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

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2018

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*"Not even the biggest force can do everything alone. I daresay, it can't do much. By contrast, a union of forces can often do what seems to be impossible. A drop of water is worth little but a union of millions of drops has an overwhelming power."*

*(Ferenc Kölcsey)*

## *Welcome*

The judiciary regularly faces challenges that are more than just daily tasks. The first half of 2018 abounded in such challenges. A fundamental change that affected all branches of the judiciary was the amendment of court procedure laws, the Civil, Administrative and Criminal Procedure Codes. The preparation was a tall order but courts successfully managed it. In parallel, the number of court cases eligible for online administration was further increased. While electronic procedure was limited to companies courts in 2011, it is now available in almost all branches. In addition to quality and timeliness, Hungary is a leading member of the EU in terms of digital justice.

These daunting challenges often call for joint thinking at a national, working group or network level. At other times, in the face of such complex subjects as the preparation for the application of the new procedure codes or digital court developments, they require complex projects. Yet at other times, in building projects, they call for the division of funds by applications so that we can create decent conditions for the administration of court cases across Hungary. We are proud of the Eger Regional Court's historic building renovated in the reporting period as an illustrative example of the way to preserve traditional values and to meet the needs of the modern age at the same time.

Court staff have never had as many opportunities as they do today to have a say in the operation of the judiciary and to shape its future by their personal contributions in working groups, networks, projects and tenders. Judicial self-administration had been around in Hungary since the political changeover but the 2012 court administration reform greatly extended the opportunities of making contributions to self-administration. A key management method in the current model, an option laid down in the relevant laws, is the enforcement of the principle of immediacy, by which only people competent in the given matter play a key role in decision-making, there is ample opportunity to give feedback, and anyone genuinely willing to act can find a way of contributing to the administrative responsibilities of courts at a local, regional or national level. Fortunately, there is a high number of professionals in the judiciary who not only administer justice but also lavish their time and energy on work for the community.

I am grateful to all fellow professionals for doing their utmost every day to earn the trust of citizens seeking justice and for their sacrifices by which they have contributed to the achievements detailed in this report.

*dr. Tünde Handó*  
President of the NOJ



# STRATEGY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY

## The NOJ's President established the following strategic goals:

- courts must fulfil their constitutional obligation by which independent judges must deliver judgements in a timely and highly professional manner,
- optimum allocation and utilisation of human resources,
- creation, optimum allocation and utilisation of physical conditions,
- integrity of the judiciary, transparency of judgements and administration together with the predictability and monitoring of administration,
- simplified access to courts, and
- development of the training system, cooperation with other legal professions.



# THE EFFICIENCY OF JUSTICE

## CASELOAD

### METHODOLOGICAL CHANGES

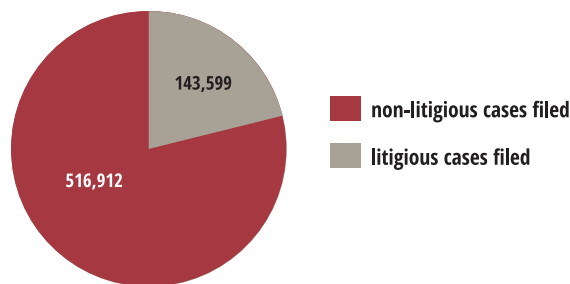
From 1 January 2018, the NOJ started to use simpler and different official statistical samples of district, regional and appellate courts. The NOJ changed its method of counting criminal enforcement cases, a factor that added to the caseload just like the emergence of indemnity cases in 2017. Also, the entry into force of the new Administrative Procedure Code (APC) on 1 January 2018 brought about a fundamental change in the caseload indicators of administrative and labour courts and of regional courts compared to the previous years and this considerably affects the comparison with the figures disclosed in previous years. In 2018, the NOJ performed data cleansing and revised its counting methodology regarding regional court enforcement.

### CASE FILINGS

In the first half of 2018, courts received approximately 661,000 cases, 10% less than in the first half of 2017. This decrease was apparent at all levels except for the second instance of regional courts. Both the litigious and the non-litigious branches received a lower number of cases. The number of first instance litigious cases filed with regional courts hit a record low, having dropped two almost two-thirds of the corresponding figure in the first half of 2017. The primary reason was that some clients preferred to file their actions in the last quarter of 2017 for fear of the new procedure codes.

The legal amendments involved in the new APC affected the number of cases filed in the administrative and labour branch. The number of cases almost halved for litigious cases in the labour branch and for non-litigious cases in both branches.

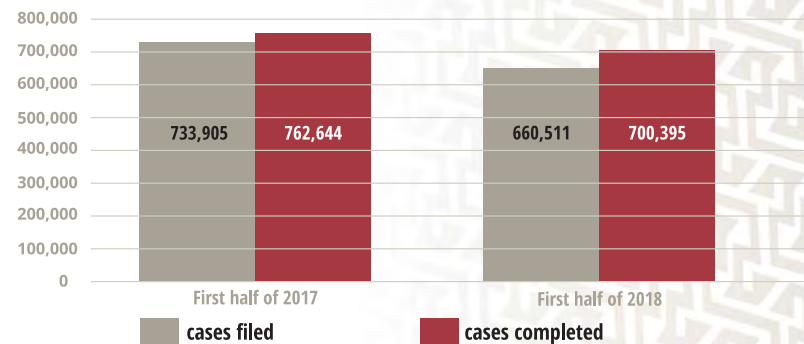
Number of litigious and non-litigious cases filed across Hungary in the first half of 2018



### CASE COMPLETION

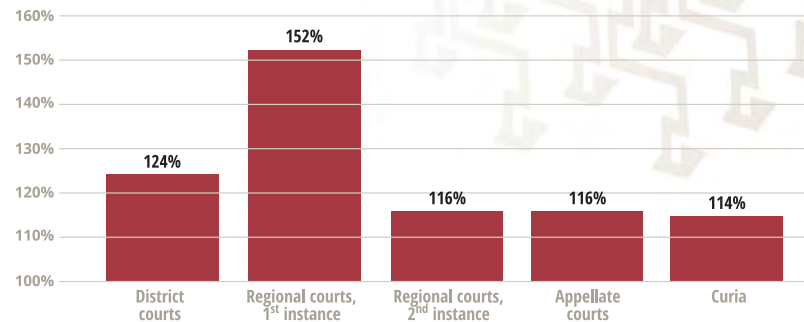
In the first half of 2018, courts completed approximately 700,395 cases. It should be noted that the number of completed cases exceeded the number of those filed by 40,000 in the first half of 2018, just like in the previous periods. This represents a considerable 39% improvement compared to the first half of 2017.

Cases filed and completed in the first half of the year



In the first half of 2018, completions exceeded filings at all levels in both litigious and non-litigious cases. It should be noted that courts completed nearly 180,000 litigious cases, 35,000 (24%) more than the number of cases filed.

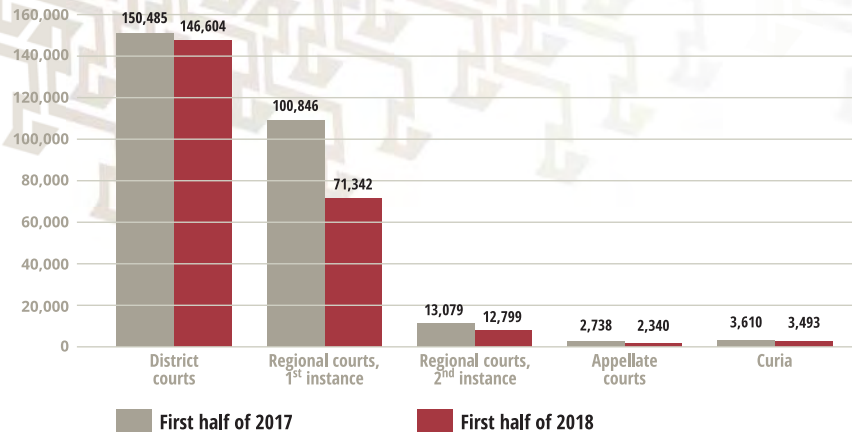
Number of litigious cases completed in the first half of 2018 compared to the number of litigious cases filed



## CASE BACKLOGS

Case backlogs have continued to decrease as the number of completed cases consistently exceeded the number of cases filed in the first half of the previous years. At the end of the first half of 2018, courts managed to reduce the number of pending cases by nearly 35,000, a 12.6% improvement compared to the first half of 2017. This helped courts to keep the number of pending cases under 237,000 as of 30 June 2018.

Number of backlogs per court level



## THE CENTRAL REGION

The Central Region consists of the Budapest Metropolitan Appellate Court, the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court, and the Budapest Environs Regional Court together with other courts in their respective jurisdictions. These courts receive over 40% of the cases, nearly 266,000 in the first half of 2018.

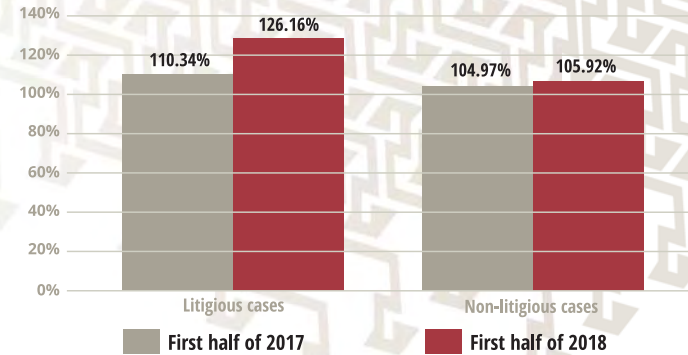
### Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court

In the first half of 2018, the number of cases filed with the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court and its courts did not exceed 180,000 and the number of completions was 10%, roughly 18,000 higher. The number of pending cases had dropped by over 3,000, a 5% improvement compared to the first half of 2017.

### Budapest Environs Regional Court

In the first half of 2018, the Budapest Environs Regional Court and its courts completed over 1,000 cases more than they received. Regarding litigious cases, the rate of completed cases as opposed to cases filed is outstanding as it exceeds 124%. This is largely because the number of civil litigious cases that were completed exceeded the number of those received in the reporting period by 33%.

Percentage of cases filed with and completed by the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court



### Budapest Metropolitan Appellate Court

In the first half of 2018, 4,100 cases were filed with the Budapest Metropolitan Appellate Court, 8% less than in the first half of 2017. The number of completed cases exceeded the number of cases filed also at this level of the Central Region. The Appellate Court completed nearly 400 cases more than received, by which it even managed to reduce the number of pending cases by 4%.

## TIMELINESS

High-quality and timely justice is a key priority for courts so the most important goals in the first half of 2018 included, in addition to preserving the achievements of the previous years, the further reinforcement of timeliness and the reduction of the number of protracted cases. To this end, the National Office for the Judiciary announced the Sustainable Development Program (SDP) back in April 2016 and SDP 2 as a follow-up in June 2017, scheduled to end on 31 October 2018. SDP 2 further improved timeliness indicators for both litigious and non-litigious cases, and reduced the number of protracted cases.

Timeliness in justice is presented primarily using the number of cases completed within one year (six months for appellate courts).

### Completed litigious cases

The rate of litigious cases completed within one year (six months for appellate courts) is roughly 86–87%. In the first half of 2018, 151,000 of the 174,000 litigious cases completed came to an end within one year (six months).

Special mention must be made of appellate courts which considerably improved the rate of completed cases within six months beginning from the first half of 2016. In the first half of 2018, appellate courts completed as much as 82.7% of their litigious cases within six months.



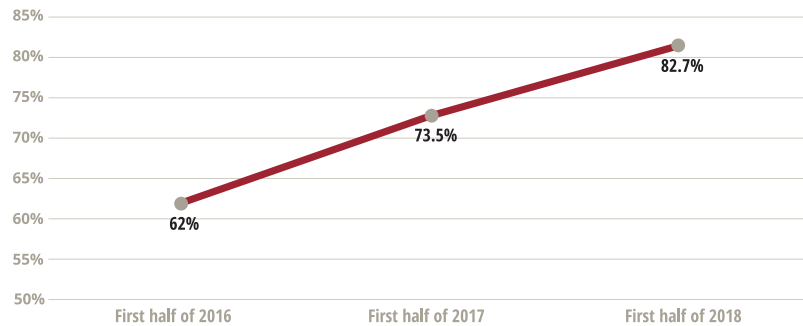
## LAWS UNDERLYING THE OPERATION OF THE JUDICIARY

### LEGAL AMENDMENTS AFFECTING THE JUDICIARY

#### Main legal amendments on legal status

- **The Seventh Amendment to the Fundamental Law of Hungary** on the judiciary came into force on 29 June 2018. By virtue of the amendment, the judiciary shall be comprised of ordinary and administrative courts.
- Administrative justice shall be regulated by a cardinal Act. Another essential provision requires courts to identify the objective of laws primarily from their preamble and justification when interpreting them.
- **Decree 20/2017 (21 December) of the Minister of Justice on the amendment of Decree 11/1999 (6 October) of the Minister of Justice on the legal internship and training of trainee judges** came into force on 1 January 2018. These amendments support the new generation by promoting the development of uniform national practices in the training of trainee judges.

Rate of litigious cases completed at appellate courts within six months



## SOUNDNESS OF JUDGEMENTS

### Rate of final judgements

An indicator of society's satisfaction with the administration of justice is the lowest possible number of appeals against first instance judgements, i.e. the highest possible number becoming final at this level. The vast majority of judgements are delivered in the civil branch of district courts. In the first half of 2018, this accounted for nearly 54% of litigious completions. In this branch, an average of nine out of ten judgements became final, a rate in excess of 91%.

This indicator also improved in the criminal branch as the first half of 2018 witnessed 6% more litigious cases that became final at the first instance of regional courts than the first half of 2017. Regarding second instance actions at regional courts, nearly 99% became final in the reporting period, just like in the first half of 2017.

### Rate of repeals

This indicator was calculated as the rate of repeal and retrial decisions compared to all decisions by second instance courts in litigious cases.

The rate of repeals has improved in both the criminal and the civil branches at district court level compared to the first half of 2017.

	Criminal branch	Civil branch
First half 2017	6.8%	9.1%
First half 2018	5.0%	8.2%



## Amendment of procedural rules that considerably affect courts

- **Act CXXX of 2016 on Civil Procedure** came into force on 1 January 2018. This code reregulated civil procedure after 60 years with a number of novelties, including the division of first instance actions to a preliminary and a trial stage, courts' obligatory contribution to the clarification of case files, the principle of concentration (identifying the subject of the action and obtaining the required evidence as soon as possible), and the requirement to use forms.
- **Act I of 2017 on Administrative Procedure** came into force on 1 January 2018. This code separated civil and administrative procedure and extended the powers of courts acting in administrative cases. Regional courts came to have first and second instance administrative chambers and central regional courts were established. The legislator radically reduced the scope of non-litigious procedures and replaced them with special administrative actions and other administrative court procedures.
- **Act CL of 2016 on general administrative procedure** came into force on 1 January 2018. Passed in replacement of the Act on the general rules of official procedures and services of public administration, this code brought about a number of novelties, including the extension of the concept of official cases, the introduction of automatic decision-making (summary procedure) and the types of overall procedure, the replacement of final decisions by definitive decisions, and the establishment of new legal institutions in enforcement.



- **Act CXVIII of 2017 on court rules applicable in civil non-litigious procedures and certain non-litigious procedures**, which came into force on 1 January 2018, repealed Decree 105/1952 (28 December) of the Council of Ministers on the provisions required by the entry into force of Act III of 1952 on civil procedure, and Decree 1/1960 (13 April) of the Minister of Justice on the procedure of declaration of death and pronouncement of death. Chapter I of the Non-litigious Procedure Act contains all general provisions applicable in non-litigious procedures.
- **Act L of 2017 on the amendment of certain Acts related to the entry into force of the General Administrative Procedure Code and the Administrative Procedure Code** is another omnibus law amending a total of 242 other laws. Most amended acts pertain to public administration. The legislator primarily wanted to achieve harmony with the procedural laws coming into force on 1 January 2018 (APC, General Administrative Procedure Code).
- **Act CLI of 2017 on tax administration procedure** came into force on 1 January 2018. This law brought about a number of novelties, including administrative justice as an option against certain definitive decisions of the tax authority that are subject to an independent appeal, and the prosecutor's right to challenge not only definitive decisions but also failure to perform any procedural obligation in the case of the prosecutor's ineffective order.



### Main legal amendments related to electronic procedure

- **Act CCXXII of 2015 on the general rules of electronic administration and fiduciary services** (hereinafter: E-administration Act) introduced overall electronic administration in court procedures with effect from 1 January 2018. Electronic communication is obligatory for the agencies and individuals listed in Section 9(1) of the E-administration Act: in non-litigious procedures launched by virtue of the new CPC on 1 January 2018 and afterwards, and in criminal actions launched by virtue of the new CrPC on 1 January 2018 and afterwards.
- **Decree 19/2017 (21 December) of the Minister of Justice on the conduct of civil trials and hearings via an electronic communication network** was published on 21 December 2017 and came into force on 1 January 2018. The Decree lays down detailed rules for conducting trials, personal hearings of the litigants and other parties to the action, witnesses and experts, or inspections via an electronic communication network under the CPC.
- **Act XLIII of 2017 on the authentic register of general powers of attorney for litigious and non-litigious procedures (GRA)** came into force on 1 January 2018. In compliance with this Act, the NOJ developed its own software called Register of General Powers of Attorney (hereinafter: Register). The GRA requires that the Register be kept electronically. The IT application designed for keeping the Register and supplying data is operated by the NOJ's President.

### Relevant changes in the substantive laws applied by courts

- **Government Decree 75/2018 (20 April) on the tasks required for creating the Insolvency Register** came into force on 25 April 2018. Hungary created the Insolvency Register to comply with its obligation as a Member State under Regulation 2015/848 of the European Parliament and the Council of 20 May 2015.
- **Act II of 2012 on civil infractions, civil infraction procedure and the civil infraction registration system** was amended on 1 January 2018. Some of these amendments related to the introduction of electronic communication but also affected the enforcement of on-the-spot and ordinary fines imposed in civil infraction procedures.
- **Act CLXXVII of 2017 on enhanced criminal protection for children under the age of twelve against sexual violence** came into force on 1 January 2018. This Act revised the system of qualified instances of sexual violence. The new qualification system takes into account the victim's age more and hence imposes a more serious punishment for sexual violence against victims under the age of twelve.

## THE NOJ'S EVALUATION OF LAWS

### Evaluated laws and findings

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ received 102 applications for evaluating laws. The following table breaks down the evaluated drafts and bills to applicants.

Applicant	Number of applications received	Type of case
Ministry of Agriculture	0	draft law
Ministry of the Interior	27	draft law
Ministry of Human Capacities	2	draft law
Ministry of Defence	1	draft law
Ministry of Justice	24	draft law
Ministry of Innovation and Technology	4	draft law
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	0	draft law
Prime Minister's Office	1	draft law
Ministry of Finance	2	draft law
Parliament's website	11	bill
Courts	4	legislative proposal, legal practitioners' experiences
Curia	5	legislative proposal, legal practitioners' experiences
NOJ's units	9	legislative proposal, request for comments, proposals
Agencies outside the judiciary and the ministries	4	request for information
Other non-codification cases	8	miscellaneous tasks related to the cases of other departments and units
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	



In the first half of 2018, the NOJ received less applications than in the first half of 2017 (164) because the codification activity is associated with Parliament's legislative procedure and law-making came to a halt before the April 2018 elections. The new Parliament held its inaugural session on 8 May 2018. The restructuring of the ministries and personal changes postponed the bulk of legislation to the second half of 2018.

### Network of Legal Evaluation Experts

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ's President continued to receive support for her duty to evaluate laws from a reduced group of expert judges and heads of division, coordinated by the NOJ's Judicial Department. This team of members from each branch of law helped the NOJ's President to make relevant comments on all draft laws affecting courts, often by particularly tight deadlines.



## INITIATIVES

### Proposed legal amendments that were approved or came into force in the first half of 2018

#### Main proposals affecting the civil branch:

In both the new procedure codes and in the related lower level laws, the NOJ submitted a number of synthetic comments and legal amendments. The legislators often incorporated these legislative proposals in the laws under preparation. Some key results:

- Act XLIII of 2017 on the authentic register of general powers of attorney for litigious and non-litigious procedures, which came into force on 1 January 2018, contains detailed rules proposed by the NOJ's President.
- Act CXXVIII of 2017 on the application of cost exemption and the right to deferred payment of legal costs in civil and administrative procedures came into force on 1 January 2018, incorporating several proposals by the NOJ's President.
- Act CXXXVI of 2017 on the amendment of certain acts and other judicial acts related to the entry into force of Act LXXVIII of 2017 on attorneys' activities came into force on 1 January 2018. This Act amended Act CXXX of 2016 on Civil Procedure among other laws. Of the proposals by the NOJ's President that were incorporated in the Act, special mention must be made of the one to create, in harmony with the Act on court organisation and administration, the right of court secretaries to legal representation and the extension of the provisional rules regulating the entry into force of the Civil Procedure Code.

#### Main proposals affecting the criminal branch:

- Act XXXIX of 2017 on the amendment of Acts regulating European Union and international criminal cooperation and other related Acts for harmonisation came into force on 1 January 2018, incorporating several proposals by the NOJ's President (e.g. terminology of the recognition of foreign judgements, deduction of the term of house arrest, suspension of procedure and initiation of recognition, laying down the powers of district courts to enforce European Investigation Orders).
- Act CLXXVII of 2017 on enhanced criminal protection for children under the age of twelve against sexual violence came into force on 1 January 2018, amending Section 197(4) of Act C of 2012, incorporating a proposal by the NOJ's President to enhance criminal protection for children.

### **Main proposals concerning legal status affecting the judiciary:**

- Act C of 2017 on the 2018 Central Budget of Hungary incorporated a proposal by the NOJ's President to raise the base salary of judges by another 5% to HUF 453,330 with effect from 1 January 2018.

### **Legal amendments proposed in the first half of 2018**

The NOJ's President repeatedly proposed the amendment of Section 172(2) of Act CLXII of 2011 on the legal status and remuneration of judges (LSRJA) concerning the uniform calculation of the service period. The proposal suggested that the service period should include the time served as a judge or prosecutor before appointment and the time served in any other legal status or by performing any other activity subject to the Bar Examination.

## NEW CHALLENGES

### **Tasks related to the entry into force of the new Codes as of 1 January**

#### **Working Group Supporting the Enforcement of the New Civil Procedure Code**

After the E-Code CPC Project ended on 31 January 2018, the Working Group Supporting the Enforcement of the New CPC (hereinafter: New CPC Working Group) was established to monitor the changeover to the new civil procedure and to examine the enforcement of the CPC. In parallel, regional courts created local working groups or professional workshops.

In the first half of 2018, the New CPC Working Group:

- provided professional support for the appropriate use of the Integrated Court Information Technology System (BIIR) in compliance with the provisions of the CPC;
- developed a proposal for a legal amendment using court comments to simplify the form used by parties without a legal representative;
- started to develop the sample decisions and Bench Book to promote the practical application of the CPC and prepared the enforcement of the course material disseminated in the CooSpace platform;
- prepared the National Conference of Heads of Civil Divisions (NCHCD) developing professional materials and summarising the questions submitted by court working groups and professional workshops.

#### **Working Group Supporting the Enforcement of the Administrative Procedure Code**

After the E-Code APC Project ended on 31 January 2018, the NOJ's President decided to establish a working group supporting the enforcement of the new Code to continue certain tasks of the project, monitor the effective Code, provide administrative support for law enforcement, and perform certain tasks that require coordination.

Responsible for the uniform management and coordination of professional and administrative tasks, the Working Group Supporting the Enforcement of the APC (hereinafter: Working Group) held its inaugural session on 16 February 2018, followed by other meetings in April, May and October.

The Working Group is primarily responsible for examining case filings, gathering and summarising questions of legal interpretation, and monitoring new court practices derived from the most important new legal institutions to forward all questions and comments to the professional bodies and the Curia, and to support the NOJ and courts in central administration matters by submitting analyses, opinions, and proposals.

In addition to its professional tasks, the Working Group supports matters of administrative justice in terms of administration, organisation and human resources management.



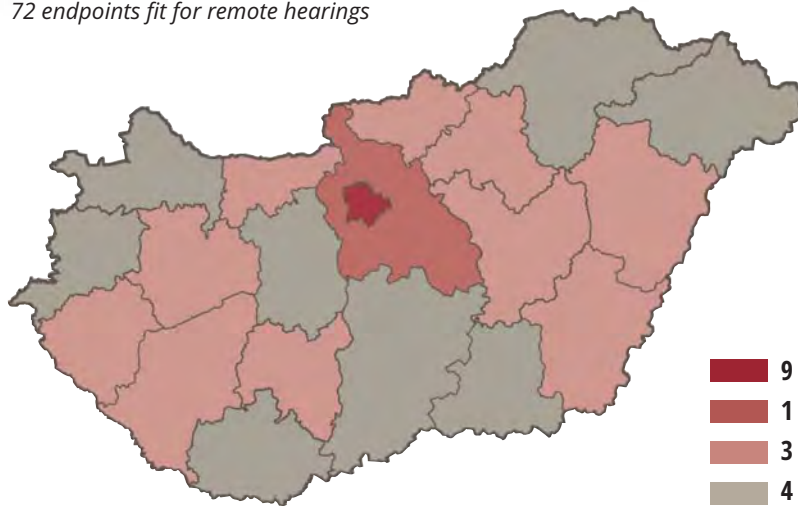
## Electronic procedures

### Via Video Project

Improved timeliness and transparency in court procedures is a fundamental expectation of society. In this context, the National Office for the Judiciary is working towards increasingly extended and efficient electronic court administration as a priority, introducing remote hearings and audiovisual courtroom recording across the country.

After a set of surveys, work started to equip 72 courtrooms for remote hearings.

*72 endpoints fit for remote hearings*



The new technology establishes a connection between remote hearing courtrooms with

- other courts,
- domestic partner agencies (correctional facilities, immigration offices, government offices, district offices),
- International judicial agencies.

The technical services supporting project implementation (reservation system, endpoint telephone directory) are also in place.

The use of the remote hearing system may make procedural acts simpler and more efficient and may considerably reduce costs. Remote hearings may save time for courts, the litigants, and other parties to the procedure alike, and may help avoid costs and time losses necessarily involved by trips.

## Digital Court Project

The main aim of the Digital Court Project is to make court administration faster and more efficient.

Its principal development areas include:

- improving the disclosure and anonymisation of court decisions,
- digitisation of case files (creating e-files) and allowing electronic access to case files,
- establishing an online connection between electronically available authentic registers and court information technology systems.

These improvements are expected to

- make court decision searches easier and faster,
- allow 24/7 online access to case files regardless of time and space,
- enable courts to request data from authentic registers (e.g. land register) to minimise the scope of data to be requested from clients and to conclude court procedures faster.



## Speech recognition and transcription software

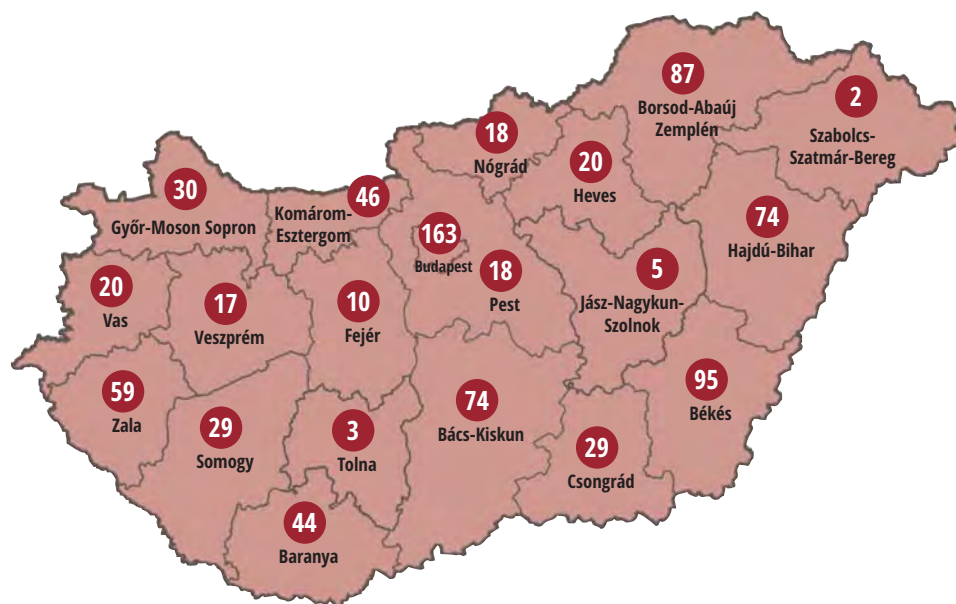
The use of speech recognition and transcription software can help courts

- to meet all deadlines for drafting written decisions and records,
- to use their working hours more efficiently by reducing drafting time.

Until the end of 2017, courts ordered 726 units of speech recognition and transcription software.

All courts in Hungary became able to use speech transcription software for their daily work.

The following map shows the penetration of speech recognition and transcription software units as of 29 June 2018.



## NATIONAL PROGRAMS

### Permanent programs

#### Court mediation

Available in Hungarian courts since 2012, mediation can be a powerful tool to increase client satisfaction and timeliness in litigious and non-litigious civil actions. It offers the benefit of scheduling sessions as required by the parties and their agreements made with the contribution of a court mediator. Courts approve each part of the agreement reached in the procedure in line with the petition as a settlement in action so its provisions become enforceable. The parties must perform the non-approved portions on a voluntary basis. On 1 January 2018, mediation became an option in administrative actions, previously excluded among case types. The new CPC allows for mediation without the need to file an action together with the option to initiate an attempted settlement. The same procedure allows for the enforcement of a previously reached agreement, eligible for court approval, against the payment of a low amount of duty.

In the first half of 2018, a total of 919 mediation cases were completed, including 521 where the parties conducted the procedure and 246 where they reached a settlement. From the introduction of the procedure to 30 June 2018, Hungarian courts conducted a total of 4,376 mediation procedures.

In the reporting period, the NOJ's President appointed 14 secretaries and 3 judges to act as mediators. As a result, 76 judges and 100 court secretaries were authorised to act as mediators across Hungary as of 30 June 2018.

#### Witness care and victim protection

Witness care is a national program launched in 2013 to simplify access to courts.

Since its inception, this national program has focused on

- providing witnesses with detailed and easy-to-understand information about their procedural rights and options;
- promoting the enforcement of their procedural rights including victim's rights without prejudice to an impartial and unbiased procedure, and
- encouraging them to make a statement without fear.



The most important objective is to promote the obligation to testify. At the turn of 2017 and 2018, Hungarian courts had 67 separate rooms available for witnesses, including rooms of a combined use.

Detailed information provided in the previous years has dynamically raised the number of registered applications. Clients submitted 11,569 such documents to witness caretakers in the first half of 2018.

Victims of crimes and civil infractions were interviewed as witnesses in the procedures therefore the National Witness Care Program came to include the topic of victim protection in 2015.

Training plays a key role as sensitising court staff is an important objective so that they can identify victims during their work regardless of their procedural positions and can turn to them with due sensitivity. A court procedure may traumatise the participants but the appropriate management of problematic situations can help avoid repeated victimisation.

The judiciary also lays great emphasis on building the information network through which the staff can refer victims to the competent agency or authority as a high level of dialogue with partner agencies in the field of victim protection contributes to efficient work.

In the spring of 2018, the NOJ hosted its traditional National Witness Care and Victim Protection Conference. This offered an opportunity for exchanging best practices in witness care by regional courts, enhancing cooperation with partner authorities and for identifying challenges posed by the new procedure codes in term of victim protection.

### **Child Focused Justice**

Child Focused Justice is a national program designed to create a judicial system that achieves the highest possible level of respecting and enforcing children's rights efficiently in the administration of justice and that enforces children's paramount interest in each case conducted with their participation or affecting them as a primary consideration.

In the first half of 2018, the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court finished its pilot course for juvenile judges. The experiences of the pilot training will inform the same course in the whole of Hungary in 2019. This training is designed to provide judges with uniform theoretical and practical skills that cover most of the disciplines concerned.

In the first half of 2018, we laid great emphasis again on activating the coordinator network of Child Focused Justice and started to organise the traditional National Child Focused Justice Conference. This year's edition, with a focus on interviewing children in consideration of their age, will be hosted again by the Hungarian Academy of Justice.



### **Best practices**

Courts develop a number of solutions, practices, methods and applications during their work to achieve more efficient, more timely and more accurate work or division of the workload. The NOJ considers the collection, analysis and national dissemination of such best practices as a priority.

An indication of the importance of this area is that the Administrative Regulation has turned the catalogue of best practices to a national program.

The NOJ has organised Best Practices Workshops since 2015, enabling courts to present their respective solutions and to find out about the methods of other courts. As the new CPC has also brought about an essential change in the administration of complaints days, the NOJ dedicated its Best Practices Workshop in the first half of 2018 to this topic in Siófok on 10 and 11 April 2018. The workshop was attended by court administrators, judges and court staff from across Hungary, from the district to the appellate level. The first day of the event was held with the participation of officials from the Ministry of Justice and the Somogy County Government Office.

The participants expressed that the legal amendment had greatly reduced the role of this legal institution as courts can only record the petitions and statements of clients without counsel that are laid down in the new CPC.

After the event the NOJ's President announced the call for proposals "Let's Rename Complaints Day!" for judges and court staff to replace this name, now dated with the recent changes in the statutory environment, with one that is plain and reflects that parties seeking court assistance in client service hours will be provided with more efficient, professional services under the CPC. The call for proposals received a total of 137 valid proposals, including 293 names. The winner was "Client Assistance". The results will be announced at a ceremony in the second half of 2018.

## Periodic programs

### Sustainable Development Program 2

Within the 2016 Sustainable Development Program, courts achieved considerable results in all three pillars of high-quality and timely justice, professional career, and client relations and communication.

As the objectives continue to apply, the NOJ announced Sustainable Development Program 2 in 2017 to sustain the existing results and promote further development without imposing an extra workload on judges and court employees.

Sustainable Development Program 2 runs for a longer term, covering the statistical period between 1 November 2016 and 31 October 2018, with checkpoints to make sure that development remains sustainable. The program covers all regional courts and appellate courts.

Announced for the presidents of regional courts in the first half of 2017 to continue and further develop certain goals in the previous Sustainable Development Program, the Leadership Program was another success. Its goals included reinforced court communication, a more even workload and improved staff satisfaction. In addition, the Program offered an opportunity to exchange best practices in certain key areas of court administration such as human resources management.

## FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Judicial self administration bodies: <https://birosag.hu/en/judicial-self-administration-bodies>

Digital Court Project: <https://birosag.hu/en/digital-court>

On National Programs: <https://birosag.hu/en/national-programmes>



# HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE JUDICIARY

## COURT LEADERS

### NUMBER OF COURT LEADERS

As of 30 June 2018, the judiciary had a total of 763 leaders, including 453 administrative leaders appointed or assigned for a fixed term and 310 chairpersons of chambers appointed for an indefinite term.

Breakdown of court leaders by appointing officers:

- Presidents of Regional Courts: 551
- Presidents of Appellate Courts: 51
- President of the Curia: 38
- President of the NOJ: 123

### CHANGES IN SENIOR POSITIONS

#### Court leaders appointed by the NOJ's President

Year	Number of expiries in the first half of 2018 (or previously)	Number of new appointments in the first half of 2018	Number of new assignments in the first half of 2018
2012	21	13	4
2013	26	20	1
2014	17	8	3
2015	22	16	1
2016	15	6	1
2017	9	6	2
2018	18	1	4

#### Court leaders appointed by the NOJ's President in the first half of 2018

Dr. László Péntek, Head of Criminal Division Győr Appellate Court

#### Court leaders assigned by the NOJ's President in the first half of 2018

Dr. Eszter Ágnes Varga, Head of Criminal Division Budapest Environs Regional Court

Dr. Tünde Fehérné Gaál, Head of Civil Administrative and Labour Division, Budapest Environs Regional Court

Dr. József Lezsák, Head of Civil Division Győr Appellate Court

Dr. Judit Polgárné Vida, President Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court

In addition, Presidents of Regional Courts appointed 29 administrative leaders in the reporting period.

#### Administrative leaders appointed by Presidents of Regional Courts in the first half of 2018

##### Presidents of District Courts

Dr. Erika Smid, Buda Environs District Court

Dr. Sándor Liziczay, Budaörs District Court

Dr. Andrea Szűrősné Takács, Szigetszentmiklós District Court

Dr. Norbert Kálóczi, Kalocsa District Court

Dr. Péter Imre, Bicske District Court

##### Presidents of Administrative and Labour Courts

Dr. Adrienn Kispálné Józsa, Kecskemét Administrative and Labour Court

Dr. Krisztián Mórítz, Zalaegerszeg Administrative and Labour Court

Dr. Ágnes Zsófia Lele, Szeged Administrative and Labour Court

Dr. László Gottlieb, Győr Administrative and Labour Court

##### Deputy Presidents of District Courts

Dr. Ágnes Serfőző, Szigetszentmiklós District Court

Dr. Dóra Kardos, Gyöngyös District Court

Dr. Éva Révfy, Siófok District Court

Dr. Róbert Kriston, Miskolc District Court

Dr. Mónika Folmeg, Dunaújváros District Court

Dr. Réka Urbán, Szolnok District Court

Dr. Mariann Mácskovicz, Esztergom District Court

##### Heads of Unit

Dr. Erika Gaál, Gödöllő District Court

Dr. Nelli Edina Varga, Debrecen District Court

Dr. Gábor Remes, Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court

Dr. Erika Szuetta, Pest Central District Court

Dr. Szilvia Tuzáné Papp, Székesfehérvár Regional Court

Dr. Zoltán Szabó, Nyíregyháza District Court

Dr. Zsolt Gyuricza, Székesfehérvár Regional Court

##### Deputy Head of Unit

Dr. Marietta Katalin Szentpéteri, Pest Central District Court



### Chairpersons of Chambers

- Dr. Pál Péter Bakó, Debrecen Appellate Court
- Dr. Erzsébet Vitai, Eger Regional Court
- Dr. Éva Perényi, Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court
- Dr. Levente István Koncz, Kecskemét Regional Court
- Dr. Dömötör Gyula Ivanov, Szolnok Regional Court

### COURT STAFF

Currently, more than 11,500 people work for the judiciary. As of 30 June 2018, their headcount was the following:

	Approved				Actual			
	Courts	Curia	NOJ	Total	Courts	Curia	NOJ	Total
<b>Judge</b>	2,901	92	37	3,030	2,810	86	35	2,931
<b>Court Secretary</b>	889	14	28	931	846	17	20	883
<b>Trainee Judge</b>	254	0	3	257	230	0	3	233
<b>Court staff<sup>1</sup></b>	7,072	220	237	7,529	7,206	212	236	7,654
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,116</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>11,747</b>	<b>11,092</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>11,701</b>

<sup>1</sup> Exclusive of court secretaries and trainee judges



## CHANGES IN JUDICIAL HEADCOUNT

### APPLICATIONS, APPOINTMENTS, TRANSFERS

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ's President evaluated 173 calls for judicial positions to which a total of 1,423 applications were submitted. As a result, the NOJ's President proposed the appointment of 106 judges, each accepted by the President of the Republic, decided on 61 transfers, and declared 6 applications invalid, including 5 by lack of a call for positions and 1 for a procedural infringement. Of the 106 newly appointed judges 87 had worked as court secretaries before submitting their applications. Of the 61 transferred judges 40 continued to work at a higher court level.

Of the 173 positions 44 were announced for applications given the second stage of the extension of administrative justice. Regional administrative and labour courts announced 42 positions, including 20 at the Budapest Metropolitan Administrative and Labour Court. 2 positions of regional court judge were offered at the Regional Administrative and Labour Division of the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court. As a result of the evaluation of applications, the 44 administrative and labour positions included 5 transfers and the appointment of 22 court secretaries and 17 external applicants.

In all of the 173 successful applications (100%) evaluated, the NOJ's President took a decision in accordance with the ranking of chambers. To deviate from such ranking in the case of 2 applications, the NOJ's President contacted the National Judicial Council for a preliminary agreement. The NOJ's President proposed the transfer of both applicants in the 2nd place of the application ranking but, by lack of agreement with the NJC, the NOJ's President decided to appoint and transfer the applicant in the 1st place of the application ranking.

### TERMINATIONS OF SERVICE STATUS

In the first half of 2018, a total of 33 judges had their service status terminated, including

- 4 who reached the upper age limit
- 21 who completed 40 years of service and reached the general old-age retirement
- 7 who resigned
- 1 who resigned for lack of medical fitness.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Judges are assigned due to the special nature of the given branch or to manage cases within a branch that require special skills or qualifications or a specifically assigned judge by virtue of the relevant Act. LSRJA Section 30 provides for assignment by the NOJ's President and the President of the Curia whereas it is the President of the Regional Court's duty to assign investigative judges under CPC Section 207(1) and criminal enforcement judges under Criminal Enforcement Act Section 47.

By virtue of Fundamental Law Article 27(3), in cases defined by law, court secretaries may also act as sole judges. By virtue of Section 41/A(1) of the Act on the service status of court staff, in cases defined by law, the Presidents of Regional Courts shall assign court secretaries authorised to act as sole judges. In the case of district court secretaries, the President of the Regional Court shall decide on assignment as proposed by the President of the District Court. The assignment shall specify the scope of cases to which it applies. In 2018 court



secretaries authorised to act as sole judges were assigned in civil infraction, criminal, civil (financial), and criminal enforcement cases, and in cases related to the hospital treatment of psychiatric patients.

Upon the proposal of Presidents of Regional Courts, in the first half of 2018 the NOJ's President:

- assigned 45 judges to hear juvenile criminal cases,
- assigned 27 judges to hear cases defined in Section 17(5)-(6) of Act XIX of 1998 on criminal procedure,
- assigned 24 judges to hear administrative and labour cases,
- assigned 9 judges and 14 court secretaries to act as court mediators, and
- terminated the assignment of 3 judges to act as court mediators.

## SECONDMENTS

By the first half of 2018, the Presidents of Regional Courts had decided to second 324 judges. Those who used this option were typically in charge of regional courts in an unfavourable position in terms of caseload.

By the first half of 2018, upon the initiative of Court Presidents and with the consent of Judges, the NOJ's President had decided to second 82 judges, including

- 33 from various courts to the Curia,
- 1 from the Curia to an appellate court,
- 1 from the Curia to a regional court,
- 4 from an appellate court to another appellate court,
- 20 from a regional court to an appellate court,
- 4 from an appellate court to a regional court, and
- 19 from the jurisdiction of one regional court to another regional court.

## TITLES AWARDED AND HELD

LSRJA Section 174(1) authorises the NJC to award judges, in recognition of their work, the title Excellent Judge qualified for a higher position or qualified with distinction and the title Honorary Judge after at least 6 years of actual experience at the given court level, including their term of service at a higher level court. The NJC makes such decisions upon the proposal of the President of the Regional Court, the Appellate Court or the Curia, and upon the initiative of the NOJ's President.

While the titles awarded by the NJC under LSRJA Section 174(1) are optional, LSRJA Section 174(2) stipulates that the NOJ's President shall award the title Honorary Judge in recognition of the given judge's term of service after twenty years of actual experience at the given court level, including their term of service at a higher level court.

In the first half of 2018, the title Honorary Judge was awarded to 57 professionals, including

- 13 ex officio after 20 years of actual experience,
- 44 as a recognition.

As of 30 June 2018, a total of 682 judges held the title Honorary Judge, including service statuses that had terminated in the meantime.

## COMPOSITION OF JUDGES

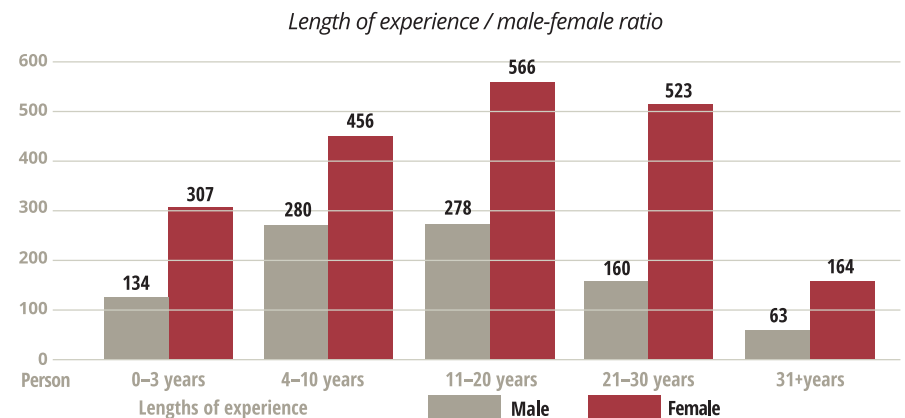
### BREAKDOWN BY SEX

The overall ratio of female and male judges has not changed since last year. 2,016 judges were female (69%) and 915 were male (31%).

### BREAKDOWN BY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

As of 30 June 2018, Hungarian judges had the following lengths of experience:

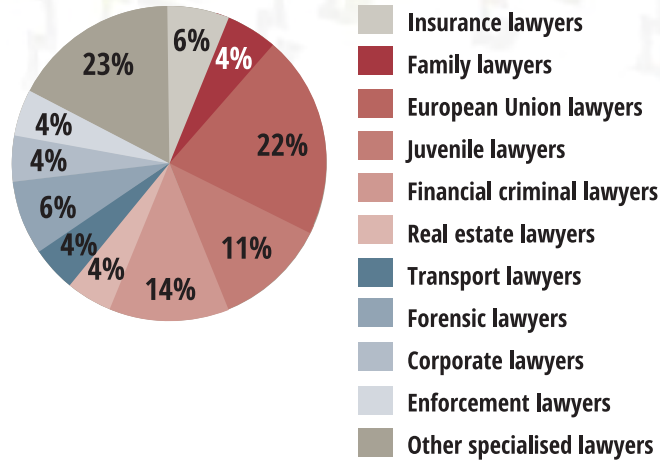
- 0-3 years: 441
- 4-10 years: 736
- 11-20 years: 844
- 21-30 years: 683
- 31+ years: 227



## ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

As of 30 June 2018, a total of 152 judges held a postgraduate degree and 23 held a PhD. Compared to 30 June 2017, the number of specialised judges had risen by 2.5%. Their current number is 805.

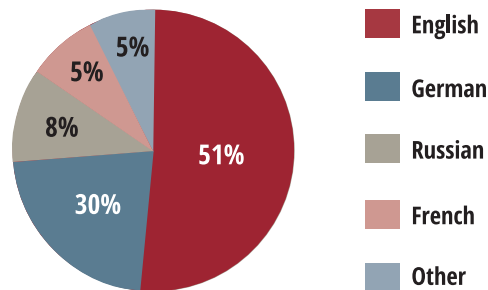
Number of specialised lawyers as of 30 June 2018



## LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATES

As of 30 June 2018, 1,393 professionals held a language proficiency certificate, including 542 with two or more certificates.

Language proficiency certificates by languages



## DISTRIBUTION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

### CHANGES AND PRINCIPLES OF HEADCOUNT

In the first half of 2018, central regional courts created further jobs for court staff under Act I of 2017 on Administrative Procedure.

The entry into force of the new CrPC enabled three appellate courts to create jobs for judges and court staff.

### EVALUATION PROCEDURE OF JUDGES' JOB APPLICATIONS

As a rule, a judge's position may only be filled in via a public call for job applications except for the cases laid down in Section 8 of Act CLXII of 2011 on the legal status and remuneration of judges (LSRJA). Such exceptions include the retransfer of judges from the NOJ or a Ministry on expiry of the transfer period or a considerable change in the given court's jurisdiction and competence that precludes the judge's continued employment in their original place of service or the reappointment of a judge after a labour dispute. At the same time, judges that wish to transfer to a different court (e.g. for family reasons) must submit an application and the NOJ's President may only transfer them subject to a successful application.

In 2015 a new evaluation method was developed for judges' job applications. In essence, this raised the need to check, as a key selection requirement before announcing calls for job applications, if the approved headcount is in proportion to the workload.

Job applications are evaluated in successive stages. The applicant is heard by the chamber of the affected court to rank applicants accordingly. The detailed rules of such ranking are laid down in the LSRJA and Decree 7/2011 (4 March) of the Minister of Justice on the detailed rules of evaluating the job applications of judges and the scores given in the ranking process. The president of the regional or appellate court may agree with the chamber's ranking or propose, giving written reasons, that the position be granted to the second or third applicant. If the NOJ's President wants to fill in the position with the first applicant in the chamber's ranking and if such applicant does not hold a judge's position, she proposes the President of the Republic to appoint the applicant. If the applicant is a judge, she decides on their transfer. If the NOJ's President wants to fill in the position with the second or third applicant in the chamber's ranking, she must obtain the NJC's consent.

2017 witnessed the revision of Decree 7/2011 (4 March) of the Minister of Justice, also known as the “Scoring Decree” underlying the evaluation of judges’ job applications. In response to this legal amendment, the NOJ engaged in major professional work to facilitate the evaluation of judges’ job applications for all participants and to standardise the process also as a contribution to support the success of applications.

The NOJ prepared the following professional aids:

- general guide for judges’ job applications (Courts Bulletin),
- plain guide for judges’ job applications – FAQ (birosag.hu),
- auxiliary application forms (general, administrative branch),
- guides for completing auxiliary application forms (general, administrative branch),
- score aggregation tables (general, administrative branch),
- proposal forms (general, administrative branch),
- statistical datasheets,
- statements of professional experience,
- guide for the evaluation criteria of the “Scoring Decree”, including practical information and eligible proof,
- guide for the job application procedure, including cases of missing documents and dismissal, and a summary that promotes the division’s opinion.



## JUDICIAL CAREER

In addition to the regular remuneration and extra allowances of judges and court staff, the Judicial Career covers professional promotion, continuing education, the recognition of performance, social (healthcare) services offered to judges and court staff, the improvement of working conditions, and the creation of harmony between work and family, i.e. the conversion of courts to family-friendly workplaces.

The Judicial Career not only keeps staff in the system and offers them appreciation but also makes the job of judges and court staff attractive for young career-starters.

As a major milestone in the Judicial Career, the remuneration system of court staff was revised in September 2017. As a result, 97% of court staff came to earn 30% more on average. Another contribution to the remuneration of court staff was that, upon the proposal of the NOJ’s President, the basic remuneration of judges rose by 5% for the third time, from HUF 431,740 to HUF 453,330 as of 1 January 2018.

In 2018, after the increase of court staff’s remuneration, the emphasis shifted to the overall change of judges’ remuneration as three 5% increases of the basic remuneration of judges alone are insufficient for tackling the problems inherent to the current remuneration system of judges. Only a fully reformed remuneration system can reflect appropriately the recognition of service term and the responsibility of judges’ work even in the case of career-starters, can make a proportionate distinction between court levels and recognise the weight of responsibility carried by a leader’s position.

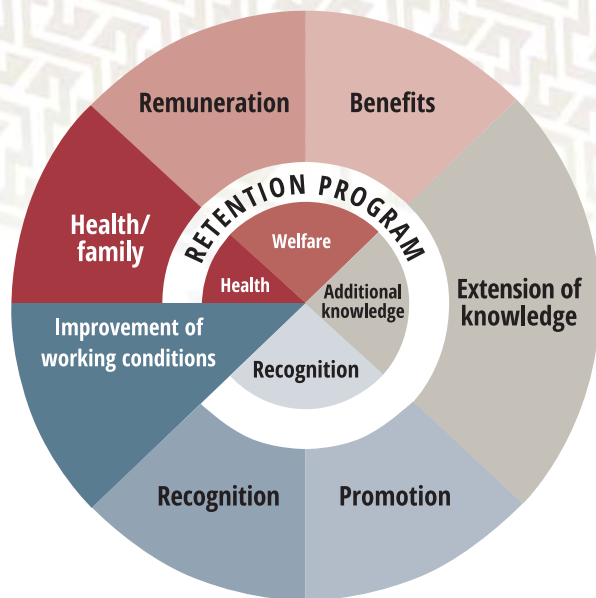
To achieve these goals, the NOJ started to develop a proposal for the reform of judges’ remuneration system back in 2017. In the first half of 2018, this proposal was used to submit the 2019 budget of courts.

The NOJ also submitted this proposal to the 2019 Budget Bill and then to the bill underlying the 2019 Budget. In order to reform judges’ remuneration system, we continuously refined our proposals involving expert presidents and discussed by the Conference of Presidents and submitted them to the Government in the second half of 2018.

In the first half of 2018, in order to improve working conditions, we continued to develop the IT tools of courts. Of the ongoing overall court rebuilding and extension projects, we inaugurated the building of the Eger Regional Court in this period.

A symbol of the intention to implement the Judicial Career is the Retention Program launched in 2016, whose elements support welfare, additional knowledge and health, and express recognition.





As with the previous two years, in January 2018 the Retention Program provided financial coverage for the extraordinary promotion of judges in recognition of their excellence.

Similarly to 2017, in February 2018 we granted a qualification bonus to district, regional and appellate judges with a PhD or an academic doctorate in recognition of the acquisition and utilisation of such additional knowledge.

In March 2018, the program provided financial coverage for the first time to make advanced level medical examinations available to all judges and court staff.

At Easter 2018, as with the previous two years, we provided a gift voucher to all judges and court staff.

After the second half of 2017, in May 2018 we provided judges with a professional self-study aid to support the acquisition of additional knowledge.

As a new element of the Retention Program, in June 2018, we granted a holiday voucher to court staff.

	Retention Program element	Beneficiaries	Number of beneficiaries	Amount per person	Total budget costs
RECOGNITION	immediate promotion of judges	judges with an excellent performance	150 judges	HUF 22,665	HUF 45 million
	recognition of a PhD degree	judges holding a PhD	17 judges	HUF 90,666	HUF 3 million
ADDITIONAL KNOWLEDGE	professional self-study aid	eligible judges	2,900 judges	HUF 250,000	HUF 859 million
	advanced level medical examination	all judges and court staff	11,000	HUF 39,500	HUF 157 million
WELFARE	low-value gift voucher (Easter)	eligible judges and court staff	10,500	HUF 30,000	HUF 445 million
	low-value holiday voucher	eligible court staff	7,900 court staff	HUF 30,000	HUF 335 million

## FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Appointment of judges: <https://birosag.hu/en/appointment-judges>  
 Judicial careers: <https://birosag.hu/en/judicial-careers>



# BUILDINGS OF THE JUDICIARY

## COURT PROPERTIES

In late June 2018, the judiciary managed:

- a total of 185 properties
- of a total net floor area of 462,220 m<sup>2</sup>.

Of these only 153 were used as actual court buildings.

Monitoring the technical condition of the 185 properties in 113 cities, facility management, maintenance and refurbishment with due diligence, creating 21st century working conditions for court staff to serve the quality of justice, creating buildings for millions of court clients every year that meet the demands of an open and client-friendly court, and creating the physical conditions for access to courts are key responsibilities of the NOJ that require considerable resources.

In line with its short and medium term plans, the NOJ allocates the available funds every year within the Wagner Gyula Program and the Jablonszky Ferenc Tender. According to the pre-approved project plan, simple works are carried out by courts whereas complex multiyear projects are carried out by the NOJ as its own investments within the Wagner Gyula Program. In the Jablonszky Ferenc tender system the NOJ provides funding for centrally determined purposes and building improvements.

## PRIORITY PROJECTS, DEVELOPMENTS

### Curia Project – Kossuth Tér Palace of Justice

In 2016 the Government launched the Steindl Imre Program for a historically authentic reconstruction of Kossuth Lajos tér and its neighbourhood in the 5th district of Budapest and for the renovation of all buildings around the square and the adjacent public areas.

In association with the Program and in cooperation with Steindl Imre Program Nonprofit Zrt. as its management company, this project aims to prepare the removal of the Curia to the Kossuth Tér Palace of Justice, currently used by the Museum of Ethnography and the Political History Institute.

During the preparation, the NOJ places emphasis on harmonising the preservation of artistic and historic assets with present-day demands. To this end, the NOJ's President, accompanied by the staff of SIP Zrt., the Curia and the NOJ, visited the Leipzig Supreme Administrative Court and the Viennese Supreme Court, both built in the same period. The Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design was commissioned to create a design thinking plan to assist the planning program. Also, a plan was made to build a visitor centre in the former Palace of Justice.

### Budapest Environs Regional Court (BERC) HQ Development Project

By Decision 1785/2015 (30 October), the Government moved the BERC to the M3 Business Center at Hungária körút 179–187. in the 14th district of Budapest. After the Government bought and occupied the property in March 2016, the NOJ prepared the project planning program in cooperation with the BERC units and professionals.

In early 2017, Hungarian National Asset Management Inc. finalised the program to locate the units of the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court and called for building design bids. The building plans were completed in the second quarter of 2018.

In 2017 the NOJ established its internal organisation for project coordination.







## Eger Regional Court – Overall renovation and extension launched in 2016

- Address: 3300 Eger, Barkóczy u. 1.
- Affected headcount: 116
- Original floor area: 5,198 m<sup>2</sup>
- Proposed floor area: 7,080 m<sup>2</sup>
- Overall budget: HUF 3.3 billion shared with the Prosecutor's Office
- Completion: April 2018

This project covered the overall renovation and extension of the regional court's building. The Eger Regional Court shared its old building with the Prosecutor's Office. Launched in November 2015, the renovation project explored several parts that had been covered over time and first reconstructed the marble painting in the grand stairway and its decorative sculptures. In accordance with the priority principles of open client-friendly courts, this renovated building became the first among those fully renovated to have a modern client centre, designed by the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design in cooperation with the NOJ according to the "Image Handbook".

The overall renovation and extension resulted in a versatile building that meets all modern needs. The inauguration ceremony took place on 3 April 2018.

## Regional administrative and labour courts

This priority project aims to accommodate 8 priority administrative and labour courts (ALC) in four stages between November 2017 and November 2018. The total headcount of 790 requires an overall area of 25–30,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

The Government earmarked HUF 205.2 million in 2017 and HUF 3.266 billion in 2018 for the creation of all physical conditions. As the available amount and short time did not allow for erecting new buildings, the new courts will be accommodated in leased properties in six cities (Győr, Veszprém, Pécs, Miskolc, Debrecen, Szeged). The courts within the jurisdiction of the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court and the Budapest Environs Regional Court will be accommodated by rationalising the existing building capacities.

The development costs of creating the physical conditions, as requested by the regional courts, were reallocated in two stages, in December 2017 and March 2018.





### **Szeged Regional Court, Szeged District Court – Overall renovation and extension launched in 2016**

- Address: 6720 Szeged, Széchenyi tér 4.
- Affected headcount: 293
- Original floor area: 9,200 m<sup>2</sup>
- Proposed floor area: 13,000 m<sup>2</sup>
- Estimated overall budget: HUF 5.9 billion shared with the Prosecutor's Office
- Completion of planning: 2019 Q1
- Proposed completion: second half of 2021
- Work is underway to temporarily move the court to a leased property.

“KEHOP-5.2.2. – Priority Energy Management Developments and Utilisation of Renewable Energies in Public Buildings” European Union tender  
The EU-funded Environmental and Energy Efficiency Operative Program (EEEOP) is comprised of two projects that allocate a total of HUF 1.7 billion for the modernisation of several court buildings. For the implementation of the projects, the NOJ signed a Consortium Cooperation Agreement with National Development and Strategic Institute Nonprofit Ltd. as the designated consortium leader.

The NOJ will spend HUF 300 million on energy improvement in the buildings of the Pécs Regional Court and the Pécs Appellate Court with another HUF 1.4 billion on overall energy improvement in the buildings of the Komló and Baja District Courts. The support agreement for the improvement of the Pécs building was signed in April 2017 and that for the Baja and Komló buildings in July 2017.

To fully use the HUF 1.4 billion budget, we will examine further buildings for eligibility against the criteria in the EEEOP Call for Applications. The actual building works can start in the first half of 2019 at the earliest.

## RENOVATIONS, CONSTRUCTIONS, INVESTMENTS

### **Gödöllő District Court – overall renovation and extension**

- Address: 2100 Gödöllő, Tessedik Sámuel u. 6.
- Affected headcount: 65, including 17 judges
- Original floor area: 1,592 m<sup>2</sup>
- Proposed floor area: 2,755 m<sup>2</sup>
- Estimated overall budget: HUF 1.25 billion shared with the Prosecutor's Office
- Building start date: first half of 2017
- Proposed completion: first half of 2020
- The court is temporarily located in the building of Saint Stephen's University.

### **Érd District Court – new building**

- The new District Court will start operations on 1 January 2019.
- Proposed floor area: 2,990 m<sup>2</sup>
- Estimated overall budget: HUF 1.5 billion shared with the Prosecutor's Office
- Due date for permit and building plans: 2018 Q4
- The NOJ established its internal organisation for project coordination.
- Proposed completion: 2020 Q3
- The court will be located in a temporary building until the new building is completed.

### **Ráckeve District Court – new building**

- Address: 2300 Ráckeve, Kossuth Lajos u. 25.
- Affected headcount: 16, including 4 judges
- Proposed floor area: 490 m<sup>2</sup>
- Estimated overall budget: HUF 300 million
- Under the Cooperation Agreement between the NOJ and the Ráckeve Local Government, the new building was granted a plot for free.
- The Government earmarked HUF 169 million for the project, to be spent by the Ráckeve Local Government on implementation.
- Proposed completion: 2020 Q3

### **Szarvas District Court – overall renovation and extension**

- Address: 5540 Szarvas, Deák Ferenc u. 1.
- Affected headcount: 20, including 4 judges
- Original floor area: 1,158 m<sup>2</sup>
- Proposed floor area: 1,530 m<sup>2</sup>
- Estimated overall budget: HUF 960 million
- Proposed completion: late 2020

### **Tapolca District Court – overall renovation and extension**

- Address: 8300 Tapolca, Köztársaság tér 4.
- Affected headcount: 22, including 4 judges
- Original floor area: 767 m<sup>2</sup>
- Building shared with the Prosecutor's Office
- Proposed floor area: 1,100 m<sup>2</sup>
- Estimated overall budget: HUF 700 million shared with the Prosecutor's Office
- Proposed completion: late 2020

### **Dunakeszi District Court – new building**

- On 23 May 2018, the National Office for the Judiciary and the Hungarian Chamber of Architects announced a call for bids to plan a new building for the Dunakeszi District Court and District Prosecutor's Office. The call for bids aims to erect the building based on the most favourable architectural solution selected from the submitted bids.



- The call for bids envisages a building for both the Court and the Prosecutor's Office with all physical conditions for modern and efficient work and for more transparent work management and with an enhanced client-centred approach.
- Submission due date: 4 September 2018
- End of planning process: late 2019
- Proposed completion: 2021 Q3

### **Relocation of the Budapest 2nd and 3rd District Court**

- Address: 1035 Budapest, Miklós u. 2.
- Affected headcount: 126, including 36 judges
- Original floor area: 2,600 m<sup>2</sup>
- Proposed floor area in the leased property: cca. 4,700 m<sup>2</sup>
- The Court has grown out of its current property in Miklós utca. By lack of a definitive location, the NOJ worked hard and has found a temporary place in the building at Lajos utca 48–66. in the 3rd district of Budapest. After the lease agreement is signed and the required rebuilding and improvement works are completed, the building is expected to be ready for use in January 2019. It will have the third uniform client centre in the spirit of granting access to courts.
- Work is underway to evaluate the potential definitive locations for the court.

### Hungarian Academy of Justice Wing “C” – inner rebuilding

- Address: 1122 Budapest, Tóth Lőrinc u. 6.
- The HAJ is a department of the NOJ that works as an independent unit. The HAJ is the organiser and venue of central courses and the NOJ's protocol events but also the coordinator of local and regional courses within the Hungarian judiciary.
- To provide more space for the increasing number of students, Wing “C” will undergo an inner rebuilding to include a training room for 70 students and training management offices. In parallel with this project, the unused tennis courts at the south-eastern end of the plot will be turned into a multifunctional sports ground and an open-air community area.
- Proposed completion: late 2019

### HAI-BALATON Project – new training buildings

- The demolition of the existing buildings finished in May 2018.
- Proposed floor area of the new facilities on two plots: 2,600 m<sup>2</sup>
- Estimated overall budget: cca. HUF 1.5 billion
- Scheduled date for permit and building plans: May 2018
- Proposed completion: 2020 Q3



## JABLONSZKY FERENC TENDER SYSTEM

### Jablonszky 5 Tender

After the first round of the two-round tender announced in October 2016, the NOJ set up a working group with the leaders of the 16 winning bidders to create a uniform design for client centres. In the first half of 2017, the working group held a two-module workshop to examine administrative issues, the number of cases filed, clerk's office relations, and the communicative and visual aspects of the proposed new court function.

The NOJ used the results of the workshops and signed a design contract to create a uniform design for the proposed client centres in the winning locations and the building development projects to be completed in 2017. In the first half of 2018, a client centre was set up at the Eger Regional Court together with the ongoing projects, and another one at the Szigetszentmiklós District Court in the second half of 2018.

### Jablonszky 6 Tender

Announced in March 2017, this two-round tender covered the topics of heating modernisation, the replacement of external doors and windows, the modernisation of the electric network, the improvement of the working environment and security technology. 223 applications were submitted in a total amount of HUF 2.7 billion. The 56 winners can carry out developments worth HUF 524 million in total. Most tender developments were completed by December 2017. The major works were finished in the first half of 2018.

### Jablonszky 7 Tender

In May 2018, another tender was announced in the topics of building energy improvement and working environment. Courts submitted a total of 192 applications worth over HUF 2,500 million. As part of the 2018 Investment Plan, the NOJ allocates a total of HUF 532 million for the 69 winning applications.

Most tender developments are expected to finish by December 2018 but the major works will be finished in the first half of 2019.



## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The significance of IT development cannot be overestimated. The 21st century court is all about continuous modernisation. The future is for the “digital court”. Our goal is to make courts accessible irrespective of time and space, i.e. at any time and from any point. This means making a number of services that have been available only in person accessible from home, right from your sofa. Courts are the leading branch of power concerning online administration as online communication becomes possible and indeed statutorily obligatory in an increasing number of case types from year to year. Needless to say, the transition period is a challenge for both clients and court staff. We provide clients with continuous information and assistance each time they have a problem and we offer courses to staff. Key caseworkers have a nationwide network. We expect the digital court to mean more efficient and faster case management and simpler procedures in the long run.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

Compliance with the legislator’s intention to continuously improve electronic public services and with a set of ever-wider user expectations on clients’ part for modern communication solutions require continuous IT infrastructure development from the judiciary. Another key task is to operate and support the existing services at a high level.

Given the structure of the judiciary, the NOJ Information Technology Department is responsible for the central management and implementation of developing and operating the national infrastructure as follows.

### New devices

In the first half of 2018, work continued to replace the court IT equipment in support of fast and efficient work in the court IT system. The project *“Road to the Future – Acquisition of Innovation Resources”* prepared the purchase of nearly 1,400 notebooks, 600 work stations and 1,100 tablets for judges. Similarly to the previous years, in the first half of 2018 the NOJ IT Department purchased a substantial amount of IT decides, including 682 new multifunctional printers and 120 servers for introducing the project *“From Dream to Reality – 21st Century Case Management”*.

### Court IT network development

National Infocommunications Service Provider Ltd. (NICSP) provides the IT network among courts and the internet network. This network is no longer capable of serving the increased and steadily rising digital data load. After previous surveys and negotiations, the NICSP can significantly raise these bandwidths at each regional court in consideration of local needs. The increase will result in a larger bandwidth at each regional and district court across the country. As this IT network constitutes a unit, the overall court IT network will become faster and more capable of meeting the needs of the increased data load.

### Operation of national systems

In the first half of 2018, we continued to keep the court network running across Hungary. Case registration, correspondence, network storage spaces, printing and antivirus software are services that are used on a daily basis.

### Remote work

More and more court staff have remote access to the network, which makes working from home easier. Remote access allows for fast interventions in the case of malfunctions.



## LICENCES AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

### Online administration

For enhanced safety in the operation of national systems, we transformed the existing virtualisation technologies and purchased the required 50 VMware software licences and 50 one-year support units.

In the reporting period, we renewed 13,500 and acquired 2,000 new antivirus licences.

For the efficient introduction of a new office system, we launched the project *"From Dream to Reality – 21st Century Case Management"*. We made preparations and purchased the required 9,000 licences.

### Online communication with partner agencies

We created a separate application for access to the registration cases of NGOs. This enables prosecutors to perform their duty of statutory supervision with greater ease. To facilitate access to the data of bankruptcy and liquidation procedures under non-final decisions, we also developed an electronic access system. This enabled the authorised partner agencies to reach the data concerned with greater ease.

Work is underway to develop the Hungarian Bar Association's (HBA) attorney designation software, aimed at performing all attorney designation responsibilities that arise in the criminal branch of courts. The BIR-O software produces unique order samples and forwards a standard data structure to the HBA. The HBA uses these data to automatically draw an attorney and forward their name as an automatic reply to the NOJ with a maximum delay of 10 minutes. The BIR-O software also allows for appointing an attorney where the HBA gives no reply.

The Insolvency Register (IR) is designed to forward orders and other data generated in bankruptcy and liquidation procedures where the insolvency of companies and NGOs is determined from the BIR-O system to the agency in charge of the Insolvency Register.

### Extension of electronic files

Electronic court files flow through the NOJ's system. The speed of preliminary processing and forwarding of filings depends on the speed and throughput of this system. The extended scope of electronic procedures considerably has raised the number of emails received by courts and this greatly contributed to client satisfaction and enhanced trust in electronic procedures.

### Application development

The Leaders' Information System (VEIR) is a currently available live system designed to provide data collected from the entire organisation based on a central synchronised database, which is available to all court leaders to promote inspection and the preparation of management reports.

The primary job of the VEIR system is to offer access to judicial caseload and timeliness data for a predetermined date or any date and to enable users to store the results. VEIR is capable of displaying query results in a simple and clear way, including graphic forms (column and circle diagrams, etc.) and is compatible with portable devices (tablets, mobile phones). The primary users of the VEIR system are court leaders and the designated statisticians.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### Headcount

The judiciary's IT responsibilities are performed by the NOJ IT Department and court IT staff. At the end of the reporting period, there were 223 IT staff in the whole of Hungary, including 21 at the NOJ and 202 at courts.



## COURT FINANCES

### 2018 BUDGET OF THE COURTS HEADING

In Act C of 2017 on the 2018 Central Budget of Hungary, Parliament approved the following appropriations for the Courts Heading:

- subsidies: HUF 112,390.1
- revenues: HUF 2,258.1
- expenditures: HUF 114,648.2

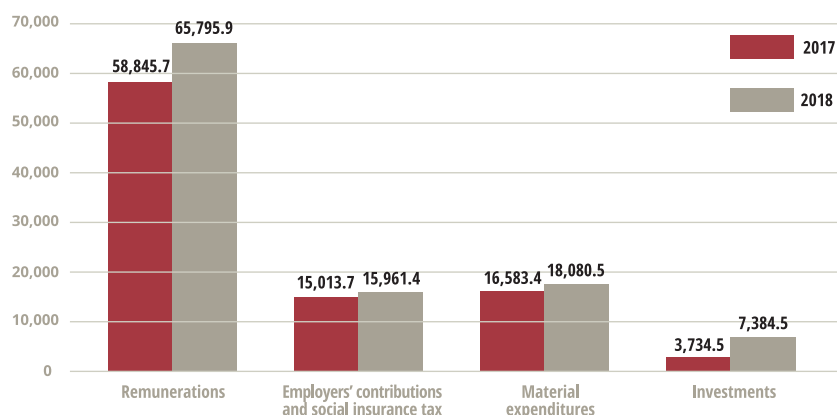
The 2018 budget subsidy exceeded the 2017 subsidy by HUF 15,544.9 million. The available budget surplus provides coverage for:

- the surplus required for achieving the obligatory salary level
- the extra costs involved in the 5% increase of judges' basic remuneration as of 1 January 2018
- the extra costs of hiring further IT staff due to the increased number of electronic procedures
- the operation of remote hearing devices installed in the VIA VIDEO project
- the costs of tightening the procedure in the new border control area
- the costs involved in the amendment of the APC in 2017
- the costs involved in the entry into force of Act CXXX of 2016 on Civil Procedure
- the costs of enforcing punishments, measures, certain coercive measures and civil infraction custody
- the extra costs of increasing the minimum hourly flat rate of asset security.

### INSTITUTIONAL BUDGET EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

The following table illustrates the budget expenditures of courts and the Curia by key appropriations:

*Distribution of original appropriations in 2017 and 2018 (HUF million)*



This clearly shows that the budget expenditure item of the highest amount (approximately 61%) covers remunerations. The following table shows the key appropriations of remunerations in the first half of 2018 compared to the first half of 2017.

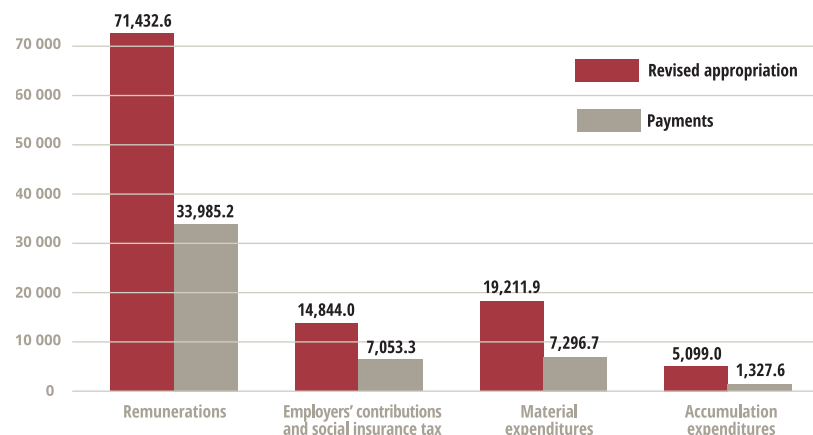
Key appropriation for remunerations (in HUF million)			
Description	First half of 2017	First half of 2018	Change vs. first half of 2017
Original appropriation	58,845.7	65,795.9	11.8%
Revised appropriation	59,560.3	71,432.6	19.9%
Payment	27,777.1	33,985.2	22.3%

In order to provide and allocate coverage for the costs of the sectoral task at administrative and labour courts, in early 2018 HUF 14,864.9 million were reallocated from Title 1. Court Budgets to Title 3. Sectoral Appropriations – Operation of the Judiciary, for the benefit of the affected institutions during the year as the needs arose.

The increase of the 2018 revised appropriation compared to the original was required by the preceding reallocation and by the surpluses provided by the Ministry of National Economy in the first half of 2018, such as the extra remuneration of court staff in 2018.

The following diagram shows the amount of the revised budget expenditures and the payments made out of them until 30 June 2018. This reveals that payments were made on the due dates.

*Appropriations for expenditures in January–June 2018 (HUF million)*



The original appropriation for 2018 was HUF 65,795.9 million, including an additional HUF 6,952.2 million compared to 2017. The 2018 budget surplus provides coverage for:

- paying the 5% increase in judges' basic remuneration, the third in a row, as part of the new Judicial Career for judges as of 1 January 2018,
- the anniversary bonuses increased together with the basic remuneration, also affected by the amendment of the Act of the service status of court staff,
- increasing the budget for judges' fringe benefits, and
- the remuneration of new positions in administrative and labour courts.



The following diagram illustrates the revised budget expenditures and the payments made out of them until 30 June 2018.

In the first half of 2018, institutional revenues totalled HUF 11,525 million, including

- HUF 928.7 million as operational revenue,
- HUF 1,554.8 million as tax and duty revenue,
- HUF 1,014.1 million as accumulation revenue,
- HUF 8,027.6 million as the total use of residual appropriations from 2017, including
  - HUF 8,023.2 million subject to a liability and
  - HUF 11,525.32 million free from any liability.

In the first half of 2018, tax and duty revenues were 13.5% and operational revenues 29.3% higher than in the first half of 2017.

The line Accumulation Revenues contains subsidies for other purposes from Other Sectoral Appropriations. The considerable decrease in the first half of 2018 compared to the first half of 2017 was caused, under the support agreement with the Ministry of the Interior, by the amount allocated to the Heading as coverage for the costs of mass immigration, amounting to HUF 811.9 million in 2017 compared to only HUF 85 million in 2018. Likewise, payments in the first half of 2018 do not contain the amount reallocated from the Chapter Budget in the first half of 2017 for the overall reconstruction of the Eger Regional Court.

## SECTORAL APPROPRIATIONS

The following table shows the amounts of and changes in Sectoral Appropriations in the 2017 and 2018 Budget Acts.

**Changes in sectoral appropriations (HUF million)**

Description	2017 original appropriation	2018 original appropriation	2017 revised appropriation	2018 revised appropriation
Budapest Environs Regional Court's building reconstruction	0	0	991	935.8
Justice investment projects	3,083.0	5,583.0	8,037.6	6,893.8
Justice operation	1,561.90	1,561.90	7,223.8	12,504.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,644.90</b>	<b>7,144.9</b>	<b>16,252.4</b>	<b>20,334.2</b>





An essential change is apparent in Justice Investment Projects as the 2018 budget includes HUF 2,500 million more, an 81.9 % increase compared to 2017.

## MEASURES IN SUPPORT OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Any process within the heading that aims to rationalise financial management by using public funds is successful if it results in the standardisation, centralisation and preferably the overall efficient use of factors that influence financial management. In the first half of 2018, such achievements included:

- For the central acquisition and appropriate distribution of IT devices, it is vital to keep a standard sectoral register of devices broken down to users (units and main positions). We put in place a standard procedure to record devices that are allocated for personal use and are kept in courtrooms, by which every institution must extend/alter the register of devices already allocated as necessary and record any further device allocated for personal use in compliance with the Users' Manual.
- In the first half of 2018, the NOJ Finance Department prepared its usual financial analysis of institutions for January–June 2018 to explore their financial situation giving court leaders an overall picture of their respective organisations' financial management during the year and enabling them to plan the budget available for each element of the Retention Program. A key goal of such analysis is to raise the attention of institutions of cash flow oriented financial management in line with the Government's objectives as another way to reduce the amount of the next year's surplus.
- In the case of appropriations for each element of the Retention Program and earmarked within the Heading's budget (ALC, CrPC, VIAVIDEO), we provided central guidance and allocated unique collective codes for the close monitoring of costs involved in the given task.

## PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2019 BUDGET

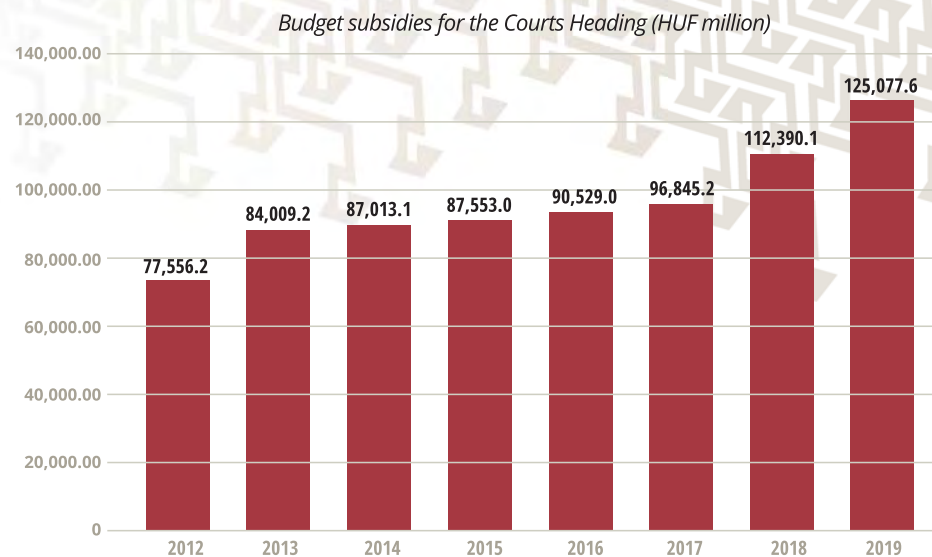
In May 2018, the Ministry of Finance (previously: Ministry of National Economy) sent the NOJ its schedule for preparing the 2019 Budget Bill. The bill was submitted to Parliament in the spring session.

The 2018 general elections and the formation of the new Government left considerably shorter time for compiling the following year's draft budget than in the previous years.

Compared to the 2018 original appropriation, a budget surplus was available for the following tasks in 2019:

- increasing remunerations by virtue of the amendment of Act LXVIII of 1997 on the service status of court staff as of 1 September 2017
- increasing the 2018 minimum wage and guaranteed wage minimum, and adjusting the incorporation of the increase of 2017
- creating the Government's Encrypted Backbone Network
- tasks related to the enforcement of Act XC of 2017 on criminal procedure
- replacing the obsolete hardware infrastructure of companies courts
- organising the Curia's 2019 international legal conference
- modernising the Curia's IT equipment

The following diagram shows changes in the sectoral subsidies allocated to courts, which have risen by over HUF 47,521.7 million (61.3%) since 2012.



## FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Completion of the Eger Regional Court's new building: <https://birosag.hu/media/6320>  
Digital Court Project: <https://birosag.hu/en/digital-court>



# THE INTEGRITY OF THE JUDICIARY

## COURT INTEGRITY

### ACTIONS FOR IMPROVED COURT INTEGRITY

The President of the National Office for the Judiciary has always laid great emphasis on establishing an organisational and operational system to ensure the integrity of courts as reinforcing an integrity-based organisational operation and the corresponding staff behaviour (personal integrity) is one of the most efficient tools to prevent corruption and to reduce and eliminate corruption risks.

This commitment has been reflected in a number of central administration actions affecting multiple topics over the past few years. The NOJ pays special attention to cooperation for integrity, awareness-raising courses on integrity for judges and court staff, the exchange of best practices, the assessment of the organisation's situation of integrity, seeking ways to eliminate and manage integrity risks, and creating internal rules of integrity. These objectives motivated the integrity-related measures adopted in 2018 to date, including:

- 8 May 2018: The Hungarian Academy of Justice held a central course entitled "Judges' Ethics, Judges' Independence and Liability".
- 14 May 2018: Annual course for the NOJ's new entrants to make them aware of internal integrity and safety-conscious, with a focus on the importance of integrity and the main provisions of the Integrity Regulation together with a presentation by an agent of the Constitution Protection Office.
- May – June 2018: annual integrity questionnaire for judges to explore the processes and circumstances of the integrity of the judiciary
- June 2018: work to regulate multiple matters of integrity completed, specifically the President's recommendation for appellate and regional courts on the standard management of events violating organisational integrity and on the regulation of integrated risk management.

Also, with the entry into force of the Integrity Regulation, each appellate and regional court has a designated integrity officer to continuously receive, analyse and evaluate integrity-related reports, contribute to the relevant inquiries and make the required proposals for the actions they deem fit, and issue opinions on matters of integrity and the potential risks as requested by court leaders and staff.

## INTERNAL AUDITS

The NOJ Audit Department (AD) prepares standard audit methodologies and uses them to make summary reports that explore deficiencies and perform analyses so as to draw conclusions and make proposals for the entire judiciary.

In the first half of 2018, a detailed audit methodology was prepared for the systematic audit of court vehicles.



In the first half of 2018, systematic audits in the entire judiciary were conducted in the following topics:

- Financial audit of the 2017 Budget Reports within the heading: upon the order of the NOJ's President, local financial audits were conducted in each independent court institution until 31 March 2018. The AD completed its sectoral financial audit by 30 June 2018. The sectoral report summarising and evaluating the results from all 26 institutions is due by the second half of 2018.
- The AD conducted a heading-level systematic audit of the Szolnok Regional Court's budget management. The audit report was sent to the institution on 16 July 2018. In the audit, the AD stated 15 findings and proposals that require action.

Also, preparations were made for the following audits in the second half of 2018:

- a heading-level systematic audit of the Budapest Environs Regional Court's budget management
- a systematic audit of the NOJ's IT warehouse operation
- a systematic audit of the operation of appellate and regional court vehicles

Similarly to the previous years, in the first half of 2018, the NOJ held a course for the internal auditors of the judiciary with the participation of a total of 32 people.

## BUILDING SECURITY

The improvement of building security systems and the overall provision of security in new buildings are high-priority issues. The NOJ uses modern equipment fulfilling 21st century requirements to guarantee the security of court buildings and the protection of clients and staff.

In the first half of 2018, the overall reconstruction of the Eger Regional Court and the Heves County Prosecutor General's Office was completed. As a result, both buildings have a security system with state-of-the-art technical equipment to guarantee safe operation, with special attention to staff, clients and to data and information security.

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ worked hard to make sure that, in both ongoing projects and new projects launched in the reporting period, buildings plans were made in compliance with the typical security requirements of courts (Érd District Court and District Prosecutor's Office, Balatonszemes Training Centre, Tapolca District Court and District Prosecutor's Office, Szeged Regional Court and Szeged District Court, new BERC HQ). In addition, the required security technology was installed in the buildings that temporarily accommodate the Gödöllő District Court and the Érd District Court.

The appropriate use of the X-ray machines (in 70% of courts), metal detector gates and manual metal detectors (in 100% of courts) purchased within the Swiss Project and continuously maintained considerably improve building security.

## PHYSICAL SECURITY

The number of attacks on courts continued to increase in the first half of 2018. As the threats related to ongoing cases, most atrocities affected the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court and its district courts (especially the Pest Central District Court) and their staff. However, reports by court leaders suggest that all courts across Hungary are facing increasing risks especially because of certain groups of demonstrators that appear in the provinces.

The NOJ is concerned about the increase in the number of violent actions by clients in court buildings compared to last year. Several courts reported extraordinary incidents caused by the same client's conduct in their buildings (especially registries).

The security equipment purchased and installed across the country recently has become a useful tool to prevent attacks on court buildings and entry with prohibited objects. Yet, people entering public trials as audience but actually intent on staging a demonstration sometimes disturb trials and occasionally impede the entire court's operation. In the first half of 2018, a number of bomb threats caused court buildings to be evacuated and ongoing trials to be postponed.

The National Office for the Judiciary does its utmost to repel any attack or threat against courts and court staff and to prevent any conduct that undermines society's trust in the administration of justice. Our goal is to make sure that judges, court staff and clients feel safe even in courtrooms. To efficiently repel cyber attacks and vexations via electronic channels, we involve experts to hold continuous courses.



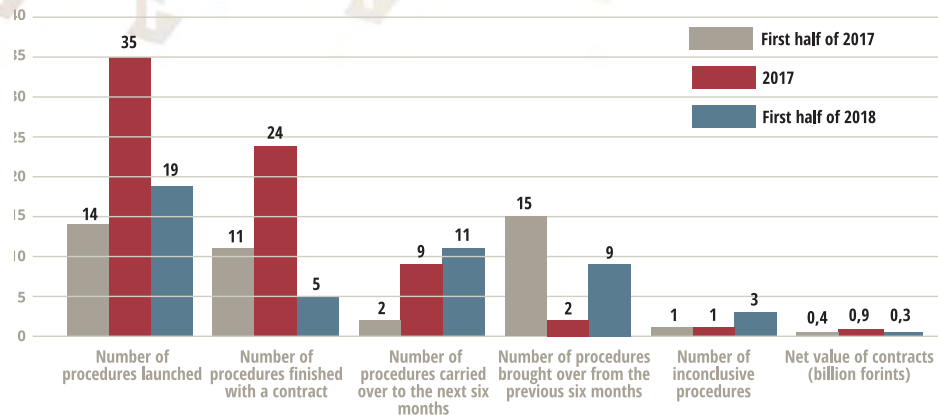
## PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ launched a total of 19 public procurement procedures worth an estimated net of HUF 5,383,893,209, including

- 5 where a contract was awarded worth a total net of HUF 300,108,680
- 3 completed to no effect, and
- 11 going on worth an estimated net of HUF 4,573,629,140.

In the first half of 2018, no redress was sought from the Public Procurement Arbitration Panel.

Number of public procurement procedures



## LITIGIOUS PROCEDURES AGAINST COURTS

Pursuant to Section 86(3)b) of Act CLXI of 2011 on court organisation and administration (hereinafter: COAA), the NOJ shall act on courts' behalf in all court procedures. Representation is provided by the Legal Representation Department (hereinafter: LRD) as the unit designated by the NOJ's Bylaws.

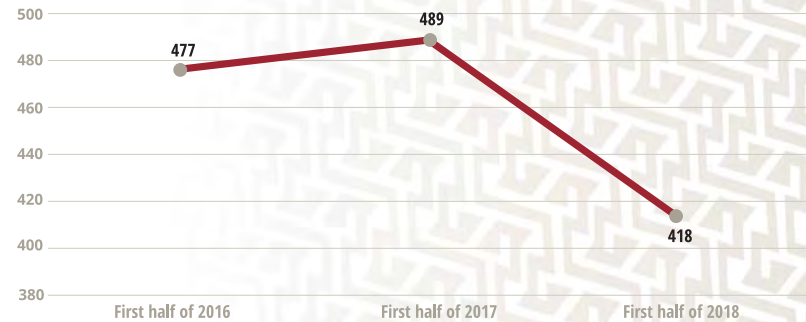
In the first half of 2018, 361 new cases were filed against courts. This represents a 22% increase compared to the first half of 2017 (295 cases) but remains below the corresponding figure of the first half of 2016 (457 cases). This slight increase may be put down to the entry into force of the new CPC as of 1 January 2018. Probably, clients tried to enforce their demands already identified in the second half of 2017 under the previous procedural law. Due to assignments, these cases add to the number of case filings of the first half of 2018.

At the end of the reporting period, 671 cases were in progress. This is the aggregate number of cases managed both within courts' respective remit

and under the powers of attorney granted to the NOJ. Of these, courts acted on their own behalf without granting a power of attorney to the NOJ in 253 cases.

As of 30 June 2018, 418 actions were in progress where courts were represented by the NOJ including newly launched actions.

Number of pending cases represented by the NOJ



The number of ongoing actions against courts shows a downward trend from year to year.

In the 400 cases completed by a final judgement in the first half of 2018, courts were found against in 50% of the cases (4) compared to the 1st half of 2017 (7 cases). 99% of the petitions were ungrounded.

In the reporting period, the relevant judgements imposed a total of HUF 2,354,627 on respondent courts, equivalent to an average of HUF 588,657 per case.

The amount imposed on and paid by courts in the first half of 2018 corresponds to 25% of the amount awarded with respect to actual judicial activities (HUF 9,334,700) in the 1st half of 2017.

## THE INTEGRITY OF JUDGES AND COURT STAFF

### THE EVALUATION OF JUDGES

Independence in the delivery of judgements requires the appropriate level of individual responsibility and audit mechanisms. This strategic goal is served by a regular evaluation of judges, immediate as required, to have a realistic and comparable picture of their professional activities irrespectively



of the court level and branch concerned. In addition to promoting client interests, the evaluation of judges aims to support judges' activities and identify potential systematic errors to prevent them in the future and to sanction previous omissions as necessary.

The rules of evaluating judges' activities are laid down in Act CLXII of 2011 on the legal status and remuneration of judges (LSRJA) and NOJ Instruction 8/2015 (12 December) on the Regulation of the Standard Evaluation of Judges' Activities and Detailed Evaluation Criteria.

Launched upon the initiative of the NOJ's President and discussed with a wide range of stakeholders to reform the evaluation procedure, the Regulation was not only aimed at providing users with a set of standard evaluation guidelines but also at bringing about a change of attitude and mindset to change the organisational culture according to the strategic goals of the NOJ's President. The Regulation is more complex and suitable for the complexity of the delivery of judgements. In order to promote the uniformity and comparability of examinations for the evaluation of judges' activities, the Regulation requires a qualification for the examiner's assignment, specifically a central course for examiners and their entry in the Examiners' Register. Today, examiners are regularly trained on a separate thematic day for civil and criminal judges. The Regulation contains a methodological guide with practical assistance for conducting the evaluation, its criteria and for preparing the evaluation report. The guide helps to make sure that reports are more uniform, comparable and objective.

In the first half of 2018, a total of 193 judges were evaluated at the Curia, appellate, regional, district, and administrative and labour courts. Of these 167 were appointed for an indefinite term while 26 served for a fixed term.

Of the 167 judges appointed for an indefinite term,

- 78 were found qualified for a higher position with distinction,
- 49 were found qualified with distinction,
- 39 were found qualified,
- 1 was found unqualified.

## JUDGES' DISCIPLINARY STATUS

In the first half of 2018, 5 judges received a written warning, including 4 due to breach of service (delay in drafting a decision, administrative delay) and 1 due to a behaviour damaging the reputation of the judicial profession (passing an indecent remark on a fellow professional).

In the first half of 2018, disciplinary actions were filed with the First Instance Service Court against 12 judges, the same number as in the first half of 2017, including

- 7 due to wilful breach of service [LSRJA Section 105a)],
- 4 due to a behaviour or lifestyle damaging or compromising the reputation of the judicial profession [LSRJA Section 105b)],
- 1 due to both offences under [LSRJA Section 105a) and b)].

Of the ongoing disciplinary actions in the first half of 2018, 4 were suspended due to a criminal action against the judge.

In the first half of 2018, the First Instance Service Court terminated 7 disciplinary actions by a final judgement. The First Instance Service Court

- terminated 3 actions without enforcing the legal consequences,
- issued 2 reprimands, and
- imposed 2 disciplinary punishments of salary reduction by one category.

The Second Instance Service Court:

- approved 4 judgements of the First Instance Service Court (1 removing a court leader from office, 1 on salary reduction by one category, 2 issuing a reprimand),
- overturned 1 judgement (changing the First Instance Service Court's dismissal of the disciplinary action and deciding to terminate the second instance disciplinary action).

In the first half of 2018, 6 criminal actions against 28 judges were terminated by a final sentence (4 misdemeanours of defamation, 1 misdemeanour of slander, 1 misdemeanour of desecration). In these criminal actions, neither of the judges had their immunity suspended.

In the ongoing criminal actions in the first half of 2018, 4 judges had their immunity suspended.



## TOOLS OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

### REGULATIONS (INSTRUCTIONS) AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NOJ'S PRESIDENT

As a result of work in the first half of 2018, the NOJ's President took into consideration the opinions of courts until the summer court holiday to issue 8 regulations (instructions) and 5 recommendations, and took 82 organisational and 510 personal decisions. New or revised regulations and recommendations that are relevant for court administration were made in the following topics:

- a revised procedure of whistle blowing reports and complaints in compliance with the relevant law in effect,
- a set of provisions to incorporate the rules of Act XC of 2017 on criminal procedure in the NOJ's instructions and in the recommendations of the NOJ's President,
- a set of norms to separate the statutory responsibilities of the NOJ and the NJC in the NOJ's instructions with greater accuracy,
- a set of harmonised rules in compliance with the relevant laws in effect on court integrity, a procedure for the management of breach of organisational integrity, and integrated risk management,
- enforcement rules on the authentic register of general powers of attorney for litigious and non-litigious procedures,
- recommendation for the operation of courts and the National Office for the Judiciary as places of professional practice.

In the first half of 2018, key ongoing regulatory projects included:

- developing data protection and management provisions in compliance with the effective rules of the GDPR and the Privacy Act, especially on court camera use,
- developing provisions on the performance evaluation of court staff,
- creating a proposed norm on court statistics in compliance with the new Statistics Act,
- reforming the rules on the training of trainee judges and secretaries,
- developing IT security rules for the judiciary.

## REVIEWS

Reviews allow for an in-depth analysis of individual administrative areas and may focus a leader's attention on timely and efficient justice or any other priority issue or any deficiency in the given area.

An administrative review may be a regular, extraordinary, ad-hoc, target or impact review. In the NOJ's administration practices, the typical form is the regularly conducted general review and the target review that affect all or individual courts.

### General reviews

General reviews are conducted regularly, typically on an annual basis. As with previous years, in 2018 a review was launched to look at

- criminal cases pending in court after statute of limitation
- cases pending for more than two years,
- reports on the activities and costs of on-call and stand-by staff.

In addition, the NOJ annually monitors the experiences about the recognition and equivalence of judgements and generally about requests of international legal assistance.

### Target reviews

A target review is a detailed overview of a given activity or topic aimed to offer an accurate picture of the area and to set tasks. A target review ordered by central administration may be conducted simultaneously in several or all courts depending on its background.

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ's President ordered and terminated the following target reviews of the judiciary and individual regional courts:

- Given this year's considerable change in the legal environment of criminal cases of international relevance, a target review was conducted at the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court to ensure timeliness by the unit of international non-litigious criminal cases. The review summary found that the unit was prepared for the expected increase in the caseload due to the legal amendments and the exclusive competence of equivalence procedures and it kept permanent contact with the affected agencies concerning legal interpretation, i.e. the Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior's Criminal Registry.



- The NOJ's President ordered a target review at the Budapest Environs Regional Court regarding its caseload data to improve timeliness at the second instance criminal branch. The review summary found that it was reasonable to order the review as the delay of over two years in most second instance cases was wrongfully caused by the chairman of the chamber acting in the matter. The NOJ's President took the required administrative actions against the chairman of the chamber in breach.
- The NOJ's President ordered a national target review to explore the timeliness of posting final cost payment orders to the police department regarding apprehensions in criminal cases between 1 January and 28 February 2018 and the potential causes of failure to post such orders.
- The NOJ's President ordered a national target review to explore the practices of regulating the exclusion of judges and to determine the required administrative measures. It was found that judges do not abuse of invoking grounds for relative exclusion, courts examine reports in compliance with the relevant administrative rules and do not generally cause a considerable protraction of cases. Therefore, there was no need for a comprehensive administrative measure.

## MANAGEMENT OF COMPLAINTS AND WHISTLE BLOWING REPORTS

In the first half of 2018, 198 new complaint cases were filed with the NOJ. In the complaint cases launched in 2018 and the previous years, a total of 1,485 follow-up complaint management documents were received. The NOJ manages complaints and whistle blowing reports as a priority because they can reveal systemic deficiencies. Therefore, the NOJ often monitors the filings submitted to it but subject to the affected court under the relevant procedure and seeks feedback and orders a review or target review as necessary.

In the first half of 2018, 3 filings were considered as a whistle blowing report but neither was found well-grounded.

The complaints received and the proposals made by courts required a review of the existing complaint regulation. To this end, in the first half of 2018, the NOJ prepared Instruction 7/2018 (11 July) on the procedure of whistle blowing report and complaint management, a new regulation similar to a plain, clear and easy-to-use handbook incorporating the structural changes discussed with courts. The new regulation lays down the option to make complaints both verbally and by email.

## OTHER MANAGEMENT TOOLS OF COURT ADMINISTRATION

### MEETINGS, CONSULTATIONS, WORKSHOPS, BEST PRACTICES

The NOJ's President may use several other management tools to perform her responsibilities, including meetings, consultations and workshops as forms of direct communication to help efficiently explore problems in individual areas and to offer an opportunity to jointly develop solutions.

The NOJ's President convenes multiple meetings of the presidents of regional and appellate courts every year to discuss current topics and problems that affect all.

In the first half of 2018, 6 meetings were held with the following main topics:

- Digital Court Project
- E-codes – experiences about the January 2018 launch
- 1st semi-annual report of the NOJ's President in 2017
- options of management support
- reform of judges' remuneration system
- development of the training system
- regulation (amendment of integrity regulation, adopted regulations, amendment of regulations pertaining to the NJC)
- reform of administrative courts
- exploration of court IT applications
- tasks related to the entry into force of the new CrPC.

In addition to the annual meetings of judges, the individual courts hold multiple management meetings every year in line with their respective work schedules, where all administrative leaders discuss topical administrative and financial matters.

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ's President attended, in person or by proxy, almost all meetings of appellate and regional judges and the management meetings of the Budapest Metropolitan Court and the Budapest Environs Regional Court.

Workshops are interactive consultations aimed at the exchange of experiences and knowledge that offer an opportunity for an intensive exchange of views. Their high efficiency prompted the NOJ to organise an increasing number of central courses in this form or to offer an opportunity to exchange knowledge at workshops as part of the given course. In the first half of 2018 such workshops included:

a civil infraction course – workshop (31 January – 02 February 2018)  
a workshop of best practices (10 – 11 April 2018)







During their continuous operation, courts develop a number of solutions, practices, methods and applications for more efficient, timely and accurate work and performance of tasks. The NOJ gathers, analyses and shares such best practices across Hungary as a priority. A clear indication of the importance of this field is that the Administrative Regulation has turned the catalogue of best practices to a national program. (More on best practices at courts in Chapter 2: Efficiency of Justice).

## PROJECTS

The NOJ's President often launches projects (e.g. Digital Court, Via Video, E-code) for individual tasks of the NOJ and the judiciary that are subject to a due date and require considerable resources and coordination. A benefit about this well-tried structure is that protracted tasks affecting multiple professionals can be carried out involving various specialty areas and using a huge body of special skills that are available in courts.

The NOJ implements projects making sure to channel the professional experiences accumulated in courts towards project development. Therefore, a number of judges and court staff work on each NOJ project, both current and future.

We believe it is vital to put the available external resources (Széchényi 2020, Justice DG Grants system, Internal Affairs Funds, Swiss Contribution, Danube Transnational Program, etc.) in the service of the National Office for the Judiciary and the whole of the judiciary in as many cases as possible. To this end, we continuously plan and develop new project proposals in addition to those completed and in progress.

## WORKING GROUPS

Court Presidents and the NOJ's President may create working groups to perform any of the responsibilities laid down in the COAA. They are professional bodies that make proposals, perform analyses and give opinions while creating professional materials to support decision-making.

Working groups are important as they channel the knowledge and experiences accumulated in courts towards the central administration and may hence assist judges and court staff with their special skills for efficiency, timeliness and transparency in the delivery of judgements and in administrative duties.

Regional and appellate courts set up working groups to promote the tasks related to the entry into force of the new procedure codes. In addition, a number of working groups were active in exhibit management, procedural and administrative matters in cases with electronic communication, the simplification of electronic communication in practice, matters of integrity, court traditions, support of IT developments and the reduction of workload, to name but a few. In 2018 at least 61 local working groups helped regional and appellate courts to perform their professional and administrative responsibilities. Their number continuously varied as individual goals were achieved.

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ operated 12 working groups, including

- 4 that continued their previous work (Court Mediation Working Group, Filing Working Group, Plain Information on Courts Working Group, Digital Star Map Working Group)



- 5 that had their terms of operation extended (Court Integrity Working Group, Financial, Headcount and Wage Management Working Group, Child Focused Justice Working Group, New Enforcement Working Group, IT Security Control System Working Group),
- 3 that were newly set up in response to the new procedure codes (New CPC Enforcement Working Group, APC Enforcement Working Group and New CrPC Enforcement Working Group).

Some key achievements of the working groups:

- The Digital Star Map Working Group worked hard to explore the external and internal IT applications required for the delivery of judgements and the IT Security Control System Working Group worked hard to create rules that guarantee IT security.
- The New CPC Enforcement Working Group, the New CrPC Enforcement Working Group and the APC Enforcement Working Group worked hard to monitor the enforcement of the new procedure codes and to promote their smooth application.
- The Filing Working Group played a major role in developing proposed legal amendments in response to the changing legal environment while the Mediation Working Group played a major role in exploring new opportunities in mediation.
- The Plain Information on Courts Working Group focused on improving the efficiency of the press spokespersons' and press secretaries' network.
- The Child Focused Justice Working Group contributed to the development of a pilot course for judges hearing juvenile criminal cases.
- The Court Integrity Working Group joined the regulation program.

## PILOT PROGRAMS

Pilot programs are significant as they provide an opportunity within limited time and at low costs for the practical testing of a particular work method or its supporting application in a reduced group of legal practitioners. The idea is to prepare national introduction and to explore any defect, deficiency and need for further development.

In 2017, in coordination with the NOJ, the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court launched a four-module pilot course including professional and awareness-raising components for judges hearing juvenile criminal cases. The course consisted of one training day per month. The pilot program came to an end in the first half of 2018 but will resume using all experiences in 2019.

In April 2018 a two-month pilot program was launched in cooperation with the Pécs and Zalaegerszeg Regional Courts to prepare a new data gathering model in the Open Court Program. Now in place based on experiences, the model will go live in January 2019 to replace the monthly reporting obligation and to allow for a nationwide differentiated evaluation of almost 2,000 programs per year, thereby promoting the program's development.

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ started preparations for the pilot introduction of the Debrecen Model in the second half of the year. This pilot program enables regional courts to introduce in their respective jurisdictions some components of the Debrecen Model (a work management method developed as best practices by the Debrecen Regional Court), thereby promoting the efficient and timely delivery of judgements.

## NETWORKS

As professional networks can promote coordinated, fast and efficient work by court staff with ample knowledge in direct contact with each other, the NOJ supports this tool of knowledge sharing as a priority. In the first half of 2018, the following professional networks, established in previous years, continued their operations:

- Network of European Union Legal Advisors (judges' and secretaries' networks),
- Network of Press Spokespersons and Press Secretaries,
- Network of Child Focused Justice Professionals and Coordinators,
- Network of Contact Persons of the National Open Court Program,
- Network of Project Contact Persons,
- Network of National Court Library Expert Coordinators,
- National Network of Mediation Coordinators,
- Network of E-action Contact Persons,
- National Network of Court Coaches and Trainers,

In the first half of 2018, preparations for the Cyber Network, active from July 2018, finished.

## FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

On the Service Court: <https://birosag.hu/en/judicial-self-administration-bodies>

The President of the NOJ was awarded for her integrity-related activity:

<https://birosag.hu/en/news/category/birosagokrol/president-noj-was-awarded-her-integrity-related-activity>



# ACCESS TO COURTS

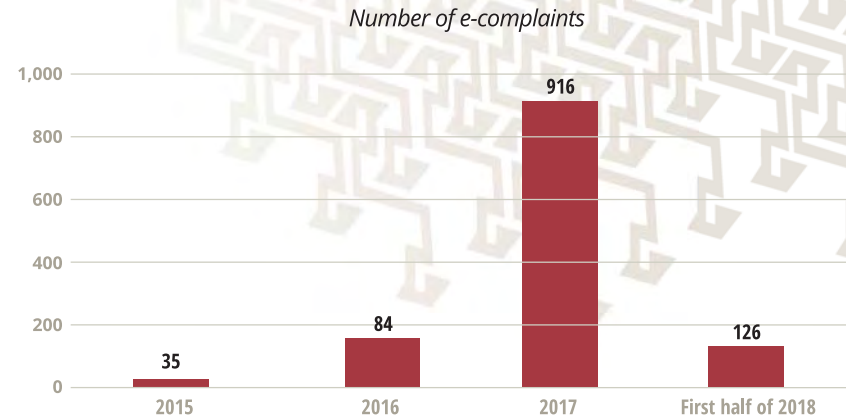
## CLIENT RELATIONS

Simplified access to courts as a strategic goal aims to help people obtain information with greater ease and to simplify the process of seeking justice. The tools to achieve these goals include client centres, court information guides for clients, electronic administration services, and client satisfaction assessment.

## ELECTRONIC ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

The electronic administration services introduced in 2015, including e-complaint management, the Trial Length Calculator and the Judicial Electronic Information and Warning System, continued to operate smoothly in the first half of 2018.

E-complaint management enables clients to submit their administration complaints electronically 24/7. In the reporting period, 126 complaints were submitted electronically.



The Trial Length Calculator is an online application that helps citizens to check the average time of individual case types at the given court. In the reporting period, the application was used for 787 calculations.

The Judicial Electronic Information and Warning System (JEIWS)

- provides registered clients and attorneys with access to the basic data of cases and with text and email notifications of important procedural acts.
- In the first half of 2018, there were
  - 641 newly registered users,
  - 388 new cases affected by registration,
  - 392 new users subscribed for text and email notifications,
  - 480 text and email messages sent to users.



## CLIENT CENTRES

Hundreds of thousands of clients visit courts in person every year to resolve their cases. Thus, it is particularly important that they are received by duly qualified professionals in an environment that is appropriate for the relevance of their cases. In the 21st century this is natural in both the private and the public sectors.

As government windows are the faces of the “good state”, so are client centres the faces of the open court as a service provider. Similarly to government windows and client centres in the corporate world (e.g. banks, telecommunications companies), client centres are designed to create a new culture of administration. The idea is that court clients should be able to resolve their cases more simply and faster under modern and comfortable conditions.

The NOJ has always viewed the matter of setting up client centres as a complex issue including the development of a unique design for rooms where clients are received, the standardisation of administrative processes, proper training for the staff in charge, and the publication of plain information guides.

In April 2018, as a part of its overall renovation and extension project, the Eger Regional Court opened the very first client centre of a uniform design to provide complex and professional services. The second client centre will be completed at the Szigetszentmiklós District Court in October 2018. The third client service of a uniform design, the first in Budapest, will be inaugurated in the new building of the Budapest 2nd and 3rd District Court in February 2019. Work is underway to assess further potential venues with a working group in charge of coordinating implementation.

Client centres in the court buildings erected and renovated within ongoing and proposed projects will have a uniform design.

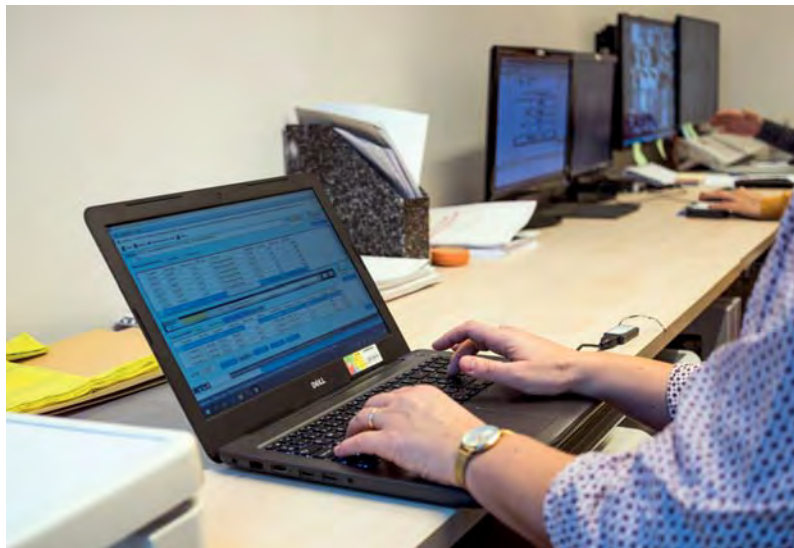


## CLIENT SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

In line with 21st century expectations, the judiciary also increasingly lays emphasis on the extension of client relations and the function of courts as service providers, specifically assessing and improving client satisfaction. For the continuous development of the function of courts as service providers and hence for improved client satisfaction, it is vital for courts to receive any client feedback, whether positive or negative, on court services and procedures, staff's work and the entire judiciary. Client satisfaction questionnaires provide courts with relevant client responses to inform further improvements. The idea is to use all, mostly positive, feedback received so far to make the administration of justice as client-friendly as possible.

To this end, the NOJ chose client satisfaction assessment as a key topic at its best practices workshop on 8–9 November 2017. Using the experiences gathered and the consensus reached at the interactive event, the NOJ launched a regulatory project later in 2017 to summarise all results of the joint discussions in a regulation by the NOJ's President. In the first half of 2018, the regulatory project gave rise to a procedure suitable for collecting, processing and comparing by courts all client feedback on court services according to standard criteria, which will be a key point in the NOJ Instruction on courts' client relations, in effect from 2019.

The findings of standardised nationwide client satisfaction assessments are expected to help define the central level improvements of court services.



## DEVELOPMENTS SUPPORTING JUDICIAL ACTIVITIES

### E-ACTION

In order to speed up actions, the legislator has continuously made electronic communication optional and compulsory for specific parties and their representatives in certain procedures since 2008. This means that parties are required to communicate with courts electronically by omitting paper based filings under the relevant statutory rules.

On 1 January 2018, overall electronic administration was introduced in court procedures. The NOJ and courts as agencies using electronic administration are required to communicate electronically with clients in all cases within their jurisdiction and competence.

From 1 January 2018, all agencies and individuals listed in Section 9(1) of Act CCXXII of 2015 on the general rules of electronic administration and fiduciary services are required to maintain electronic communication with courts in all cases in addition to those previously subject to electronic communication as required:

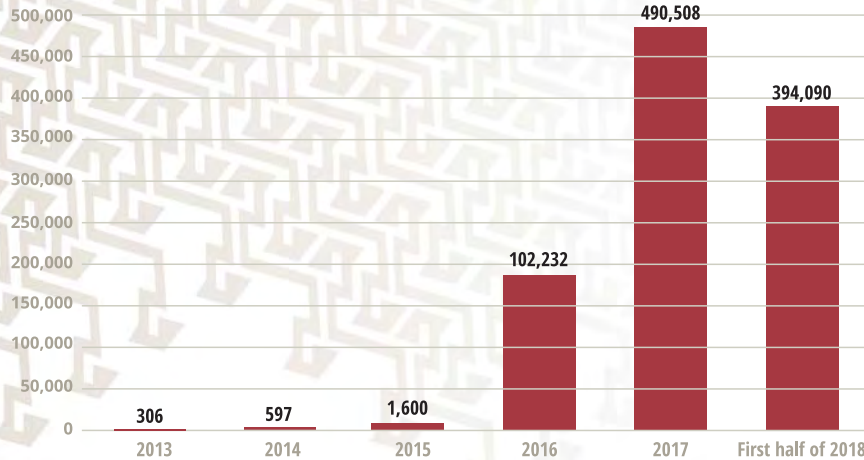
- in non-litigious enforcement actions,
- in non-litigious civil, financial, administrative and labour actions,
- in criminal actions,
- in civil infraction actions, and
- in the President's administrative actions.

From 1 January 2018, individuals acting in person remain free to opt for electronic communication in litigious and non-litigious cases and in the President's administrative actions. In response to the introduction of overall electronic administration and the new procedure codes (CPC, APC, CrPC), a number of IT developments were carried out in the Court Register Program.

### Civil actions

The introduction of overall electronic administration dynamically increased the number of e-filings in litigious and non-litigious civil actions (enforcement and out-of-court cases) in the reporting period. Court experiences show that even parties not obliged to e-communication often prefer this faster and cost-efficient form to paper-based communication.

Number of e-filings in civil actions



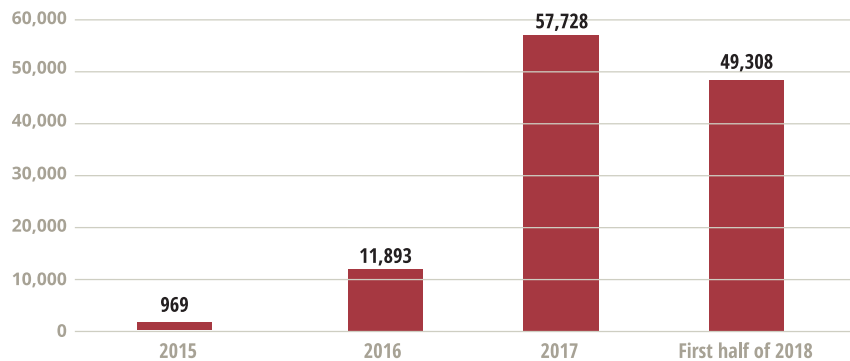
In the first half of 2018, a total of 20,839 e-filings were submitted in non-litigious civil actions:

Procedure	Initial documents	Follow-up documents	Total
Enforcement cases	9,113	143	9,256
Out-of-court cases	7,901	3,682	11,583
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,014</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>20,839</b>

### Bankruptcy and liquidation cases

The first half of 2018 witnessed a sharp rise in the number of e-filings in bankruptcy and liquidation cases as shown by the following graph:

Number of e-filings in bankruptcy and liquidation actions



By the 1st half of 2018, managing electronic forms (downloading, filling in data fields, e-signature, AVDH-authentication, annexing enclosures) and electronic delivery had become a daily routine for parties while processing and recording e-files had become a daily routine for court registries.

In compliance with its obligations under EU and domestic law, Hungary created an Insolvency Register (IR) on 26 June 2018, developed by the NOJ in continuous cooperation with the Ministry of Justice regarding legal and IT details.

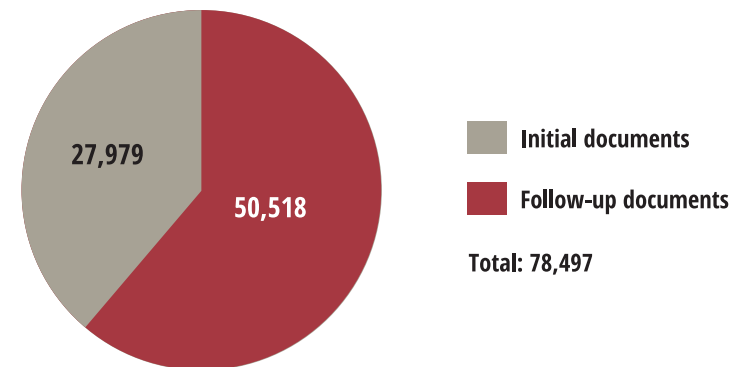
### Criminal actions, civil infraction procedures

Since 1 July 2015, applications for inclusion in the aggregate punishment and for ex-post inclusion in the aggregate punishment may be submitted and revoked electronically in criminal actions. From 1 January 2018, investigation authorities, prosecutor's offices, courts, correctional facilities and other government agencies are required to maintain electronic communication in criminal and civil infraction procedures. Likewise, electronic communication applies to counsels and attorneys acting on behalf of any party to the action. By contrast, this is only an option for individuals.

Courts received

- 78,497 e-filings in criminal cases, including 27,979 initial and 50,518 follow-up documents; and
- 117,518 e-filings in civil infraction cases, including 105,877 initial and 11,641 follow-up documents.

Number of e-documents in criminal cases



The 1st half of 2018 was a transitional preparatory period of electronic communication that required close cooperation and efficient communication with partner agencies, chambers and clients.



### **E-ACTION 2018 menu**

In preparation for the introduction of overall electronic administration on 1 January 2018, the *E-ACTION 2018* menu was created in late 2017. A subpage available from the central website of courts ([www.birosag.hu](http://www.birosag.hu)), *E-ACTION 2018* is a complex repository of information with structured contents including details, guides, process descriptions, electronic forms and Frequently Asked Questions about electronic communication with courts.

### **E-ACTION Helpdesk**

Designed for examining client queries and complaints, Helpdesk ([e-ugyintezes@birosag.hu](mailto:e-ugyintezes@birosag.hu)) continued to operate smoothly in the first half of 2018. This platform allows for giving professional and timely responses to queries about electronic communication. In the reporting period, Helpdesk received 1,180 queries.

The average response time was 2 business days in the reporting period.

The NOJ regularly analyses and evaluates queries submitted to the E-ACTION Helpdesk and has assessed client satisfaction in line with outgoing response messages since June 2017.

The evaluation of client questionnaires shows that, in the reporting period, on a scale of 5,

- the speed of administration was rated 4.51;
- the usefulness of information in response messages was rated 4.46; and
- 85% of clients would recommend Helpdesk to their co-workers and friends.

### **Electronic forms**

In 2017, in preparation for overall electronic administration as of 1 January 2018, the entry into force of the GDPR and the new procedure codes, the NOJ started to improve client forms, develop further forms and prepare the related case descriptions and fill-in guides.

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ introduced forms for non-litigious enforcement, non-litigious civil financial, administrative and labour, criminal and civil infraction procedures, and the President's administrative cases.

### **Network of E-ACTION Contact Persons**

In line with the extension of electronic communication, the NOJ established its Network of Civil and Criminal E-ACTION Contact Persons. The members are judges of the affected branches with intimate familiarity with electronic communication.

The Network of Civil and Criminal E-ACTION Contact Persons holds a meeting every other month. These sessions aim to deepen members'

knowledge about electronic communication in terms of procedural law, administration, IT, and system use, and to share their skills and local best practices.

The E-ACTION contact persons are mainly responsible for offering judges and court staff professional and even technological assistance in their daily work. In the first half of 2018, each regional court established its Network of E-ACTION Contact Persons so that every unit in its area of competence should have a professional intimately familiar with electronic communication who provides help, contributes to answering local questions, managing local courses, and channelling proposals and comments.

### **E-ACTION courses**

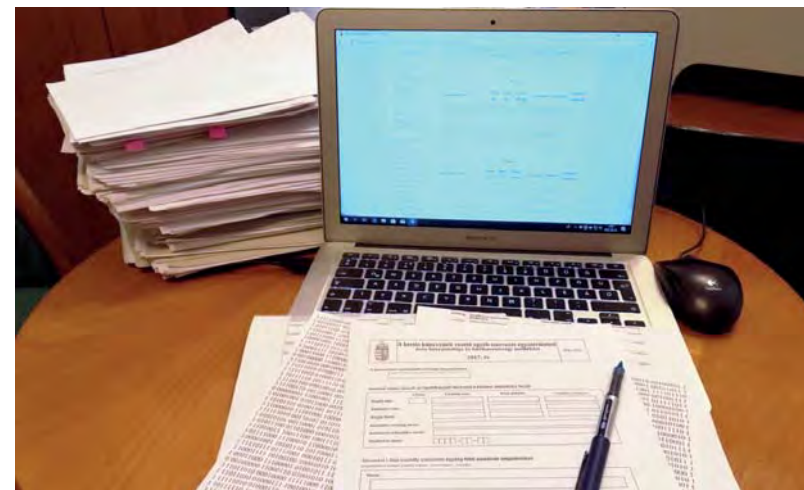
In response to the introduction of overall electronic administration as of 1 January 2018, in the first half of 2018, a number of central, regional and local courses were held.

These aimed to promote the deepening of theoretical and system use skills about e-communication.

Key central courses:

- Civil E-action Contact Persons' Days
- Criminal E-action Contact Persons' Days
- Electronic administration in civil actions, topical issues of e-procedures (key users' training for registry staff)
- Electronic administration in criminal actions, topical issues of e-procedures (key users' training for registry staff)
- Use of telecommunications devices, audiovisual recordings at trials

E-ACTION contact judges cooperate with the participants of key users' courses organised by the NOJ to manage local training and hence make sure that the judiciary is well-prepared and has deep and up-to-date knowledge about electronic communication.



## ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

In 2018 clients continued to pay statutory duties in most electronic court procedures via the Electronic Payment and Clearing System (ADER) and by transfer to the duty revenue accounts of courts kept with the Hungarian State Treasury (MÁK).

In the reporting period, HUF 543,498,205 of duties were paid via the ADER and HUF 2,379,729,816 of duties were paid by MÁK transfer.

## E-REGISTRY OF NGOS

Introduced on 1 January 2015, the Civil Integrated Information System (CIIS) allows for electronic communication between courts, clients and prosecutors in civil registration procedures. This new IT system has been continuously developed ever since.

In the first half of 2018, a number of developments were completed for a new order generation feature in the CIIS from July 2018, designed to make registration and registration of change procedures more efficient and faster. The order generation feature allows for automatic data extraction from the forms filled in and submitted electronically by clients and for feeding such data in the CIIR without human intervention. The software uses the extracted data that are requested to be registered to generate a sample order that greatly facilitates and speeds up the work of the professionals in charge.

The 5-day national course presenting the use of the new feature was successfully completed by 125 participants. The new version of the CIIS was put into operation on 25 June 2018 based on proposals by the participants.



## COMMUNICATION

### COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: CLARITY AT COURT

It is an objective of communication strategy that clients seeking justice and the general public should know and understand the operation of the judiciary. The NOJ declared 2017 to be the year of clarity at court and continued to work towards this goal in 2018. In addition to using plain language in its communication including news items, it made an extensive use of the modern communication channels of the 21st century. With its client centred approach, it focused on reinforcing the written and oral communication of courts with informative guides, producing video contents, revising the central website and using social media with increasing efficiency.

In the first half of 2018, providing timely and appropriate information to clients about the new CPC and APC with effect from January and the new CrPC with effect from 1 July was a key communication task for the judiciary. The central website and courts released short infographics and guides, and the press spokespersons' network launched coordinated communication via multiple media outlets across Hungary to present the most important changes to citizens seeking justice.



### Network of Press Spokespersons and Press Secretaries

The Network of Press Spokespersons and Press Secretaries assists the judiciary in its uniform communication. The Curia as well as each appellate and regional court has its press spokesperson and press secretary. Their contact data are available on the central website of courts.

The network's members help the judiciary to convey its messages to clients and citizens both on a national and on a regional level. They play a key role in both external and internal communication. Among other duties, they are responsible for the flow of information inside the organisation, for liaising with the press and for providing information.

The NOJ held a two-day plain language course for press secretaries in February 2018 and another for press spokespersons in May 2018 at the Hungarian Academy of Justice. Press secretaries were explained the main characteristics of plain language and were offered workshops with communication experts to learn techniques of plain language. Press spokespersons also completed a television and radio practice, and attended a presentation technique course. The program was designed to help press spokespersons prepare more efficiently for responding courts received by courts fast and in plain language.

### Plain Language About Courts Working Group

In 2014 the members of the Network of Press Spokespersons and Press Secretaries established the Press Spokespersons' Working Group, primarily tasked with promoting uniform court communication. In November 2017 the

working group was transformed, had its responsibilities and headcount extended, and continued to operate with the name Plain Language About Courts Working Group. Its aim is to develop the external and internal communication activities of courts, to promote plain information, and to enhance the efficient communication of the Network of Press Spokespersons and Press Secretaries.

In the first half of 2018, among other things, the working group contributed to the organisation of the courses for press spokespersons and press secretaries and helped to standardise the communication of general judges' meetings.

## ONLINE PLATFORMS

### Central website

In 2018, the NOJ worked hard to develop online communication and to upgrade online platforms, especially its central website and social media presence. The judiciary should keep abreast of 21st century communication trends and bear in mind the different communication habits and needs of various target groups. Revamping the central website is a key task for 2018.

### Revamping the central website of courts

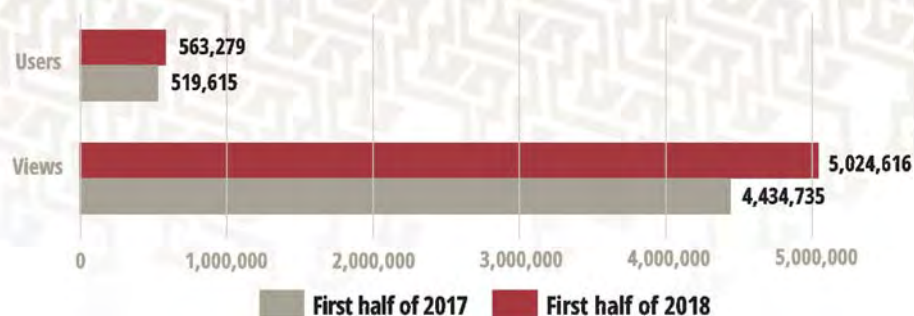
In the first half of 2018, work continued to revamp the central website of courts to provide visitors with a new user-friendly and modern platform from the second half of the year. Redesigned in a client-centred approach, the website "Hungary's Courts" offers a number of novelties, interviews and



professional recommendations. The new website has a design and clear structure that help clients to obtain information and its colourful and informative contents offer plain information on the most important news and events of the judiciary.

Surveys suggest that [birosag.hu](http://birosag.hu) received more than five million visits in the first half of 2018.

*Accesses to the central website [www.birosag.hu](http://www.birosag.hu)*



### News, press releases

The central website of courts features current news, interviews and press releases concerning the judiciary. In the first half of 2018, it disclosed 195 news items and 872 press releases. In 2018 it started to feature new contents, the “Legitimate Questions” column, which seeks answers to common legal questions that often affect everyday life.

Another novelty and development in the first half of 2018 was a number of video summaries and interviews about topics of central administration. These visual materials appear on [birosag.hu](http://birosag.hu) several times a week. In the first half of 2018, the NOJ disclosed 66 videos and launched its YouTube channel.

Infographics make news about the judiciary’s results including statistical data colourful, easy-to-understand, spectacular and informative.

Also, the NOJ launched “Judicial compass”, a series of animation films and information leaflets with clear explanations of key information about courts and court procedures. Made in cooperation with the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, the first animation short film is called “Going to Trial”. The film presents the tasks, rights and obligations of witnesses from the moment of receiving the summons to their arrival at the court. The film is also available in each client centre.

### Central online newsletter

The news and press releases of [birosag.hu](http://birosag.hu) are offered to media professionals, press spokespersons and the press representatives of partner agencies in a newsletter every Thursday. The newsletter is sent out to over 200 addressees every week to raise their attention to all events and news of the given week.

### Social media, Facebook

The judiciary is also present in social media. In the first half of 2018, the NOJ sought to make its communication more active on its Facebook site. This platform features news and events of general interest together with photo and video contents.

In the first half of 2018, the site became even more popular with 3,117 likes. The site helps the judiciary to reach an average of 867 users per day.

### Central intranet

Internal communication aims to provide court staff with current news and information. The central website of courts is one of the most important platforms of internal communication that allows for the flow of information, continuous liaison between courts, and the exchange of best practices. Also, each regional and appellate court already has its own internal intranet site as an important channel for communicating local news and information.

### Central intranet newsletter

Court staff can find out about news and events every week from the central intranet newsletter every Thursday, already published with a new design and a structured form. The newsletter is sent out to all staff so the most important news of every week reach approximately 11,000 addressees.

### Media relations

The external communication channels provide contact with citizens seeking justice, other legal professions, external agencies and the media. They are designed to present the judiciary’s operation, results, successes, objectives and plans. The NOJ and the members of the press spokespersons’ network keep in touch with the media on a daily basis.

In the first half of 2018, the media departments of courts responded a total of 680 media inquiries. In addition, the most efficient forms of media relations include press conferences held to communicate current topics and answer journalists’ questions efficiently. In the reporting period, appellate and regional courts held a total of 37 press conferences and 7 press breakfasts.



## Publications

The first half of 2018 witnessed the following publications:

- The 1st semi-annual report of the NOJ's President on 2017
- The 1st semi-annual report of the NOJ's President on 2017 in English
- Uniform client information publications (Organisation Guide, Going to Trial, Client Helper, Summoned as a Witness, Petition)
- Judges' job applications
- Leaders' job applications
- Flyers about the new procedure codes
- Courts in Focus photo book
- Court history publications
- New generation flyers
- Justice scoreboard in Hungarian and English
- THEMIS competition publication
- Other events
- Gallery
- Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary

The NOJ launched a research project in cooperation with the University of National Public Service to assess court press releases in terms of plain language and media suitability for the key objective to produce a practical guide or handbook that court press spokespersons and press secretaries can find useful in their daily work.

## Events, conferences, tenders

In the first half of 2018, courts organised a number of ceremonies, exhibitions, conferences, courses and other events open to the press, especially:

- Training for the new CrPC trainers (22 January)
- Inauguration of the Eger Regional Court's new building (3 April)
- Courts in Focus book presentation (26 April)
- Court press spokespersons' course (15 May)
- NOJ press talk (5 June)
- Court history exhibition in Edelény (11 June)
- Mathias I and Justice – a conference of court history (18–19 June)
- Digital Court Open Day (5 July)

## FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

On courts: <http://birosag.hu/en>

NOJ video library: <https://birosag.hu/en/video-gallery/videos>

NOJ official Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/obhbirosag](http://www.facebook.com/obhbirosag)

Open Court Program: <https://birosag.hu/en/open-court-programme>

## General meetings of judges

In the first half of 2018, each appellate and regional court held a press conference before the general meeting of judges where court leaders reported on their results in 2017. Each venue exhibited the winning pictures of the Courts in Focus Photo Competition. Similarly to 2017, a national report of a uniform design was prepared for the press to disclose the main results and successes of the year.

## Courts in Focus Photo Competition

The Courts in Focus Photo Competition aims at a creative presentation of the buildings, work and daily life of courts. Over the past four years, more than 230 applicants have submitted 1,200 photos, an average of 300 per year. On 26 April 2018, the National Office for the Judiciary presented the book *Courts in Focus* at the Robert Capa Contemporary Photography Centre. This exclusive book contains the most outstanding photos of each edition of the annual competition since 2014, over 150 by a total of 75 photographers.



## Open Court Program

In 2012, within the spirit of social responsibility, the NOJ launched the Open Court Program to help young people become legally conscious citizens and choose the judicial profession as necessary. The program primarily targets young people at high school, the 7th and 8th grades of primary school, and higher education.

In the first half of 2018, a total of 1,466 events were held for 528 schools and 32,158 students.

# TRAINING

## ORGANISATIONAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE TRAINING SYSTEM

In the first half of 2018, we developed the training system in two areas. On the one hand, we put in place software to provide administrative assistance to course management and registration in support of the training officers' network set up in 2015 which operates the central training system coordinated by appellate courts since 2017. In 2018, the changeover to the training management software took place gradually with the support of the HAJ as a key user and multiple in-depth practical courses. This development aims to reduce the needs for resources of our enhanced training activity with an accurate and nationally uniform training register and with a standardised training management process described in the relevant protocols. These measures are expected to make the overall training system more efficient.

On the other hand, we developed infrastructure. The judiciary has grown out of the HAJ's available training capacity. This raised the need for an extension. One way of achieving this was the rebuilding of Wing "C" of the HAJ. The swimming pool was replaced with a new restaurant and classroom without losing the original wellness function. Another project was HAJ-BALATON, a new training centre built in Balatonszemes. In the first half of 2018, using the results of the workshop involving courts, building development concepts and plans were made. We launched the pre-building authorisation procedure.



## CENTRAL TRAINING PLAN AND PROGRAMS

The increasingly coordinated system of successive courses has become fit for efficient communication between the smallest court unit and the HAJ as the NOJ's training unit.

In the first half of 2018, one of the most important tasks was to manage a series of courses on the new CrPC. This included trainers' training and a digital course on the new CrPC including video, audio and interactive materials, which we shared with students via the e-learning framework system used previously when it came to the CPC and the APC.



## KEY TARGET GROUPS OF CENTRAL COURSES

In 2018 the key target group that received special attention at the central courses was that of leaders. Likewise, similar emphasis has traditionally been laid on the new generation and priority has been accorded to the members and coordinators of national networks and the participants of international conferences.



## KEY FOCUS TOPICS OF CENTRAL COURSES

Key focus topics in the first half of 2018:

- **professional courses:** events about the practical aspects of the new CrPC, CPC and APC in effect from 2018, which determine the daily life of judges, secretaries, trainee judges and court clerks, and the practical use of the related electronic applications (digital court);
- **management skills development:** a course of administrative, technological and competence skills for leaders incorporating the experiences of the previous two years;
- **new generation:** overall preparation for the judicial profession, which goes beyond continuing education in substantive and procedural law to include the basic principles of law and society, the fundamental rules of ethics, integrity and conduct of judges, and the integration of newly-appointed professionals in the organisation. The program aims to prepare trainee judges for the Bar Examination and to provide practical training for secretaries and career-starter judges appointed for a fixed term;
- **national networks and programs:** special mention must be made of the improvement of the networks of court mediators, consultants, press spokespersons and training officers, and of the active management of the system of electronic procedure contact persons. Also, mention must be made of the events of the Open Court, Witness Care, Child Focused Justice programs and the courses on the operation of client centres built within the strategic program of courts as service providers;
- **case types subject to assignment and special case types:** in 2018 our key focus topics included fundamental rights, especially informational self-determination and freedom of information regarding juvenile criminal cases, cybercrime, the rights of disabled people, supported decision-making and guardianship actions;
- **scientific and international events:** we set a dual goal to increase court attendance at events organised by domestic and international partners and to increase the number of HAJ conferences with high-quality scientific contents.

## CENTRAL LOCAL AND REGIONAL COURSES

In addition to providing coordination and professional support to appellate courts and the regional divisions of administrative and labour courts, we continued the system of training weeks in 2018. We organised criminal, civil, administrative and labour training weeks with quality assurance by the HAJ, including compulsory training and, in response to the needs of local and regional courts, 16 types of recommended training in civil and administrative and labour law for 2,148 professionals.

In 2018 we continued preparations for the application of the procedure codes. We held compulsory courses for court clerks to present all provisions of the new CPC that are relevant for them. We organised practice oriented workshops at the appellate courts for 201 participants.

In preparation for the application of the CrPC, we held a total of 25 six-day courses on 150 training days for 1,565 criminal judges, court secretaries, trainee judges and other court staff at each appellate and regional court. In each appellate court region, an invitation was sent out to other legal institutions, specifically prosecutor's offices and bar associations.

In addition, we held the course "Introduction of the new Act on international private law" for 479 judges and court secretaries in a total of 6 venues.

In addition to the annual central professional courses, we launched small group courses for members of the Network of National Court Library Expert Coordinators and core court librarians on practical aspects of the application of the National Corvina Integrated Court Library System in the first half of 2018.

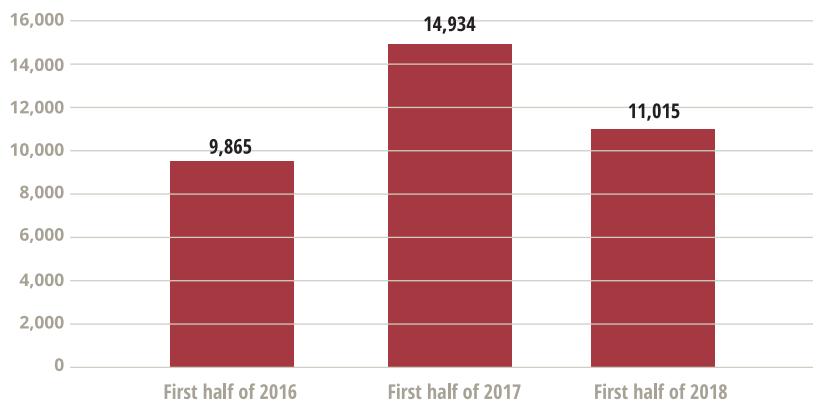
In summary, the local/regional courses coordinated by the HAJ included 38 compulsory and 39 recommended courses for a total of 4,403 participants on 203 training days.



## HAJ IN-HOUSE CENTRAL COURSES

In the first half of 2018, 268 central courses were held for 11,015 professionals including 191 HAJ central courses for a total of 6,612 people.

Number of attendants at central courses  
First half of 2016 – First half of 2018



The disclosed annual training program put HAJ courses in 7 main categories by focus topics and target groups including the professional courses. The first half of 2018 was spent on further preparation for the new procedure codes. In addition to classical legal training, we responded to the requirements for electronic procedures and efficient administration.

We created a Coospace platform for an increasing number of courses, which offer participants both continuously updated topics and the professional course materials.

In the first half of 2018, we continued to teach local course trainers. In addition to professional training, we aimed to develop skills required for the speaker's role as a special task with help received from members of the Network of Court Coaches and Trainers.

In implementing the central course to support the introduction of the new CrPC, we made professional audiovisual recordings of the lectures and used them to produce unprecedented electronic course materials linked to each presentation and podcasts for offline listening.

After the new CPC entered into force, we laid emphasis on its practical application in our course *"The New CPC in Practice – Training the Trainers"* on 9–10 July, to be followed by local/regional workshops in the second half of 2018.

A special conference was the court history event called *Mathias I and Justice* on 18–19 June 2018 for judges engaged in science and training activities. Held on the occasion of the King Mathias Memorial Year, this professional forum brought together renowned domestic researchers to present the role of Mathias I in general and legal history.

We paid special attention to administrative leaders as their management activities affect the system in its entirety. In the first half of 2018, we organised skills development courses for senior court leaders, specifically presidents and their deputies, offering them new skills together with an experience based professional discourse.



### Competitions, research, library

On 28 February 2018, the HAJ organised a symposium to conclude the *Mailáth György Scientific Competition* announced in the spirit of clarity in 2017, offering winners another opportunity to present their papers, now available as e-books on the central website of courts as in previous years.

In the first half of 2018, we announced the fifth edition of the *Mailáth György Scientific Competition* with the motto *Change and Stability in Court – 21st Century Challenges – "Tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis – Times are changed, we also are changed with them"* (Latin adage). In 2017 the fourth edition of the *Ráth György Court History and Tradition Competition* received 12 papers from 9 regional courts and 3 appellate courts, which were evaluated in 2018. The jury of court leaders and renowned legal historians supported all papers. In addition to the court history tour launched to popularise the competition, the NOJ provided funds for producing publications of the winning papers, organising conferences and exhibitions, restoring objects and places, and inaugurating memorial plaques.



During the 2018–2019 court history conference tour, the host of each venue (Szeged, Miskolc, Debrecen, Győr, Pécs and Budapest) will mention a few anniversaries to present the region's history of justice, the biography of outstanding judges, and historical research of court administration, the judiciary, and the judicial profession. In the first half of 2018, the program's events related to the 1928 Private Law Bill at the Szeged Appellate Court and to Act XLIII of 1928 on the extension of the competence of competent courts and the reform of their organisation at the Miskolc Regional Court. The event series is set to conclude in Budapest on 15 July 2019, on the 150th anniversary of the entry into force of Act IV of 1869 on the exercise of judicial power.

In the first half of 2018, the NOJ received 24 research and data applications concerning the judiciary. A number of EU funded research projects were launched to explore the enforcement of EU law. Also, legal students and PhD candidates often use data supplied by the NOJ for their scientific publications. The NOJ cooperated with a number of domestic research centres and universities in the projects so that they provide an objective picture of their subjects for both scientific and practical purposes and their findings could be used and integrated while meeting the criteria of judicial integrity.

The NOJ established the Network of National Court Library Expert Coordinators to support the operation of court libraries. In 2018 the network continued to extend its central services in line with the national program Electronic Information Service (EIS). This has offered courts access not only to a vast body of domestic literature but also to foreign databases.

In the first half of 2018, in addition to the annual central professional courses for court librarians, we held regional courses in local core libraries in line with local specificities.

## ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR TRAINEE JUDGES

In the first half of 2018, the 36 trainee judge positions received a total of 75 applications including 66 required to take the examination and 9 with a valid certificate or requesting transfer as a trainee judge to another court. In the first half of 2018, the clear wording of the call for applications prevented the submission of any invalid application. Of the successful applicants 32 were appointed trainee judges.

The new competence based testing created in 2016 had a positive impact on entrance examinations in the first half of 2018. Feedback from applicants and board members suggests that the examinations went smoothly and in good spirit but reflected the high professional requirements for trainee judges.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The NOJ and courts have maintained a wide range of permanent professional relationships with international organisations and foreign courts for multiple years. These collaborations offer judges and court secretaries the opportunity to become familiar with international trends and to exchange their skills.

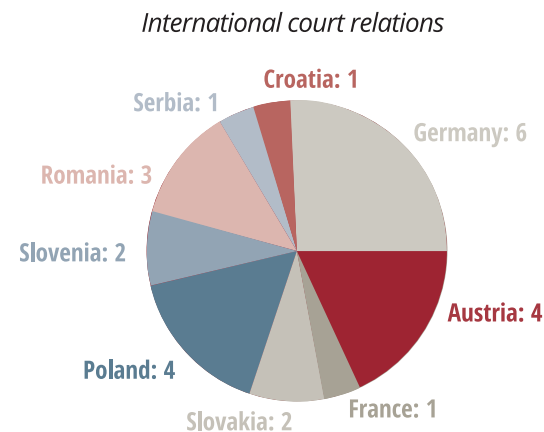
#### International relations of the NOJ

The NOJ is a member of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) and the Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary. Also, it maintains a regular relation with international organisations, including the Hague Conference on Private International Law, the European Judicial Network (EJN), and the Court of Justice of the European Union (ECJ). In judicial training, the Hungarian Academy of Justice closely cooperates with a number of organisations including the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), the Academy of European Law (ERA), and the International Legal Cooperation Foundation (IRZ). The NOJ supports the work of international judges' associations, the membership of judges and court associations and their participation in international organisations, including the European Association of Labour Court Judges (EALCJ), the Association of European Administrative Judges (AEAJ) and the International Association of Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ).

#### International relations of courts

Of the 25 appellate and regional courts,

- 15 courts maintain
- independent bilateral professional relationships in 9 different countries.



### Participation in the work of international organisations, international assignments

The judiciary's representatives have attended the annual general assemblies of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) and the meetings of exchange program coordinators since Hungary's EU accession.

The NOJ designated international contact persons as contributors to the work of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN), the Court Relations Network of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the EUROJUST Independent Joint Supervisory Body.

#### Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary

The NOJ has hosted the Secretariat of the Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary since 2015. The Hungarian members have also been members of the governing body since 2017. The Network held its annual conference and general assembly on 21–22 June 2018 in Budva, Montenegro. The governing body held a preparatory meeting on 18 April 2018 in Tirana. The Secretariat in Budapest has considerably contributed to preparing and implementing both professional meetings. The general assembly in Budva re-elected the Hungarian members to host the Secretariat of the Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary so the NOJ will continue this activity for another 3 years.



#### Hosting delegations

The NOJ's President wants to make sure that the Hungarian judiciary can find out about the judicial practices of other states and that foreign partner authorities can receive appropriate and detailed information about the Hungarian court system.

To this end, in the first half of 2018, the NOJ's President and the NOJ hosted a number of visitors and delegations:

- a delegation of court secretaries and career-starter judges in the AIAKOS exchange program,
- a delegation of the Mongolian Ambassador,
- a delegation of the Thai Office for the Judiciary,
- a delegation the Algerian Ministry of Justice,
- a delegation of the Vietnamese Supreme People's Court,
- a delegation of international attorneys of the law office association called LawLink,
- a delegation of IT law experts of the Vietnam Socialist Republic's Supreme People's Court.

Special mention must be made of the AIAKOS exchange program of the European Judicial Training Network (EJTN). This sent a group of 14 court secretaries and career-starter judges to Hungary between 14 and 18 May 2018 to get some insight into the operation of the Hungarian judiciary.

AIAKOS is a program for trainee judges, court secretaries and career-starter judges and prosecutors to learn about other justice systems and courses, extend their knowledge about EU laws and judicial cooperation, and to establish personal relationships for use during their professional careers. The five-day event offered them some insight into the professional activities of the Supreme Prosecutor's Office, the Curia, the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court and the NOJ.

#### International events organised by the HAJ

In the first half of 2018, the HAJ hosted the digital competition law course of the Academy of European Law (ERA) in an EU-funded project in partnership with the NOJ on 4–5 June 2018.





### International courses, conferences, scholarship programs

In the first half of 2018, 88 judges, 28 court secretaries and 9 other court staff participated in a total of 178 foreign study trips, conferences and courses, and domestic international events.

Of these professionals a total of 19 went to and attended 25 Hungarian international professional meetings, conferences and working group meetings on behalf of the NOJ.

Within the EJTN's short-term two-week exchange program, 4 Hungarian judges made foreign study trips. Within the bilateral exchange program, 5 judges of the Budapest Metropolitan Appellate Court visited the Munich District Court. Within the EJTN's long-term one-year judge exchange program, 1 judge went to the European Court of Human Rights.

### THEMIS trainee judges' competition

Hungary was present in two rounds of the EJTN THEMIS trainee judges' competition, in semi-finals C and D. Semi-final C entitled *European Cooperation in Civil Cases* was held in Thessaloniki between 4 and 7 June 2018. The international jury awarded the special prize to the Hungarian team for the best oral presentation. Its successful preparation received contributions from professional mentor Dr. Bálint Kovács and the NOJ.

After the successful organisation of the 2017 edition, the HAJ hosted again semi-final D entitled *Judges' Ethics and Conduct* of the EJTN THEMIS trainee judges' competition between 3 and 6 July 2018. After its Czech and French rivals, the Hungarian team came in third and qualified for the final in Paris. The team's professional mentor was Dr. Dóra Virág Dudás. The NOJ Special Prize for the most creative presentation was awarded to the Lithuanian team.



### Scholarship programs of the NOJ's President

The NOJ's President has created a tradition by providing judges and court secretaries an opportunity to work as interns at the Academy of European Law and the Court of Justice of the European Union for several years. The knowledge and experiences obtained find their way to the judiciary through the exchange of knowledge by scholarship holders after their return. In the first half of 2018, the program covered two judges working for the Court of Justice of the European Union in Luxembourg and one court secretary at the Academy of European Law in Trier.

In the spring of 2018, another call for scholarship applications was announced. As a result, two applicants will start a 5-month internship from October 2018.

In the first half of 2018, another group of court secretaries and trainee judges speaking English and German participated in the program *Use Your Language Skills and Creativity*. This year 28 people were selected and performed three types of responsibilities (focus topic, link monitoring, revision of translations) for a language bonus.

### Werbőczy Scholarship Program

By reforming the existing scholarship programs and creating new opportunities, the President of the National Office for the Judiciary established the Werbőczy Scholarship Program in 2018.

#### Werbőczy Mundus

In the Werbőczy Mundus Scholarship Program, the NOJ's President offers internships to judges and court secretaries at the Court of Justice of the European Union in Luxembourg, to judges, court secretaries and trainee judges at the Academy of European Law in Trier, and to judges at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

#### Werbőczy Lingua

This scholarship program aims to communicate international results to the domestic judiciary, to communicate the Hungarian judiciary's results on an international level and to continuously develop the required professional language skills.

#### Werbőczy Universitas

Established as a result of the extending cooperation between the NOJ and domestic law schools, this scholarship program supports judges to graduate in certain legal specialties.

#### Werbőczy Schola

This cooperation between the NOJ and the lecturers and scientific workshops of domestic legal faculties covers matters related to the administration of justice, especially its organisation.

## NETWORK OF EUROPEAN LEGAL ADVISORS

The Network of European Legal Advisors (NELA) has worked since 2013 under the regulation issued by the NOJ's President to assist the appropriate application of European law and to present the legal practices of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights to Hungarian judges.

A key goal of the network is to ensure a smooth flow of information about European legal matters between the Hungarian judiciary and the EU institutions and to offer judges fast and efficient professional assistance in applying the law.

The advisors' work is directed and organised by one coordinator and by one deputy coordinator for secretaries in each branch (civil, criminal, administrative, labour). Currently, the Network has 54 advisor judges and 23 advisor secretaries who receive their mandate, except for the Curia and the Budapest Metropolitan Regional Court, in line with the areas of competence of appellate courts, and judges are given trial day discounts, accessory and language bonuses, and secretaries are given target benefits for their work. They serve for 3 years after an application-based multistage selection process by authority of the NOJ's President.

In the first half of 2018, among other events:

- NOJ Instruction 9/2016 (17 October) on the Network of European Legal Advisors was revised due to a change in the areas of competence of regional administrative and labour divisions,
- the Network launched its *Working Papers*, articles longer than a blog entry but shorter than a study, available online and hence capable of quickly responding to current events,
- the advisor secretaries started to monitor CJEU and ECHR judgements of Hungarian relevance, to prepare their summary and then to upload them to the Network's Legal Practice Monitoring Intranet,
- the Network launched its newsletter to inform courts about the activities of legal advisors,
- the HAJ hosted the first two-day course of the Network of European Legal Advisors on 8–9 February 2018 including professional presentations followed by a presentation skills development course for secretaries,
- the HAJ hosted the Network's professional conference on digitisation between 22 and 24 May 2018.





## FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Training centers: <https://birosag.hu/en/training-centers>

Training system: <https://birosag.hu/en/training-system>

Balkan Network: <https://birosag.hu/en/balkan-and-euro-mediterranean-network-councils-judiciary>

English version of the central website of courts: <http://www.birosag.hu/en>

Courts and Communication International Conference: <http://courtsandcommunication.hu/>





## OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY

The NOJ's President exercises her powers and performs her obligations through the operation of the NOJ. The NOJ is the central organisation of court administration. The NOJ is responsible for directing, organising, monitoring and coordinating the tasks stated in the report, specifically:

- central court administration,
- management of the judiciary's budget worth tens of billions of forints,
- central headcount management of the judiciary employing nearly 12,000 people,
- nearly 200 court buildings,
- ensuring the operability and operation of thousands of IT devices and networks,
- managing, implementing and maintaining EU tenders worth hundreds of millions of forints.

The NOJ performed these responsibilities with 294 actual employees, 2.51% of the judiciary's headcount. Roughly one-third of this headcount primarily deals with the operation of the NOJ as an institution. Judges and court staff tasked with central administration also contributed to the NOJ's special administrative responsibilities. In the first half of 2018, their number was 261. In addition, 2 court secretaries and 2 trainee judges were seconded to work for the NOJ.

**The NOJ's headcount by positions**

Positions	Headcount	Rate
judges	35	11.90%
court secretaries	20	6.80%
leaders	54	18.37%
officers with higher qualifications	92	31.29%
officers with secondary qualifications	57	19.39%
blue collar workers	33	11.23%
trainee judges	3	1.02%
<b>NOJ's final headcount as of 30 June 2018</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The workload of the NOJ's staff in the first half of 2018 in figures:

- 33,179 documents were filed,
- 60,844 NGO reports were received,
- 55,205 people in guardianship were registered and 22 people made a preliminary legal statement.

### FURTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Judicial administration: <https://birosag.hu/en/judicial-administration>





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