábor Nónay, András Pethő, Márk Pető, Zsolt Szegedi

In HCLU daily tasks are done by staff, assigned lawyers and volunteers. Our chairmanship and members of the supervisory board helps us to write articles that are published in the press, and to argue in courts. We are proud that people with different expertise contribute to HCLU's strategy and our sustainability. The work and results detailed in the report would not have been realized without them.

Board members:

Ágota Bíró, Ádám Földes, Fanny Hídvégi, Ernő Kállai, Judit Sándor

Members of our supervisory board:

Gábor Békés, Barna Baráth, Márta Nagy

2017

**151
ongoing
cases**

**In 790
cases we
provided legal
aid via email**

**141
procedural
events with a
lawyer's
presence**

**38
ongoing cases in the
European Court of Human
Rights (ECHR) or the
Constitutional Court**

**We have
70
new cases**

**69
volunteers helped
our work with
1869
hours**

The infographic features a central light blue circle containing a paragraph of text. Surrounding this central circle are several other circles in green, yellow, pink, and red. Each of these surrounding circles contains a specific financial figure and a brief description of the source or nature of that figure. The text is bold and black, set against the colored backgrounds of the circles.

15 224 321 Ft
from **2 360**
people as 1% tax
designation

0 Ft -
HCLU receives that
much public money
from the Hungarian
state.

37 322 479 Ft
- total amount of
domestic donation
in 2017

It is of high priority to us that our management is transparent to everyone. Our reports, our balance sheets, our financial statements, our independent auditors' reports, the announcements on the use of 1% of PIT are available on HCLU's website retroactively for years. In addition, every year we publish a comprehensible summary along with legal regulations on our website. Our self-transparency is a matter of credibility for us.

23 302 455 Ft
from private
donations
-
736 donors
altogether

3 655 241 Ft
- total amount
of pro-bono
services



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SZABADSÁGJOGOKÉRT

Support us!

16200216-00089166 (MagNet Bank)

tasz.hu/tamogatas