

**SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY**



**NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY
2015.**



DEAR READER,



One of the primary aims of the judiciary is to have the courts fulfil their constitutional duties, have the independent judges administer justice in a timely manner and at a high level of professionalism.

In order to meet this aim, the National Office for the Judiciary provides the circumstances necessary for administering justice in compliance with the requirements of the 21st century, via, for instance, new and renovated court buildings and continuous development of the ICT infrastructure and electronic means.

Our efforts have been fruitful, the measures taken for setting up the material and regulatory framework necessary for the establishment of a client-centred justice system providing quality services have yielded results, which were also confirmed by the data of the EU Justice Scoreboard.

In spite of the challenges posed by the rapidly changing regulatory framework, the broader range of the electronic procedures and the management of foreign-currency loan and refugee cases, the indicators for the timely manner of proceedings continued to improve in the first half of 2015, the number of unresolved and pending cases – with special regard to administrative and labour cases – continued to decrease.

As shown in the report, the improvements financed by EU and budgetary funds, the collection and exchange of best practices, the strengthening of local and regional training programmes, the introduction, exchange and incorporation of international knowledge and experience and the proactive participation in international internship and long-term exchange programmes, international conferences and working groups all contribute to the high professional level and the timely manner of the administration of justice.



Being able to achieve these successful results was, to a large extent, due to the close cooperation with ministries, other fields of the legal profession, universities and authorities participating in the development.

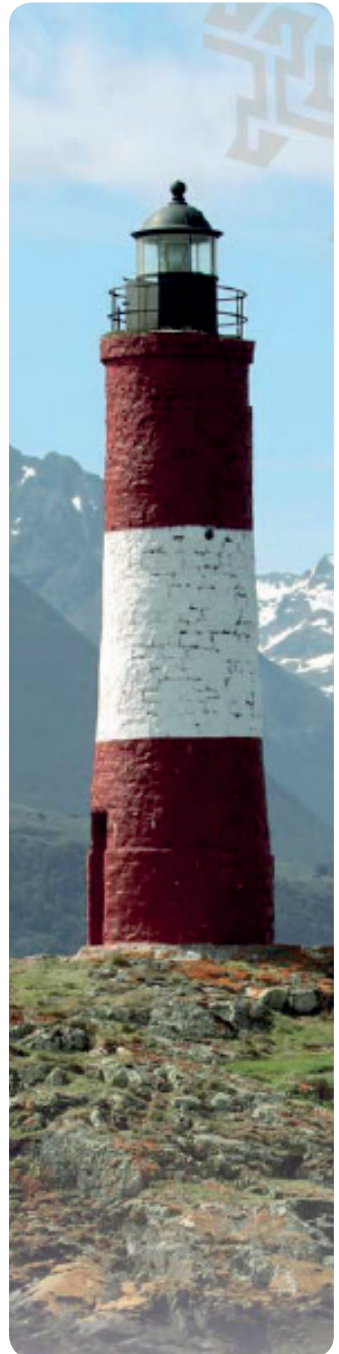
I wish to hereby extend my thanks to all of my colleagues working in the judiciary for their efforts made in order to achieve the strategic aims, for their unselfish work and the results thereof.

Tünde HANDÓ, Dr.

President of the National Office for the Judiciary

STRATEGY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY

- The courts should meet their constitutional obligation – independent judges should administer justice to a high standard and in a timely fashion
- Optimum distribution and utilisation of human resources
- Provision of material conditions and their optimum distribution and utilisation
- Integrity of the judicial organisation, transparency of the justice administration and administrative work, and predictability of, and level of control over, the latter
- Simplification of access to the court
- Development of a training system, cooperation with other professional communities





JUDICIAL ACTIVITY OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 3-5)

Concerning the main factors of the clearance rate, it should be emphasized that, in the first half of 2015,

- there was a total of 767.748 incoming cases, which is 1,4% fewer than in the first half of 2014,
- the number of resolved cases exceeded the number of incoming cases by more than 31.000 cases, that is, by 4,1%.
- the vast majority of the cases, 86,6 %, were resolved within one year,
- the number of unresolved cases decreased, in comparison to the first half of 2014, by 13 %, that is, by approximately 38.000 cases, which exceeds the decrease in the number of incoming cases several times.

INCOMING CASES

In the first half of 2015, the number of incoming cases exceeded 767.000, which is only 3,600 cases fewer than in the first half of 2014 (771.000). The indicators concerning the timely manner, the number of resolved and the number of unresolved cases improved substantially even with such a ratio of incoming cases.



RESOLVED CASES

In the first half of 2015, the courts resolved 799.000 cases. This means a decrease of 1,4 % in comparison to the data of the first half of 2014, however, the total of cases resolved in the first half of 2015 still exceeds the total of incoming cases. It should be emphasized that the total of resolved cases exceeded the total of incoming cases by more than 31.000 cases.

TIMELY MANNER

86,6 % of the litigious cases were resolved within a year of arriving at the given instance, as shown in the figure below.

UNRESOLVED CASES

The number of pending cases was 307.000 in the first half of 2014, which number decreased to 268.000 by the end of the first half of 2015, amounting to a decrease of 13%, out of which the number of litigious cases was 128.000. The decrease has a positive effect on the timely manner of the pending cases.



ADMINISTRATION OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 8-14)

TARGET ASSESSMENTS AND AUDITS

A target assessment enables the in-depth inspection of a given area of administration. In the first half of 2015, the President of the NOJ ordered that target assessments and audits are to be conducted based on the reports of heads of regional courts, complaints or reports in the public interest.

WORKING GROUPS

The aim of working groups is to ensure that a comprehensive and careful preparation is done prior to adopting all decisions, thus promoting the transparency and predictability of the judicial and administrative work of the judicial organisation.

In the recent period several working groups have been established at courts, and the implementation of projects was also facilitated by working in working groups with the participation of judges and judicial employees.

17 working group established by the President of the NJO worked the first half of 2015.

PILOT PROGRAMMES

Large-volume measures with a national gravity are developed and tested through pilot programmes locally in order to ensure their careful preparation as well as transparency and predictability.



NETWORKS

In the course of discharging its duties, the NOJ pays special attention to strengthening the sharing of know-how and practical experience in all of its forms concentrating in the judicial organisation. One of its instruments is the establishment of professional networks. By way of networks the coordinated, fast and efficient working of the judicial employees with direct relationship with each other and having outstanding know-how, can be achieved.

Professional networks such as:

- professional advisory network of the EU
- network of spokespersons and press secretaries,
- contact persons of the Open Court Programme.



SHARING OF GOOD PRACTICES

In order to ensure more efficient work, the NOJ considers it a high-priority responsibility to collect, analyse, share and facilitate the introduction of good practices prepared throughout the country.

The good practices received from courts have been categorised (e.g. procedural and management support; administration, work organisation; court services; customer relations, etc.).

The following measures were taken to utilise good practices:

- supplementary material for procedures concerning the treatment of patients suffering from mental health issues (Regional Court of Tatabánya)
- court records, manual and sample documents of criminal hearings (Regional Court of Szekszárd),
- agreement on cooperating in the preparation of law clerks and clerks of the prosecution for the examination of legal professionals (Regional Court of Kaposvár).

Daily work is simplified and accelerated by the courts via different sample documents and forms. In February, 2015, the 'Documents' tab on the central intranet site of the courts was modernised. The NOJ designed the page in such a way as to enable the courts to upload documents prepared as good practice and used in the course of the administration of justice.

With regard to all types of courts, a total of 781 documents have been uploaded, among which foreign-language documents can be found as well.



PROGRAMMES

In order to meet the aims set forth in the strategy of the President of the NOJ, internal programmes for the judicial system and programmes open to applicants from outside the judicial system are announced.

Internal programmes:

- Ferenc Jablonszky Programme – for the execution of investments and reconstruction pertaining to judicial premises,
- Programme for the preservation of the history and the traditions of the judiciary – in order to preserve the historical values both for the judiciary and for the general public,
- ‘Use your foreign language skills’-programme – in order to broaden the use of and to provide adequate remuneration for the foreign-language communication resources,
- ‘Records of civilian associations’-programme – in order to accelerate and to improve the efficiency of maintaining the records of civilian associations.
- ‘Judicial mediation’-programme – to support regional events aiming to improve mediation,
- short- and long-term foreign scholarships.

Programmes open to outside applicants:

- György Székhelyi Mailáth Scientific Programme,
- ‘Focus on the Judiciary’ photograph competition – for presenting the Hungarian courthouses in a new, creative manner.



MANAGEMENT OF COMPLAINTS AND REPORTS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

The NOJ places great emphasis on the proper management of complaints and reports in the public interest. Reasons for their special importance include the fact that these may point out shortcomings of the system itself, which may therefore be remedied. In order to serve the clients quicker and to a higher standard, the NOJ makes it possible for the clients of the courts to present their complaints without having to appear in person, via the submission of an electronic form in the central online administrative system, accessible 24 hours a day.

“THE COURTS AS PROVIDERS OF SERVICE”-PROGRAMME

On June 23, 2015, the nationwide programme, “The courts as providers of service” was announced by the President of the NOJ, in which she presented 10 primary aims in order to maintain and strengthen confidence in the judiciary and ordered the presidents of the regional courts of appeal and the regional courts to prepare their related action plans.

Out of the aims, the strengthening of timely administration, the large-scale, nationwide reduction of unresolved cases, the efficient utilisation of the feedback of clients, the measures for dealing with unfounded attacks against the judges and the improvement of the remuneration and the respect of the judges are of particular importance. In the second half of 2015, all of the courts joined the programme via the preparation of their action plans.



AGREEMENTS ON COOPERATION

One of the strategic aims of the President of the NOJ is the co-operation with the other fields of the legal profession, and to support the spreading of the best practices of the regular professional contact between courts and universities. In the first half of 2015, several agreements on cooperation were concluded.



NATIONWIDE PROGRAMMES

(pages 12-14)

The President of the NOJ considers the strengthening of the role of the courts as providers of service and their compliance with the demands of the 21st century to be aims of the utmost importance. In order to achieve these, the nationwide programmes announced in previous years, witness service, the Programme for the Child-Centred Administration of Justice, court mediation, the Open Court Programme and the surveying of client satisfaction were continued.

OPEN COURT PROGRAMME

Social responsibility includes the participation of the courts in the increasing of legal awareness. In the framework of the programme initiated by the NOJ, students may become acquainted with the legal system, the process of administering justice and the institutions of the judiciary via school lessons, moot courts and visits to the courthouses.

The number of participants continued to increase in the first half of 2015 as well. It can therefore be perceived that there are not only more Open Court events organised, but the number of participants at these events increases as well.

In the framework of the Open Court Programme, agreements on cooperation exist between 23 courts and the NOJ on one side and educational institutions on the other side. To date, the NOJ, the Supreme Court, the regional courts of appeal and the regional courts have concluded a total of 113 agreements on the cooperation with educational institutions, out of which 25 were concluded in the first half of 2015.



CHILD-CENTRED ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

One of the main aims of the programme named “Child-Centred Administration of Justice” of the NOJ is to protect the interests of children both in civil – especially family law – and criminal cases in order for them to be treated with respect to their age when participating in the procedures as witnesses, as victims of a crime, as parties interested or even as the accused. In addition to the aforesaid, the programme also aims to continuously train judges presiding over cases concerning minors to meet the special and complex requirements pertaining to these kinds of cases.

The working group for the Child-Centred Administration of Justice assisted in meeting the aforesaid aims in the first half of 2015 as well. Among other tasks, the working group participated in providing information with respect to the special requirements arising from the age of minors and the creation and continuous improvement of the sub-menu named “Child-Centred Administration of Justice” at the website www.birosag.hu. One of the main tasks of the working group was the processing and the assessment of the data gathered in the nationwide survey of criminal proceedings against juveniles. Its members participated in the working group of the new Criminal Code, assisting in the development of the provisions pertaining to juveniles.

A network of judges was established in which those courts and judges participate who are especially adept at conducting procedures concerning minors. The network is capable of assisting with the tasks of the NOJ and to assist those judges who are less experienced in this field. An interdisciplinary training framework was developed for judges presiding over cases concerning or otherwise involving minors, judges presiding over family law cases and judges presiding over criminal cases against juveniles.



The successful completion of the course may become a criterion for the appointment of judges in the future.

The aim of the NOJ is to furnish rooms for the questioning of children in every court having a staff exceeding seven persons. In the course of the execution of the “Child-Centred Administration of Justice”-programme, the furnishing of the aforesaid rooms is continuous, therefore, 44 rooms were available nationwide for the questioning of children in the courthouses in the first half of 2015.

WITNESS SERVICE AND PROTECTION OF VICTIMS

The national programme for witness service was redesigned in 2015 and the field of victim protection was also added to it. The main aim of the programme is still the provision of witness service, however, concerning the protection of victims, it also encompasses the training of judges and court staff and the improvement of the cooperation with the Office of Justice.

The aim of the witness service programme is to allow us to provide assistance to the summoned witnesses to appear at hearings confidently, being aware of their rights and without fear. We intend to spread nationwide and strengthen those best practices which already existed in the programme, but were used only at a few courts.



In the first half of 2015

- the number of participants in the witness service programme was increasing continuously,
- the number of judges and other members of the court staff appointed for witness service reached 245,
- all of the 20 regional courts had members of staff appointed for witness service,
- the network of witness service staff was established,
- the training of witness service staff was developed,
- the 'Witness service, victim protection' tab on the central intranet site of the courts was modernised.

From 2015 onwards, the network of witness service staff is designed as follows:

- coordinators: coordinators are those members of the witness service staff who possess exceptional academic and practical knowledge. They assist all members of the witness service staff at the regional court and ensure the harmonisation of practices,
- mentors: mentors are those experienced members of the witness service staff who have already participated in the training at the national level. They provide assistance in the form of mentoring for novice members of the witness service staff and/or for those members who have not yet participated in the training,
- novice members of the witness service staff and those members who have not yet participated in the training form the third pillar of the witness service staff network.



In order to perform the tasks related to witness service at a high professional level, the training of the witness service staff is indispensable. The training of coordinators and appointed mentors is performed via training at the national level, also encompassing victim protection, and the training of novice members of the witness service staff and/or those members who have not yet participated in the training is performed via mentoring, training by mentors.

COURT MEDIATION

The system of court mediation furthers the resolution of legal disputes in the shortest possible time and to the satisfaction of the clients. This option has been available in the courts of Hungary since the second half of 2012. The way for court mediation was paved by those judges who were retired in 2012 but continued to practise as law clerks. Owing to the continuous training, an increasing number of law clerks could be appointed as mediators.

The aim of providing the clients with direct access to court mediation at each of the courts having a staff exceeding seven persons was met by the first half of 2015. This system may be an efficient instrument of the resolution of legal disputes in a timely manner and of the nationwide spreading of a new approach to dispute resolution.

At the end of the first half of 2015,

- at 20 regional courts,
- 48 judges and 89 law clerks have been appointed as mediators,
- 657 cases were referred to mediation, out of which
- an agreement was reached in 285 cases,
- 293 orders were issued compelling parties to jointly enlist the assistance of a mediator in their lawsuit concerning parental responsibility.



Mediation was conducted in a total of 197 cases, out of which an agreement was reached in a total of 88 cases.

CLIENT SATISFACTION

One of the strategic aims of the President of the NOJ is to simplify the access to justice. In order to further this aim, the surveying of client satisfaction and the establishment of client centres were initiated at the courthouses.

The aim of the surveying of client satisfaction is to enable the judiciary to gain feedback from clients in issues such as being satisfied with the offices for the filing of documents, with the information provided by the court or with the security of the building. The aim is to further improve client satisfaction based on their feedback. The method used by the courts to survey client satisfaction is usually the provision of client satisfaction forms, accessible in hard-copy forms at each courthouse or on the website of the courts.

To improve the efficiency of administration, the establishment of client centres was initiated nationwide. The Budapest Environs Regional Court and the Budapest-Capital Regional Court were among the first to establish such centres. The client centre provides the citizens with the means necessary for the quick and modern administration of their cases via electronic means, the opportunity to examine files and to receive information in an orderly environment. Our aim is to increase the number of courts with client centres. In the first half of 2015, an agreement was concluded on the cooperation between the NOJ and the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME), upon which the associates of MOME have commenced the planning of a uniform design.



THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 16-19)

RECEIPT OF CASES

A total of 159 cases concerning the issuance of opinions on legal regulations were received by NOJ in the 1st half of 2015.

THE AMENDMENTS TO LEGAL REGULATIONS SUGGESTED BY NOJ AND APPROVED

In the 1st half of 2015 the NOJ performed preparatory work regarding legislation in multiple subjects, and collected suggestions and then displayed them in a structured form. A lot was achieved as a result of former amendment and legislative initiatives in the subject period.

The recommendations of the President of the NOJ have been taken into consideration during the course of the amendment of several laws, including

- the rules of civil procedure,
- the system for the registration of wards,
- mediation
- the review of the treatment of patients suffering from mental health issues.

The recommendations were prepared with respect to the opinions of the courts in this period as well. The greatest support in the forwarding of the recommendations and in their preparation in compliance with the requirements of the legislation was provided by the Ministry of Justice.



ASSISTANCE IN THE CODIFICATION OF PROCEDURAL RULES

The President of the NOJ established working groups in relation to the codification of the following procedural rules:

- The framework and the codification of the new rules of criminal procedure
- Codification of the rules of civil procedure
- The codification of the new rules of administrative procedure
- The working groups collected the opinions and experience of the courts, then, following the analysis of the aforesaid, summarised the opinions and forward them to the Ministry of Justice.

ELECTRONIC PROCEDURES

The popularity of the use of information and communication technology (ICT) systems is increasing among the clients. The effect of the electronic procedure introduced in the registration of civil associations can primarily be perceived in the reduction of the length of the procedures. In the first half of 2015, requests submitted via electronic means were usually handled approximately 8 days faster than those submitted as hard copies. Concerning the reports of civil associations, we perceive an increase in the number of organisations opting for the use of ICT systems.



REFUGEE AFFAIRS

In the first half of 2015, taking into account the substantial pressure of migration, the NOJ, in order to ensure the timely manner and the high professional standards of addressing migration and asylum cases, paid special attention to the tasks of the judiciary pertaining to such cases.

With respect to the aforesaid

- the number of cases increased (judicial review of the decisions of authorities in asylum cases, extension of asylum detention, extension of specialised detention of foreigners),
- the workload of the courts, of the presiding judges and of the law clerks increased,
- further courts were granted jurisdiction in addition to the courts originally addressing migration cases,
- the number of cases concerning the extension of specialised detention of foreigners and of asylum detention increased substantially.

In the first half of 2015, all of the regional courts affected by the increased number of cases concerning migration could ensure the timely manner of administration of justice via the efficient utilisation of their existing workforce, the development of a detailed on-call and stand-by system and the proper framework of the distribution of cases.

In the first half of 2015, the NOJ

- continuously monitored the amendments of laws on migration and refugee affairs and provided related opinions with the assistance of judges presiding over such cases and possessing specialised expertise,
- examined the registration system of immigration and asylum cases, then, taking into consideration the probable increase in the number of cases, modified it in order to be able to measure the changes in the number of cases and commenced the preparation of an even more complete and detailed statistical data collection and registration,
- commenced the establishment of a group of experts managing asylum and immigration cases.

NETWORK FOR CONSULTATION ON LEGISLATION

The internal expert group of judges and law clerks assisting with the consultation on legislation was further expanded in the first half of 2015 and provided efficient support for the President of the NOJ with her tasks pertaining to her powers for consultation on and initiating legislation, in accordance with the consistently applied internal policies.

MONITORING LAWS

The NOJ is constantly monitoring the website of the National Assembly and bills pending before the National Assembly affecting courts. The NOJ prepares weekly summaries on these and informs courts.

THE REGISTRATION OF PRELIMINARY RULINGS AND PROCEDURES BEFORE THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT ON THE INITIATIVE OF JUDGES

The NOJ is systematically and continuously monitoring and publishing judicial initiatives, which are forwarded to the Court of Justice of the European Union and the Constitutional Court.



HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 20-23)

THE CAREER PATH OF JUDGES

The management of human resources is that part of the judicial strategy which determines the judicial career path the most from the perspective of the individual. This area, in addition to remuneration in cash and in kind, moral acknowledgements and the provision of a proper working environment and material assets, also encompasses a system of job functions based on individual competences and providing a proportionate workload, in which promotion and mobility between career paths are granted.

The development of a detailed, unified model of the career path of the judges and court staff has been an understandable request in the ranks of the judiciary for decades. This aim may be achieved via the close cooperation of the judicial administration and the representative organisation, the establishment of a common framework and taking joint action.

This task is managed by the Expert Committee for the Judicial Career, established on April 2, 2015, pursuant to the initiative of the President of the NOJ, as a result of the agreement on the cooperation between the National Office for the Judiciary, the National Judicial Council, the Hungarian Association of Judges and the Trade Union of Court Staff.



THE DIVISIONS OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

The number of staff employed in the judicial organisation is approx. 11,000, which can be broken down on 30 June 2015 as follows:

Number of employees				
	31 December 2014	30 June 2015		
	Approved	Actual	Approved	Actual
Judges	2932	2839	2932	2851
Court clerks	817	798	819	818
Trainee judges	332	248	329	238
Judicial employees *	7261	7167	7297	7197
Total	11342	11052	11377	11104

*(excluding court clerks and trainee judges)



TRAINING

(pages 24-26)

A NEW FRAMEWORK OF TRAINING

The coordination and the execution of the training of the judicial staff of approximately 11.000 persons is primarily managed by the NOJ. The new training system of the NOJ was commenced in the first half of 2015, the basis of which remain the trainings conducted at the Hungarian Academy of Justice (MIA). Nevertheless, the systematic organisation of local and regional trainings were considered novel. The determination of the contents, the uniform conducting and the quality control of the nationwide trainings are the responsibilities of the MIA, execution, however, is carried out via the assistance of the network of training managers. At the Supreme Court (Curia), at the regional courts of appeal and at the regional courts, 26 training managers have been appointed in total. The list of mandatory and optional trainings for 2015 has been designed jointly by the MIA, the training managers and their administrative assistants during workshops and conferences.

CENTRAL TRAININGS AT THE MIA

The majority of the central trainings of the judges and court staff is conducted at the separate building of the MIA. In the first half of 2015, more than 3.500 persons participated in a total of 90 trainings and central events at the MIA.



CENTRAL LOCAL TRAININGS

As a result of the expansion of the training system, a total of 87 different trainings were conducted between April 1 and July 6, 2015 by the courts, without experiencing any problems. In the aforesaid period, 315 lecturers held trainings in a total of 415 training hours and to 4.225 participants.

LOCAL TRAININGS

Local trainings are organised – in addition to central trainings conducted and/or coordinated by the MIA – by the courts using their own resources, thereby complementing the national training system and making it more flexible and targeted at the local needs. Mainly the trainings of court clerks and court staff are conducted at the local level, adhering to well-organised plans. As a new initiative, specialised trainings have been commenced at a few courts, for instance, leadership trainings and integrated ICT trainings.



INTEGRITY OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 27-28)

THE DISCIPLINARY SITUATION OF JUDGES

In the 1st half of 2015 14 procedures were initiated before the service tribunal of first instance (disciplinary court). The service tribunal found the judge negligent and imposed disciplinary punishment in 13 cases. No criminal proceedings were initiated against judges in the 1st half of 2015.

LAWSUITS AGAINST COURTS

In the 1st half of 2015

- 149 cases were received, and
- 687 pending cases and
- 157 cases concluded with final judgment were registered.

INTERNAL SUPERVISION OF THE JUDICIARY

The tasks of the NOJ encompass, among others, the coordination of the supervision of sectoral organisations. In order to execute this task, the Manual of Internal Supervision and the Strategic Supervision Plan of the Supervisory Department for the period between 2015-2018 were approved by the President of the NOJ and were issued in the first half of 2015.

Based on the supervisory policies and worksheets prepared by the NOJ, the institutional supervisors of the judicial sector have conducted four extraordinary supervisory procedures commissioned by the President of the NOJ.



IMPROVING THE SECURITY OF THE PREMISES OF THE JUDICIARY

In the first half of 2015, in order to improve the security of the premises of the judiciary and thereby protect the citizens and the staff members,

- the NOJ prepared the nationwide register of the security devices of the premises, by means of which the deterioration of the installed devices may be examined with ease and the necessary modernisations may be planned, and
- compiled the draft of the manual for the planning of security measures,
- the gate security systems of the Regional Court of Pécs and the Regional Court of Appeal of Pécs were modernised,
- from the assets remaining from the Swiss Project, an additional 8 new X-ray machines for the checking of bags and 4 deteriorated metal detector gates were replaced and 150 handheld metal detector devices were procured, at a total value of approximately HUF 56 million,
- security trainings were conducted with the participation of the permanent and outsourced staff members operating the security devices (approximately 150 persons), where the participants obtained qualifications in X-ray operation,
- by means of the investments of the District Court of Debrecen and the District Court of Cegléd, modern, complex security systems were installed in compliance with the requirements of the 21st century.



TRANSPARENCY IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

In the 1st half of 2015 the NOJ conducted 24 public procurement procedures worth net HUF 1,522 million in order to achieve strategic objectives. Although the number of public procurement procedures declined in value it has increased compared to 1st half of 2014.

No procedure was brought before the Public Procurement Arbitration Committee with regard to the NOJ, the auditing bodies have not found any defects or deficiencies in the course of follow-up audits and no proceedings concerning an irregularity was initiated by them.



COMMUNICATION OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 29-31)

NETWORK OF PRESS SPOKESPERSONS

The judiciary communicates with the citizens and the media via the press spokespersons and the press secretaries assisting them. Press spokespersons and press secretaries are employed at each of the regional courts, the regional courts of appeal and the Supreme Court (Curia), the direct contacts of whom are featured on the central website. The network of press spokespersons also assists with the internal communication of the judiciary via the central intranet. To the central intranet, a total of 532 news articles were uploaded in 2014, and a total of 421 in the first half of 2015.

ONLINE PRESENCE

In the first half of 2015,

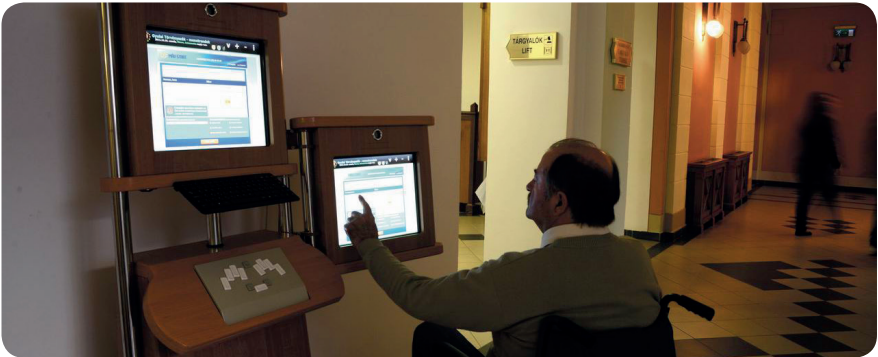
- 402.246 users performed
- a total of 2.870.377 page views and
- 599 press releases and 331 news articles were published on the central website (www.birosag.hu).

The regional courts and the regional courts of appeal have also designed and continuously develop their own websites. In the first half of 2015, all of the websites were in operation, featuring a uniform design. Based on the observations in 2014, the back-end system of the central intranet (the internal network of the judiciary) required substantial modernisation. In the first half of 2015, in addition to the back-end system and the design, the contents were reviewed and modernised in their entirety.



The Facebook page of the NOJ was set up in 2014, accessible at www.facebook.com/obhbirosag. In addition to the NOJ, a total of 5 regional courts had Facebook pages in the first half of 2015.

For further information visit:
<http://www.birosag.hu/en>
<https://www.facebook.com/obhbirosag>



IT SYSTEM AND SUPPORT OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 32-35)

The increase in the number of electronic procedures imposes several additional tasks on the ICT field of both the administration and the judiciary. In the period of reporting, the ICT services of the national network were continuously provided by the NOJ.

Due to the procurements performed in the past two years, the deterioration indicators of the ICT devices of the judiciary decreased, that is, the modernisation of the devices is continuous, however, as shown in the diagram below, 33,7% of the devices in the judiciary are still in need of replacement:

NEW DEVICES

In the first half of 2015, a total of 901 courtroom workstations and 284 office workstations were procured, in addition to 404 monitors. In order to support the printing needs of the Supreme Court (Curia), the regional courts of appeal, the Budapest-Capital Regional Court and the NOJ, a total of 171 printers were procured. In order to support the work of judges – especially at those courts where no notebooks had been received in the course of earlier eGovernment projects – a total of 717 notebooks were procured by the NOJ, in addition to a total of 227 ultrabooks procured in the period of reporting.

In addition to the aforesaid, additional ICT devices were procured in the first half of 2015 (servers, mobile devices, overhead projectors, scanners etc.).



DEVELOPMENTS

Several application and system developments and the introduction of earlier programmes were performed by the NOJ in the first half of 2015 as well, for instance

- citizens and their representatives can obtain information via a website concerning the documents submitted in their cases,
- citizens and their representatives can receive notifications via text messages or e-mails in their pending cases,
- clients may obtain information on the estimated duration of litigious procedures, in order to facilitate their efficient planning,
- management of and compliance with procedural deadlines, and access to the contents of the document bank were simplified for the judges,
- the automatized document-filling application,
- the access to the online filing of administrative complaints by the clients.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER FIELDS OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION

In order to enable the prosecutors to inspect files online, the NOJ and the Office of the Prosecutor General conducted continuous meetings of working groups. The uniform method of the transfer of data for specific procedures was commenced and designed.

Specific developments of the recent period were introduced to the attorneys as well, which developments have since been successfully used not only by the citizens but also by the attorneys.



PREMISES OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 36-39)

Courts in Hungary

- take up a total of 184 premises
- with a floor area of 441,177 m².

Out of the above 152 buildings with a floor area of altogether 420,954 m² are used for the purpose of administering justice.

CONSTRUCTIONS, INVESTMENTS AND PLANS

In the subject period several renovations, investments and constructions were implemented in relation to court premises throughout the country, while numerous other projects were planned and prepared as well.

General programmes of the NOJ concerning the premises of the judicial organisation

Based on the positive results of 2014, the programme of the NOJ for internal developments of smaller scale was continued and expanded in 2015. As a result of this, sanitary units were renovated, interiors were painted, repairs and smaller-scale developments of the air conditioning were performed in all parts of the country.



Neither a uniform assessment of the buildings, nor a database of plans is available regarding the premises of the judicial organisation, only hard copies of plans are available most of the time, which may be incomplete. Only digital copies of plans may be submitted in procedures before the authorities, since cases are managed electronically, on-line. Therefore, the necessary technical data may usually be compiled only via the expenditure of a substantial amount of working hours.

In order to facilitate modernisation and improve the efficiency of work, KIH Project Office was commissioned by the NOJ for the surveying, the photographic documentation and the digital processing of three buildings in the course of a Pilot project.

In the first half of 2015, a strategic partnership agreement was concluded between the NOJ and the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design. As the first joint project, a Manual of Design is to be compiled in order to establish client centres with a uniform design. The required compilation of technical contents and the organisation of visits to the premises are in progress.



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 40-41)

The projected grant accepted by the National Assembly for 2015 is HUF 87,553 million, which is higher than the original grant in 2014.

The court system received an EU funding of HUF 675,7 million in the 1st half of 2015 in addition to its budgetary support and own income, which funding was mainly spent on purchasing equipment.

PREPARATION OF THE BUDGET OF 2016

Unlike in previous years, consultations with the representatives of the Ministry of National Economy on the budgetary requests for 2016 commenced as early as April, 2015. During these consultations, the additional requests for the staff expenses and material expenses of the judicial sector – excluding the 10% position bonus of court clerks and law clerks for 2016 – amounted to a total of HUF 3.985,16 million in comparison to the budget available in 2015.

The reasons for the aforesaid additional requests were primarily shown by the lack of funds required for the staff expenses payable due to statutory obligations but which had not been supported in previous fiscal years, the funding of which is indispensable in order to enable the judicial sector to maintain the results achieved in earlier years in the field of its fundamental objective, namely the administration of justice.

The aforesaid was successfully represented by the NOJ before the Government as well, the consultations on the budget of 2016 yielded results, the proposed budget of the judicial sector was approved.



EU PROGRAMMES AND TENDERS

(pages 42-44)

RESULTS OF THE TENDERS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2015

The primary aim in the first half of 2015 was the introduction of the results of earlier programmes to the widest possible audience in the judiciary. In order to meet this aim, a working group for the support of the introduction of developments assisted financially by the European Union was established by the president of the NOJ. The tasks of the working group encompass the support of the introduction of developments resulting from financial assistance by the European Union, providing assistance and the preparation of information materials, opinions and recommendations. Concerning the projects, a total of HUF 675,7 million was received by the sectorial budget as financial assistance, and approximately a total of HUF 331,8 million of the financial assistance provided by the European Union was used in the first half of 2015.

PROJECTS IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2015

Printer replacement project – Replacement of the printers in the Registries of Companies: In March, 2015, the NOJ joined, as a consortium member, the project financed by the European Union. In the sub-project concerning the courts, 233 printers of different performance were procured and the obsolete machines were replaced at the registries of companies. The effective conclusion of the project has taken place.

- Timeframe of the project: March 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015.,
- Amount of financial assistance: HUF 45 million.

Project for the improvement of security: The project of Swiss contributions was aimed at the improvement of the security of the clients and the strengthening of the security measures in the work of judges and court staff. In order to achieve these goals, the procurement of security systems and the development of safer database connections enabling more efficient administration are necessary.

In the first half of 2015, as a result of the project, in order to improve the efficiency of judicial work

- a total of 901 new courtroom workstations,
- a total of 284 new office workstations,
- a total of 165 network devices for the operation of the workstations, and
- 2-2 Check Point hardwares and licences, 4 Blade and 1 Storage servers were procured.
- Timeframe of the project: August 01, 2012 – June 30, 2016.

In the period of reporting, an amount of HUF 467 million was used from the budget of HUF 1.400 million of the project.

Training project: ERA Civil Justice project, 'Using EU Civil Justice Instruments in Cross-Border Civil Litigation'.

- Its aims include furthering the knowledge about European Union law, strengthening the mutual trust between judges, facilitating exchange of practices via workshops.
- Within the framework of the project, 4 seminars of 2 days each are to be held in Hungary, in Poland, in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia.
- The number of Hungarian participants are 8 persons in seminars abroad and 23 persons in seminars in Hungary.
- Estimated date of the conclusion of the project: the first half of 2017.
- The total budget of the project is EUR 113.150, concerning which the NOJ grants a contribution of EUR 5.350.



DEVELOPMENT PERIOD FROM 2014 TO 2020

The NOJ and the courts continued the preparation for the 2014-2020 programming period in this half as well. Therefore, the preparation and the introduction of the project idea sheets was a task of special importance.

Taking into account that the participation possibilities of the members of the Hungarian judiciary are limited under the currently planned specifications of the Operational Programme for the Development of Administration and Public Services, considering those projects which may be performed by means of co-operation with other entities and via consortiums is therefore of special importance during the preparation.

PROJECTS IN PREPARATION

EU civil law training: The NOJ established a consortium jointly with Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic and was awarded financial assistance by the European Union.

- 4 seminars of 2 days each are to be held on EU civil law by the member states.
- Within the framework of the project, the training of a total of 32 Hungarian judges is possible.
- As a part of the project, an international, English-language seminar titled 'EU Civil Justice Instruments' is to be held in Budapest in May, 2016.



EU civil law ESP training: The NOJ applied as a member of the consortium established under the lead of ERA (Academy of European Law) and was awarded financial assistance.

- 7 seminars of 3 days each are to be held by the member states, furthering interactive trainings of English in the field of civil law.
- Within the framework of the project, the training of a total of 34 Hungarian judges is possible during 2016-2017.

Cybercrime project: The NOJ applied jointly with Spanish, Portuguese and Polish partners and was awarded financial assistance in the European Union project on the introduction and exchange of judicial practice and member state expertise concerning Internet and online crimes.

- Within the framework of the project, 5 English-language seminars of 2 days each are to be held in Trier, in Budapest, in Madrid and in Krakow.
- The training of at least 10 Hungarian judges is possible within the framework of the project.
- The international, English-language seminar titled 'Money Laundering on the Internet' is to be organised in Budapest in the first part of 2016, hosting a total of 40 participants.

Hearings via ICT systems, audio and video recordings in court-rooms: The utilisation of modern ICT devices suitable for the judiciary for the transmission and the recording of data is of special importance, therefore, during the programming period of the Operational Programme for the Development of Administration and Public Services (KÖFOP), a working group was established by the President of the NOJ for the examination of the possibilities of hearings via ICT systems, audio and video recordings in the courtrooms. One of the tasks of the project group is to cooperate as a partner of BM and BVOP in the establishment of the nationwide system of hearings via ICT systems, within the framework of a KÖFOP project led by the National Infocommunications Service Company (NISZ) and having a total worth of HUF 3.000 million.

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund: Entries were prepared by specific entities of the judiciary, as well as the NOJ by itself, for the system of projects financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (MMIA) managed by the Ministry of Interior.

- For the first round, an entry titled 'The improvement of the efficiency of immigration cases at the Regional Court of Kecskemét' was submitted by the Regional Court of Kecskemét, with a project worth of approximately HUF 25 million. The assessment of the entry is pending.
- For the second round, two entries are to be prepared by the NOJ, concerning the topics of 'The improvement of the efficiency of judicial practice in immigration cases' (HUF 13 million) and 'The improvement of the efficiency of judicial procedures pertaining to asylum detentions' (HUF 12 million). The entries are planned to be submitted in January, 2016.
- Due to the manifold tasks anticipated in asylum (migration) affairs, our long-term aim is the continuous recourse to the possibilities provided by MMIA.

Renovations of buildings: Within the framework of the Operational Programme for the Environment and for Energy Performance, the NOJ is making efforts for obtaining European Union resources at an approximate worth of HUF 2.000 million, usable for the renovation of the numerous buildings operated by the judiciary.



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

(pages 45-47)

NETWORK OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The President of the NOJ puts a great emphasis on utilising international good practices in the Hungarian judicial system and making foreign judicial bodies aware of the achievements and innovations of the Hungarian judicial organisation. For this purpose the judicial organisation has established a varied and diverse network of international relations.

We maintain contact with the following bodies in the area of training:

- European Judicial Training Network, EJTN
- Academy of European Law,
- Foundation for International Legal Cooperation,
- Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals of the European Council, HELP
- European Institute of Public Administration, EIPA
- Visegrad Four Judicial Academies.



The NOJ and the courts are member of and have close ties with numerous international organisations, or supports judicial associations and judges to become members of and participate in these organizations. These are the following:

- Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary,
- European Association of Labour Court Judges, EALCJ
- European Judicial Network, EJN
- Association of European Administrative Judges, AEAJ,
- International Association of Refugee Law Judges, IARLJ,
- ACA Europe,
- Association of European Competition Law Judges, AECLJ,
- EASO network of court and tribunal members,
- European Union Forum of Judges for the environment,
- expert group of national judges in the Aarhus Convention Commission,
- REturn DIALogue (REDIAL) project,
- EUROJUST Joint Supervisory Body, JSB,
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OSCE
- European Networks of Councils for the Judiciary, ENCJ
- Hague Conference on Private International Law



- Out of 25 courts (regional courts of appeal, regional courts),
- 40 have independent and bilateral relations
- with nearly 17 courts in 11 countries.

The NOJ provides internships for judges and judicial employees to share their knowledge and experience and integrate it into the organisation.

- 1 judge participated at the Court of Justice of the European Union. The goal of the internship programme in Luxembourg is to provide an opportunity to Hungarian judges to gain first-hand experience on the functioning of the Court of Justice of the European Union and preliminary ruling procedures in particular.
- and 1 judge participated at the Academy of European Law. The internship programme in Trier set the objective of familiarising interested judges with the operation of the Academy of European Law and effective methods in professional training and development of the 21st century.

The judges participating in the programme gained a lot of new knowledge and experience, which were shared with fellow judges and judicial employees via written reports.

INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL EVENTS, EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

In the course of the short-term, two-week exchange programme of the EJTN, in the 1st half of 2015

- 3 Hungarian judges took part in study trips abroad and
- 1 judges arrived at Hungary.

1 judge participated in the long-term exchange programme of the EJTN at the Eurojust in the 1st half of 2015.



The National Office for the Judiciary hosted a total of 3 international trainings in the 1st half of 2015. These events had

- 69 foreign and
- 56 Hungarian attendees.

The National Office for the Judiciary provides the opportunity to participate in study trips, conferences and trainings abroad for more and more judges and judicial employees. In the 1st half of 2015

- on 17 trainings
- in a total duration of 58 days
- 96 Hungarian judges and judicial employees were participating.

The NOJ participated as a partner in the project titled 'Mediation in illegal international child abduction cases – peaceful solution in the interest of the child', the aim of which is the promoting of mediation in international illegal child abduction cases.

BALKAN AND EURO-MEDITERRANEAN NETWORK OF COUNCILS FOR THE JUDICIARY

An important international event of 2014 was the establishment of the Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary with the participation of the NOJ and the NJC. The aim of the network is to further the efficiency of future cooperation between participants, primarily via the organisation and preparation of conferences, workshops, professional meetings, surveys and researches. The members of the network are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary (NJC and NOJ), Italy, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Turkey and Kosovo.



One of the significant diplomatic successes of the Hungarian judiciary was the relocation of the Secretariat of the network to Budapest for three years in May, 2015. Resolution on the aforesaid was adopted at the Tenth Anniversary Conference held in Tirana between May 27 and 29, 2015.

NETWORK OF SPECIALISED ADVISORS

The aim of the network of specialised advisors is to ensure the uninterrupted flow of information regarding issues of EU law and providing fast and effective technical assistance to judges in the application of legislation.

In the 1st half of 2015 on 13 international conferences and training 20 specialised advisors were participating, including Brussels, France and Luxembourg.

COMMUNICATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

In the first half of 2015, the NOJ paid special attention to the expedited translation of news on migration and the continuous uploading of these to the website, in order to further the intensity of the exchange of information in the international professional field.

Participants in conferences, trainings and internship programmes organised abroad prepare reports of their experience, which reports are then processed by the Department of International Affairs of the NOJ and published at the central intranet website.



OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY

(pages 48-49)

The President of the NOJ exercises her powers and discharges her duties through the operation of NOJ.

NOJ is the central organisation of judicial administration. NOJ is managing, organising, controlling and coordinating the tasks outlined in the report, such as

- central administration of courts,
- managing the budget heading of courts worth tens of billions of Forints,
- central staff management of the judicial organisation functioning with nearly 11,000 employees
- ensuring the operability and functioning of nearly 200 court premises and
- thousands of IT equipment and networks,
- concluding, implementing and maintaining EU tenders worth some hundreds of millions of Forints.

These tasks of the NOJ are fulfilled with an actual staff of 240 employees, which is 0,02% of the total headcount of the judicial organisation. Naturally, one-third of these employees are primarily working in the operation and serving of NOJ as an institution (e.g. facility management, administrative office).



CONTROL OVER THE PRESIDENT OF THE NOJ

(page 50)

THE OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COUNCIL

The National Judicial Council, as a supervisory body of the central administration of courts, held

- 6 sessions,
- discussed 51 agenda items and
- adopted 61 resolutions in the 1st half of 2015.

In the period of reporting, the NJC provided opinion on one occasion concerning an instruction of the President of the NOJ, and on one occasion concerning a recommendation of the NOJ.

THE NJC

- established a committee of experts for the review of the NOJ recommendation on the assessment system of the applications of judges,
- acknowledged the report of the President of the NOJ on the criteria for the filling of vacant positions of judges and the practice of the application system for the positions of judges in 2014,
- found that the report on the realisation of the 2014 budget of the judicial sector and on the anticipated results of the 2015 budget was adequate,
- acknowledged the contents of the Central Training Plan for 2015 prepared by the MIA,
- passed a total of 18 resolutions in the field of staff affairs.

CONTENT

STRATEGY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY	3
JUDICIAL ACTIVITY OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION	4
ADMINISTRATION OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION.....	6
NATIONWIDE PROGRAMMES	12
THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION.....	18
HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION	22
TRAINING	24
INTEGRITY OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION.....	26
COMMUNICATION OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION.....	29
IT SYSTEM AND SUPPORT OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION.....	31
PREMISES OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION.....	33
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION	35
EU PROGRAMMES AND TENDERS	36
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION.....	41
OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY	46
CONTROL OVER THE PRESIDENT OF THE NOJ.....	47

