



SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
PRESIDENT  
OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE  
FOR THE JUDICIARY  
2014.





## DEAR READER,

The efforts made so far by the National Office for the Judiciary towards the strategic objectives set in 2012 brought new direction into the development, swift changes, palpable and quantifiable results as well as organisational stability into the Hungarian court system.

The priority objective to ensure that independent judges fulfil their constitutional duties requires support from multiple directions and sets a new challenge for the National Office for the Judiciary. Facilitating the traceability of a fast-changing legal framework as well as providing an adequate staff management, worthy working environment and up-to-date work tools are all essential to make sure that the administration of justice is both timely and highly professional.

In order to improve the efficiency and integrity of the organisation, new working methods and IT developments appeared within the organisation. The formation of various working groups, the launching of pilot programmes and the development of professional networks promoting cooperation are all to strengthen a project-based approach for the purposes of efficient work.

The achievements continuously enhance the service provider characteristic of courts, which is an extremely important social and organisational expectation. The National Office for the Judiciary ensures that courts are functioning to provide high-standard services to the clients which meet the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century by developing existing nationwide programmes, introducing the collection and dissemination of good practices and sharing experiences gained during audits.



This report is prepared in compliance with the obligations under law, to inform the bodies supervising the operation of the National Office for the Judiciary. In addition to fulfilling this obligation, the publication follows the standard good practice established earlier that it gives a brief and well-structured summary of the first half of the year. This way the report serves as an overview of the current situation of the judicial organisation, results attained so far and future plans, for all of its readers.

The success achieved is the result of collaboration, which can only be realised through mutual support and care. Accordingly, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all of my colleagues working in the judicial organisation, whose hard and persevering work contributed a lot to achieving our objectives.

*dr. Tünde Handó*  
*President*  
*National Office for the Judiciary*



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

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





## **JUDICIAL ACTIVITY OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION**

*(pages 3-5)*

Among the main factors affecting the number of cases, it should be highlighted from the 1st half of 2014 that the number of cases received at the Company Registry Courts has returned to normal after the one-off vast number of cases received in the 1st half of 2013.

As a result of revisions proposed by the NOJ,

- the number of criminal cases falling under the competence of district courts of first instance dropped by 24%, the number of high-priority criminal cases of first instance decreased in the same proportion,
- and the regional concentration of lawsuits appealing cases concerning unfair contract terms fell as well: instead of 75%, the share of the Budapest Capital Regional Court from such cases was 49%,
- while due to the alteration of the territorial jurisdiction of regional courts of appeal, the share of the Budapest-Capital Regional Court of Appeal from applications to the regional court of appeal decreased to 54% from 58%.

### **RECEIPT OF CASES**

In the 1st half of 2014 more than 771 thousand cases were received by courts, which is 209 thousand cases less than it was in the 1st half of 2013 (980 thousand). This is because in 2014 the vast amount of incoming cases experienced in the year before was not present anymore.

### **CONCLUSION OF CASES**

In the first half of 2014 courts concluded a total of 810 thousand cases. This means a drop of 15% compared to the figures of the 1st half of 2013 owing to the significant decrease in the number of cases received by the Company Registry Court, however, courts concluded more cases than they received in the first half of 2014 as well. It should be noted that the number of concluded cases exceeded the number of cases received by more than 19 thousand.



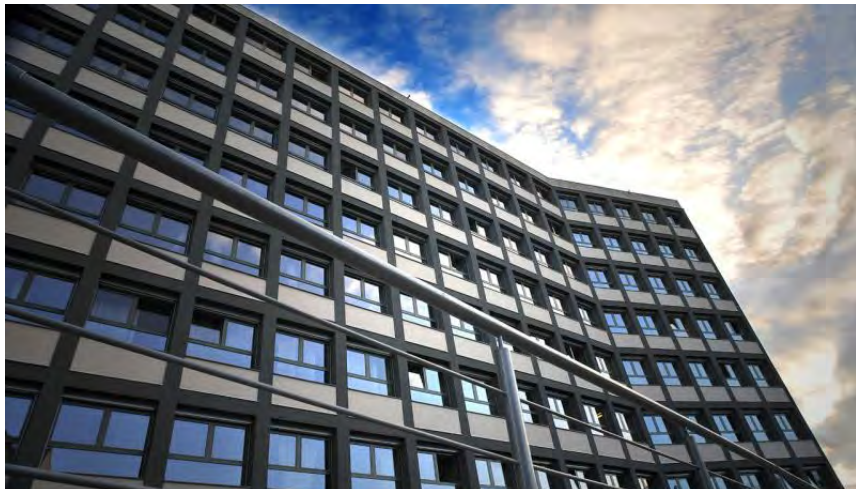
#### TIMELINESS

86% of lawsuits were concluded within one year from the date of receipt by the courts. The number of commercial lawsuits of second instance and criminal cases before the regional courts of appeal that were concluded within one year have increased by more than 6% as compared to the 1st half of 2013.

In addition, 90% of lawsuits were concluded within 1 year at the regional courts of appeal in all divisions. This ratio is over 95% in cases of second instance before the regional courts. In total, the number of lawsuits concluded within 1 year fell by 1.2% in the reporting period.

#### CASE BACKLOGS

At the end of 2013, 319 thousand cases were pending, which number decreased to 307 thousand by the end of the 1st half of 2014 constituting a drop of 4%. This has a beneficial effect on the timeliness of pending cases.



## ADMINISTRATION OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

*(pages 6-14)*

### CHANGES IN THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

*(pages 6-7)*

#### ADMINISTRATIVE AND LABOUR COURTS

At the administrative and labour courts established in 2013 a total of 195 judges are administering justice.

The number of administrative and labour cases received by courts also fell in the 1st half of 2014. The number of concluded cases exceeded the number of cases received by 20% and 4.7% in case of labour and administrative cases respectively, thus

- the number of pending labour cases decreased by 15%
- and the number of pending administrative cases by 1.6%.

The duration of pending cases is continuously declining, since administrative and labour courts have made remarkable progress in this respect in the 1st half of 2014, which is illustrated by the following chart.

#### REGIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND LABOUR DEPARTMENTS

The duties of the six professional bodies established in the first half of 2013 are to improve the professional standard of administering justice and ensure the uniformity of the application of law.



In addition to partial or full sessions and conferences of the colleges organised locally, the regional administrative and labour departments held national discussions and consultations twice in the first half of 2014. The heads of regional departments meet at least every two months under the organization of NOJ to coordinate and harmonize their efforts. The professional forums create an opportunity to discuss issues and different legal practices in various regions, monitor the legal practices of the European Court and strengthen the relationship with the European professional advisory network.

#### CENTRAL MISDEMEANOUR' COURTS

In the 1st half of 2014 the NOJ commenced the assessment of working methods of the misdemeanour division. The results justified the advantages of centralisation, which are the following:

- concentrated IT, administrative and technical support can be provided,
- enabling the standardisation of the application of law,
- communications with partner authorities can be achieved in a concentrated manner and at a higher administrative level,
- infrastructural advantages (bringing the defendants to court at the location of police jail),
- more efficient use of workforce.

In the 1st half of 2014 centralisation was fully implemented at the Budapest Environs Regional Court and partially at the Szombathely Regional Court, where a new district court is involved gradually at an interval of every 3-4 months. In the following period this centralisation shall be carried out at each regional court, since this will enable the employment of court clerks in other areas as planned.





## MANAGEMENT OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

*(pages 8-9)*

### NUMBER OF COURT EXECUTIVES

On 30 June 2014 there were 448 court executives appointed for a definite term and 306 for an indefinite term, that is, a total of 754 court executives within the judicial system in accordance with the approved head count; the NOJ's President has the power to appoint 119 out of the 754 court executives.

## INSTRUMENTS OF JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

*(pages 10-12)*

### DECISIONS OF THE NOJ'S PRESIDENT

The President of the NOJ issued 15 regulations, 3 recommendations and 271 staff decisions up until 30 June 2014 by taking into consideration the opinion of the National Judicial Council (NJC) and the courts.

The regulations relating mainly to the administration of courts are particularly noteworthy.

The regulatory efforts in process in the 1st half of 2014 are the following:

- new regulation on the qualification of judges,
- regulations relating to court mediation and registration of persons under the charge of a guardian,
- recommendations on the allocation of cases,
- forms on informing and warning the minors participating in court proceedings.

### TARGET ASSESSMENTS AND AUDITS

A target assessment enables the in-depth inspection of a given area of administration. In the first half of 2014, the President of the NOJ ordered that target assessments and audits are to be conducted



based on the reports of heads of regional courts, complaints or reports in the public interest.

### WORKING GROUPS

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

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

### PILOT PROGRAMMES

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

### NETWORKS

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

Following the restructuring of professional advisory network of the EU, the NOJ started establishing the network of spokespersons and press secretaries, contact persons of the Open Court Programme as well as the network for submitting opinions on legislation.



### SHARING OF GOOD PRACTICES

In order to ensure more efficient work, the NOJ considers it a high-priority responsibility to collect, analyse, share and facilitate the introduction of good practices prepared throughout the country. The good practices received from courts have been categorised (e.g. procedural and management support; administration, work organisation; court services; customer relations, etc.).

The following measures were taken to utilise good practices:

- the preparation of the complete update of the structure and content of the 'Good practices' menu item on the website,
- collecting further good practices,
- monitoring application,
- organising conferences and workshops.

### MANAGING COMPLAINTS AND REPORTS IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

The NOJ pays special attention to the adequate management of complaints and reports in the public interest. These are also important because they might point to system-level errors, which could be remedied through them.

### COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

One of the objectives of the NOJ's President is to cooperate with other legal professions and support the spreading of good practices in the professional relationships between particular courts and universities.



## NATIONWIDE PROGRAMMES

(pages 13-14)

The NOJ launched several nationwide programmes to strengthen the service provider characteristic of courts in recent years. The main goal of this is to draw more attention to the traditionally less distinguished, but highly important areas within the everyday tasks of applying law, such as the sensitive treatment of minors and victims involved in court proceedings.

Nationwide programmes enable the widening of the applicability of alternative dispute resolution methods, introduce the work of the judicial organisation and make citizens more aware of legal regulations in the course of participating in legal proceedings.

### OPEN COURT

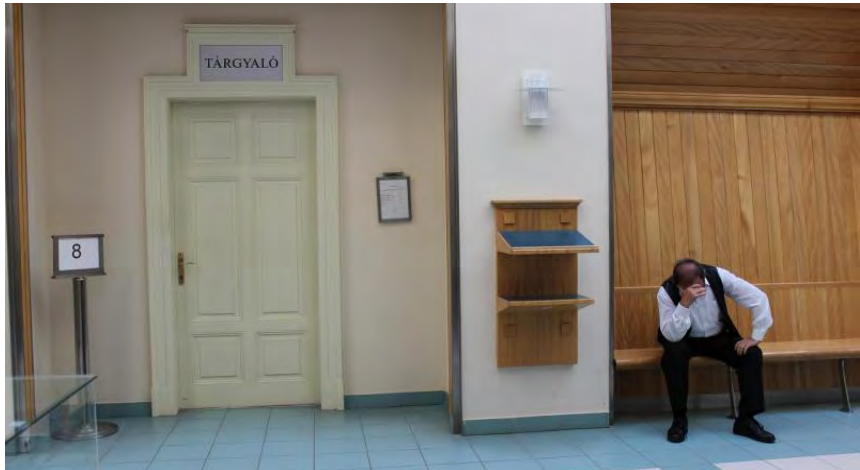
As part of social responsibility, courts shall actively participate in the spreading of legal knowledge. The programme launched by NOJ brings initiatives and good practices previously only sporadic to a national level. In the framework of the programme students are familiarised with the legal system, the process of administering justice and judicial institutions during home room classes, mock trials and court visits.

The number of participants is showing a sharply increasing tendency. Accordingly, it can be established that not only more open court events are organised, but also the number of their participants is constantly on the rise.

### CHILD-CENTRED ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

In order to ensure that the best interests of minors and children are served in the course of court proceedings, the President of the NOJ put special emphasis on organising central trainings and conferences on the issue.

Considering that the vast majority of juvenile offenders are sufferers or victims of criminal offenses or domestic violence, the training of



judges acting in criminal cases against young offenders is also closely linked to the subject.

Specific trainings in the 1st half of 2014 were in particular the following:

- two-day-long training on child-centred administration of justice in English
- three-day-long conference of child-centred administration of justice.

Our aim is to have a hearing room for children in all courts which employ more than 7 judges. In the framework of implementing the Child-centred Administration of Justice Programme, the realization of such rooms in individual courts is continuous.

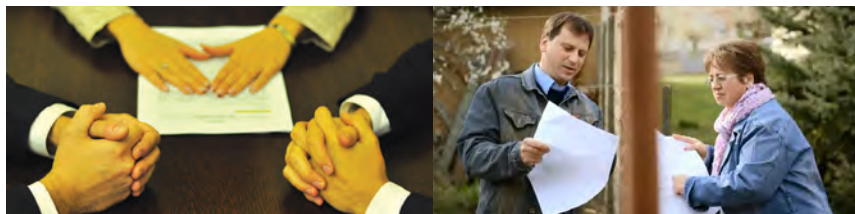
#### WITNESS CARE

The objective of the programme is to provide assistance to witnesses subpoenaed to appear before the court confidently, being aware of their rights and without fear. Some of the good practices existing previously, but only used at a few courts are sought to spread and strengthen on a national level by way of the programme.

The number of participants of witness care

- was continuously rising in the 1st half of 2014,
- the judicial employees appointed for witness care exceeded 100,
- witness caretakers were appointed at 15 courts,
- the number of witness rooms and witness waiting rooms continued to increase,





- several courts adopted internal regulations in this matter, and
- relevant content is continuously being supplemented at the web-sites of courts.

Victim protection is an important element of witness care, and

- for this reason the main measures, achievements and good practices of courts were collected and subjected to analysis to ensure the close cooperation of NOJ and the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice primarily in the area of victim protection;
- In 2014 a conference on victim protection was held with the participation of partner authorities.

#### COURT MEDIATION

The institution of court mediation is to facilitate the settling of disputes of clients received at courts within the shortest time possible and to the satisfaction of clients. This is possible since the second half of 2012. The pioneers of court mediation were judges retiring in 2012. As a result of continuous trainings more and more court clerks were appointed as mediators. The goal is to make court mediation directly available for clients at all courts which employ more than 7 judges. This could be an important instrument in ensuring the timely administration of justice and spreading a new culture of resolving disputes. In such procedures the parties can settle their cases in a responsible and amicable manner after taking into account their possibilities.

At the end of the 1st half of 2014

- at 20 courts
- 55 court clerks and 15 judges were appointed as court mediators,
- 474 open days for clients were held,
- 700 clients were received and
- 273 mediation procedures were conducted, out of which
- 176 procedures, that is, nearly 65% of all procedures were concluded with an agreement.



## THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF THE FUNCTIONING OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

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*(pages 15-18)*

### THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF NOJ RELATING TO ISSUING OPINIONS ON LEGAL REGULATIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR LEGISLATION

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#### RECEIPT OF CASES

A total of 107 cases concerning the issuance of opinions on legal regulations were received by NOJ in the 1st half of 2014.

#### THE AMENDMENTS TO LEGAL REGULATIONS SUGGESTED BY NOJ AND APPROVED

In the 1st half of 2014 the NOJ performed preparatory work regarding legislation in multiple subjects, and collected suggestions and then displayed them in a structured form. A lot was achieved as a result of former amendment and legislative initiatives in the subject period.

Based on the suggestions of the NOJ's President of 2013, the amendments coming into effect in the 1st half of 2014 are pertaining to the following:

- civil procedure,
- criminal procedure,
- complaints and reports in the public interest.

The suggestions coming into effect as amendments in the 1st half of 2014 of the President of NOJ related to the following, e.g.:

- misdemeanour procedures,
- registration of companies,
- list of procedural costs.



### CONCEPT ON ISSUING OPINIONS ON LEGAL REGULATIONS

The NOJ's activities are supported by a small team of heads of departments and judges in the course of giving opinions subject to general procedural rules or priority rules, whose inclusion enabled the President of the NOJ to make comments on the merits of all cases on amendments directly affecting the administration of justice.

As a result of the improvement, a fast process concerning issuing opinions on legal regulations coordinated by the NOJ is expected to be established as of 2015 that would enable the organisation to respond to the requests of ministries in preparation of legislative acts in a form that can be used directly in the course of codification and with comments that are based on the knowledge base of the court organisation.

### MONITORING LAWS

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

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

The NOJ is systematically and continuously monitoring and publishing judicial initiatives since early 2014, which are forwarded to the Court of Justice of the European Union and the Constitutional Court.

### CODIFICATION OF PROCEDURAL LAW

The preparation of technical contribution to the development of a new civil procedural law and criminal procedural law was commenced in the subject period.



## **HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION**

*(pages 19-22)*

### **THE DIVISIONS OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION**

The number of staff employed in the judicial organisation is approx. 11,000, which can be broken down on 30 June 2014 as follows:

	Number of employees			
	30 June 2013		30 June 2014	
	Approved	Actual	Approved	Actual
Judges	2875	2790	2910	2815
Court clerks	771	723	776	764
Trainee judges	359	274	348	252
Judicial employees *	7017	6991	7073	7019
total	11,022	10,778	11,107	10,850

\*(excluding court clerks and trainee judges)

### **SUGGESTIONS ON THE EXTENSION OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF COURT CLERKS AND ADMINISTRATORS**

In order to discharge the duties of courts under the Constitution as well as to ensure the optimal use and distribution of human resources as strategic objectives, the President of the NOJ, exercising her power to make legislative proposals, made several independent suggestions relating to relieving the burdens of judges by widening the responsibilities of court clerks, trainee judges and administrators.

Suggestions for the extension of the scope of responsibilities of court clerks are related to liquidation and bankruptcy proceedings, and could clerks would also be entitled to order and review the institutional medical treatment of psychiatric patients.

The suggestions to widen the competence of court administrators and trainee judges apply to procedures of companies.



## TRAINING

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(pages 23-25)

### CENTRAL TRAININGS

It is a strategic objective of the President of the NOJ to develop a training system and establish cooperation with other legal professions. The number of central trainings held at the Hungarian Academy of Justice and their attendees continued to rise.

### LOCAL AND REGIONAL TRAININGS ON THE NEW CIVIL CODE

Following regional presentations on the new Civil Code held at the domiciles of regional courts of appeal, selected judges attended a four-week central training, then in early 2014 these judges passed on their knowledge to judges, court clerks and trainee judges at local training sessions held in courts. In supplementing local training sessions an electronic distance education session was prepared that was obligatory for all judges, court clerks and trainee judges of the civil division and examination had to be taken and passed.

### COOPERATION WITH OTHER LEGAL PROFESSIONS

The President of the NOJ signed a training cooperation agreement with the President of the Hungarian Chamber of Civil Law Notaries and the President of the Budapest Bar Association on 20 February 2014. In training sessions held in the framework of this cooperation, a total of 2,169 attorneys and notaries public participated in all modules combined. The electronic distance education material developed for judges was also made available to the chamber and the bar association. Similar training cooperation efforts were implemented at individual courts.





#### TRAININGS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

In the 1st half of 2014 four professional trainings were held in English language with the main topics of

- cross-border contractual obligations and non-contractual obligations,
- child-centred administration of justice, and
- active repentance.

Another English language self-awareness training was held titled 'BE Intelligent'.

The sessions were attended by a total of 65 Hungarian and 78 foreign judges and court clerks.

#### LANGUAGE TRAININGS

Language skills are currently serious impediments in terms of access to foreign language materials and participation in international events, therefore the NOJ contacted language schools to improve the general command of language by having English, German and French language courses organised, which can be attended by judges and judicial employees at the courts where they work.

The NOJ participated in numerous other projects where Hungarian judges were given the opportunity to attend legal language seminars abroad. In the 1st half of 2014

- 3 persons attended an EU legal English language training, and
- 3 persons attended a training aimed at the improvement of vocabulary relating to cooperation in the area of criminal and civil law.



## **INTEGRITY OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION**

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*(pages 26-28)*

### **THE DISCIPLINARY SITUATION OF JUDGES**

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#### SERVICE TRIBUNAL

In the 1st half of 2014 15 procedures were initiated before the service tribunal of first instance (disciplinary court). The service tribunal found the judge negligent and imposed disciplinary punishment in 6 cases.

#### CRIMINAL PROCEDURES AGAINST JUDGES

No criminal proceedings were initiated against judges in the 1st half of 2014.

#### LAWSUITS AGAINST COURTS

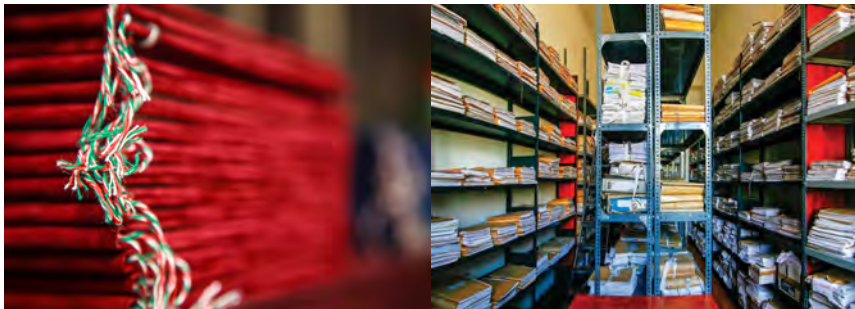
In the 1st half of 2014

- 373 cases were received, and
- 746 pending cases and
- 189 cases concluded with final judgment were registered.

In the 1st half of 2014 the courts represented by the NOJ won lawsuits in 94% of the cases.

#### CODE OF ETHICS

The Judges' Code of Ethics coming into effect on 1 January 2015 was adopted unanimously by the NJC at its formal session of 10 November 2014.



#### SWISS-HUNGARIAN COOPERATION PROGRAMME

In the framework of the programme up until 30 June 2014

- 35 new baggage inspection X-ray equipment and
- 68 metal-detector gates were installed.

Simultaneously with putting new equipment into operation, 6 baggage inspection X-ray devices were relocated. In the 2nd half of 2014 the development will continue as planned.

#### TRANSPARENCY IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES

In the 1st half of 2014 the NOJ conducted 34 public procurement procedures worth net HUF 1,430 million in order to achieve strategic objectives, which is 3.5 times more than the number of procedures in the 1st half of 2013.

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

#### INTERNAL AUDITING OF COURTS

It is also the NOJ's task to coordinate the internal audits of the court system. To this end, methods were developed in the 1st half of 2014. In line with the standardised methodology, the NOJ makes a summary analysis of conducted audits in the 2nd half of 2014.



## **COMMUNICATION OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION**

*(pages 29-32)*

Tasks related to communication within the judicial organisation are fulfilled and coordinated by spokespersons and press officers working at regional courts, regional courts of appeal and the Curia (Supreme Court of Hungary).

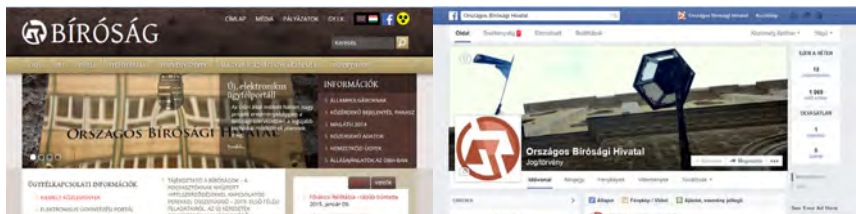
### **MAIN OBJECTIVES OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

The main objectives of external and internal communication in the 1st half of 2014 were the following:

- revision of the regulations on the press information activity of NOJ and the press service of courts' central websites and strengthening the system of press officers;
- developing internet and intranet sites and creating thematic sub-pages;
- strengthening the use of social media;
- providing continuous and comprehensible information on the operation and plans of the NOJ;
- introducing a more transparent, rationalised, efficient and new judicial system; presenting the necessity of client-oriented, faster and more accurate procedures and the improving standards of public services; ensuring the publicity of decision-making and emphasising the service provider characteristic of courts in line with the strategic objective of the President of the NOJ.

### **PRESS RELEASES ORGANISED BY THE NOJ**

The NOJ strives to provide information to journalists interested in the administration of justice on issues related to the central management of courts on a daily basis. The national press releases in the 1st half of 2014 are shown in the following chart.



Medium	1st half of 2013	1st half of 2014
Online	48	790
Printed	24	92
TV	15	39
Radio	35	45
Announcements	23	27
Corrections	4	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>993</b>

For further information visit:

<http://www.birosag.hu/en>

<https://www.facebook.com/obhbirosag>





## IT SYSTEM AND SUPPORT OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

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*(pages 33-34)*

### OPERATION

In the reporting period the NOJ continuously provided the IT services of the national network (address book services, mailing services, printing services, file servicing, sentinel auditing, management, firewall, central anti-virus system, email-web protection).

### WORKSTATIONS

In the 1st half of 2014 the workstations procured in the year before that in the framework of EU projects were gradually distributed, and the NOJ's pool of equipment was renewed and new devices were purchased from the NOJ's budget.

### TRAINING

In the area of the IT development of the training system an e-learning educational material editor module was introduced, which is suitable for application in distance education, self-education and administering examinations.

Trainings on IT were organised, e.g. IT know-how related to electronic procedures, information security training for judges and IT professionals.



## **PREMISES OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION**

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*[\(pages 35-38\)](#)*

Courts in Hungary

- take up a total of 186 premises
- with a floor area of 438,892 m<sup>2</sup>.

Out of the above 154 buildings with a floor area of altogether 418,160 m<sup>2</sup> are used for the purpose of administering justice.

### **CONSTRUCTIONS, INVESTMENTS AND PLANS**

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

### **GENERAL PROGRAMMES OF THE NOJ RELATING TO BUILDINGS**

In early 2014 the tender calling for minor, internal improvements by the NOJ at the end of 2013 was successfully closed. As a result, renovations of sanitary units, indoor painting works, repairs and minor developments in air-conditioning were implemented all over the country.

One of the strategic objectives of the President of the NOJ is the simplification of having access to courts, hence enhancing the service provider nature of courts towards clients. For this, such areas shall be created where clients can sense that they are given due attention and high-quality service right at the moment of entering. To this end, client centres with a standardised design were created in the 1st half of 2014 in numerous court buildings.



## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

[\*\(pages 39-40\)\*](#)

The projected grant accepted by the National Assembly for 2014 is HUF 87,013.1 million, which is higher than the original grant in 2013.

The court system received an EU funding of HUF 1,045.6 million in the 1st half of 2014 in addition to its budgetary support and own income, which funding was mainly spent on purchasing equipment.

### MEASURES TO SUPPORT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The President of the NOJ and the courts strove to promote an efficient and economical management of resources in the 1st half of 2014 through the following means:

- the continued collection of good practices on cost-saving and forwarding them to institutions;
- in order to continuously assess and analyse the liquidity of courts and making managerial decisions, monthly request for information containing the estimations of revenues and expenditures and payments made outlined in the accounting report, was introduced in the 1st half of 2014;
- postal deliveries are fulfilled by in-house employees at numerous institutions and postage-franking machines were purchased to reduce postage costs. Costs show a decline of 5% compared to the same period of last year;
- cleaning and security services (reception service) are performed by in-house employees at numerous institutions. In addition to cost-saving, this is more advantageous from the aspect of security as well;
- the collection of observations and suggestions relating to the regulations on resource management and revisions by the Resource Management working group were done continuously.



## **EU PROGRAMMES AND TENDERS**

*(pages 41-43)*

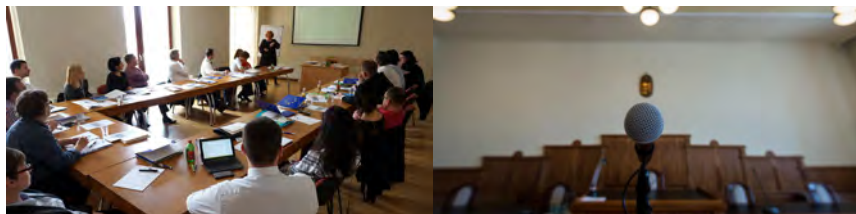
### **IT AND TECHNICAL PROJECTS**

A modern, efficient and fast administration of justice is in everyone's interest. For this, an adequate IT infrastructure and up-to-date software are needed.

In the framework of pending projects approximately 3,195 workstations and 68 servers were purchased, while in the project aimed at improving the security of courts 1000 PCs, 2 Blade servers and 165 network devices and hardware firewall systems were procured.

#### **MESSAGING PROJECT**

The work of judges is assisted by the Integrated Judicial Information System (BIIR). It is the distinguished duty of NOJ to ensure the continued development of this system and its harmonisation with the changing legislation. The provision of up-to-date information to heads of courts is facilitated by the data and statistics of the Manager Information System (VIR).



In this project our goal is

- to develop an interface enabling the more transparent use of the BIIR system,
- to develop a warning function in relation to procedural deadlines,
- to develop automatic datasheet filling functions using data recorded in the course of registration, and
- to ensure the provision of more comprehensive statistics to managers by restructuring the VIR system.

#### CORRESPONDENCE PROJECT

One of the strategic objectives of the President of the NOJ is to make the administration of justice and judicial work more transparent and predictable. By way of modern technical solutions generated in this project, the citizens' trust in the work of courts might become stronger.

The implementation of this project will

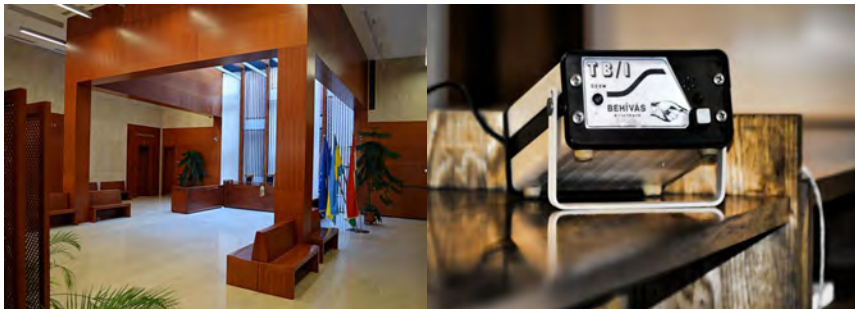
- enable the submission of judicial complaints around-the-clock,
- give online information to clients on the expected length of lawsuits in each case,
- enable a more accurate and up-to-date document management within the judicial administration,
- establish figures making the assessment of judges' workload feasible,
- enable the standardisation of the judicial internal database and the fine-tuning of IT application.

#### COURIER PROJECT

It is the strategic objective of the President of the NOJ to simplify access to courts. As a result of the project,

- clients may continuously keep track of the main events of the proceedings in which they are involved via a portal interface as well as view their obligations and the momentary status of the case.





#### SECURITY-ENHANCING PROJECT

One of the strategic objectives of the President of the NOJ is to ensure the integrity of the judicial organisation. The goal of this project is to enhance security in the course of the work of judges and judicial employees as well as towards clients. The project is made up of a technical and an IT sub-project.

- In the technical sub-project, 104 metal-detector gates and 45 X-ray inspection devices were procured in three phases, which will enable the physical security of all premises of regional courts, regional courts of appeal and district courts with large volumes of clients. We intend to spend the remainder of the funds arising from the implementation of the sub-project on purchasing additional security devices.
- In the course of the IT sub-project the modernisation of the IT devices of courts was carried out with the procurement of equipment.

#### DIGITALISATION AND RENEWAL OF IT AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE SERVICES AND CREATING A CLIENT CENTRE AT THE BUDAPEST-CAPITAL REGIONAL COURT

The objective of the project is the extension of the range of IT-based judicial services and the number of cases that can be arranged electronically. In order to improve the efficiency of administration, the clients may obtain information at a fixed and central information desk or on the IT device installed in the premises of the Budapest-Capital Regional Court, hence they can gain access to the informative online interface not requiring personal identification and get clarifications and directions easier and faster.



## TRAINING AND STRATEGIC PROJECTS

In the 1st half of 2014, 1 training project and 1 strategic project were completed successfully.

### ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR ADMINISTRATIVE AND JUDICIAL BODIES

Besides the NOJ, 19 judicial institutions submitted tenders for the call for tenders of the Organisational Development Program with a total grant of HUF 482,978,655.

The main objectives of tenders were the following:

- establishing a professional administrative organisation,
- developing administrative, coordination, management and inspection techniques to present the service provider function and develop a service provider approach,
- the project has 5 main areas: sharing of knowledge, process optimisation, change management, quality management and performance management.

The NOJ organised workshops for courts on organisation development, where methodologies related to tenders were presented in detail with the inclusion of external experts. After this the most important project management and financial know-how necessary for the implementation of tenders were instructed to tender writers of courts.

### TRAINING ON THE NEW CIVIL CODE

The aim of the training project is to make those who implement the law, judges, court clerks, court paralegals, judicial employees, attorneys and notaries, aware of Act V of 2013 on the Civil Code. In the course of this project new and modern e-learning materials have been developed.



## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE JUDICIAL ORGANISATION

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(pages 44-45)

### NETWORK OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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

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

- EJTN (European Judicial Training Network),
- ERA (Academy of European Law),
- IRZ (Foundation for International Legal Cooperation),
- HELP (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals of the European Council),
- EIPA (European Institute of Public Administration)

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

- EJN (European Judicial Network),
- Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary
- EALCJ (European Association of Labour Court Judges),
- GEMME (European Association of judges for mediation),
- IOJT (International Organization for Judicial Training),
- IGO (International Training Institute),
- ILO (International Labour Organization),
- CEELI (Central and Eastern European Law Initiative).



The NOJ provides internships for judges and judicial employees to share their knowledge and experience and integrate it into the organisation. Since 1 February 2014

- 1 judge participated in a 5-month internship programme at the Court of Justice of the European Union. The goal of the internship programme in Luxembourg is to provide an opportunity to Hungarian judges to gain first-hand experience on the functioning of the Court of Justice of the European Union and preliminary ruling procedures in particular.
- and 1 judge participated in a 5-month internship programme at the Academy of European Law. The internship programme in Trier set the objective of familiarising interested judges with the operation of the Academy of European Law and effective methods in professional training and development of the 21st century.

The first two judges participating in the programme gained a lot of new knowledge and experience, which were shared with fellow judges and judicial employees via written reports. The first semester of the programme concluded with great success, therefore internship positions are announced and filled continuously.

In the course of the short-term, two-week exchange programme of the EJTN, in the 1st half of 2014

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

1 judge participated in the long-term exchange programme of the EJTN at the European Court of Human Rights in the 1st half of 2014.

The judges going abroad and the participants of the internship programme give an account of their experiences in trip reports with special attention to the applicability of international good practices



in Hungary. These reports are published on the central intranet interface. The National Office for the Judiciary pays greater attention to the collection and sharing of international experiences and making reports searchable by keywords.

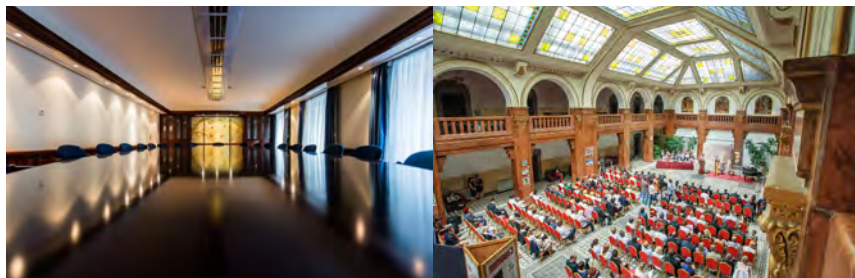
The President of the NOJ puts special emphasis on ensuring that foreign partner organisations are given adequate and detailed information on the Hungarian judicial system and its judicial and professional management. To this end, the NOJ received the following delegations in the 1st half of 2014:

- the delegation of the representatives of the Turkish bar association,
- the working group of the Conference of the Regulatory Judicial Authorities of the Balkan region (later Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary) at the working group session,
- the representatives of the Norwegian Helsinki Committee,
- the British judicial delegation,
- rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe,
- and 15 ambassadors accredited to Hungary and numerous other guests at the event held jointly with the Curia in the Museum of Ethnography.

Out of 26 courts (Curia, regional courts of appeal, regional courts),

- 13 have independent and bilateral relations
- with nearly 20 courts in 9 countries.

In the 1st half of 2014, the Kaposvár Regional Court established a new international relationship with the Cracow Regional Court, while the Kecskemét Regional Court established relations with the Tarnów Court belonging to Cracow region, hence further strengthening our ties with Poland.



The Curia and the President of the NOJ as well as the President-in-Office of the National Judicial Council (NJC) signed a common memorandum on the foundation of the Coordinating Body for International Relations (NKKT) as a consultation and coordination forum in order to ensure the harmonised representation of the international relations of the judicial organisation.

#### INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL EVENTS

The National Office for the Judiciary hosted a total of 5 international trainings and an additional 6 international professional conventions in the 1st half of 2014. These events had

- 121 foreign and
- 77 Hungarian attendees.

The National Office for the Judiciary provides the opportunity to participate in study trips, conferences and trainings abroad for more and more judges and judicial employees. In the 1st half of 2014

- on 24 trainings
- in a total duration of 56 days
- 36 Hungarian judges and judicial employees were participating.

#### THE BALKAN AND EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION

It is an outstanding international success of 2014 that the Balkan and Euro-Mediterranean Network of Councils for the Judiciary was established with the participation of the NOJ and NJC. The founding document was formally signed at a ceremony in the 1st half of 2014 by the representatives of judicial organisations of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Italy, Romania and Turkey, including the representatives of the NJC and the NOJ.

The objective of this international organisation, having its own general assembly, elected president, permanent secretariat and governing board with five members, is to promote cooperation between





signatories in a more efficient way, including the organisation of conferences, workshops, professional visits, questionnaires and research. The officers will be elected and the place of the secretariat will be selected at the forthcoming general assembly, and, until then, Hungary is hosting the office of the organisation and the NOJ is operating the website of the organisation.

#### NETWORK OF SPECIALISED ADVISORS

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

In the 1st half of 2014

- the deputy coordinators of all 4 divisions were appointed, and a total of
- 39 specialised advisors were also appointed.

The specialised advisors gave assistance in the central training of judges and judicial employees on EU law as instructors and editors of materials. They were present at local and regional events, contributed to the legislative process of the EU as well as to the preparation and updating of the informative database presenting the most important decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Union and European Court of Human Rights and those affecting the Hungarian justice system.

The first national convention of the renewing network of specialised advisors on EU law was organised for the first time on the 10th anniversary of the accession to the European Union, where participants discussed the tasks lying ahead in the future. A regional introductory event was held at the Szeged Regional Court of Appeal, while the Department of Criminal Law at the Budapest-Capital Regional Court of Appeal centred on the recognition of foreign judgments and the issues of legal assistance in criminal cases.

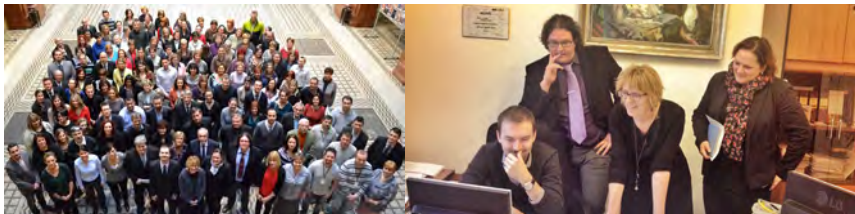


#### COMMUNICATION AND KNOWLEDGE-SHARING

International news is available at the central website of courts under a separate menu item. In the 1st half of 2014

- the website of international series of conferences titled *Court and communication* was developed,
- international technical information and trip reports are continuously being published on the central intranet interface of the NOJ,
- news in English language is constantly published on the central website.





## OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR THE JUDICIARY

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(pages 46-47)

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

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

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

These tasks of the NOJ are fulfilled with an actual staff of 209 employees, which is 1.9% of the total headcount of the judicial organisation. Naturally, one-third of these employees are primarily working in the operation and serving of NOJ as an institution (e.g. facility management, administrative office).



## **CONTROL OVER THE PRESIDENT OF THE NOJ**

*(pages 48-49)*

### **THE OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL JUDICIAL COUNCIL**

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

- 6 sessions,
- discussed 62 agenda items and
- adopted 84 resolutions in the 1st half of 2014.

In the subject period the NJC gave its opinion on the orders of the President of the NOJ in three cases, all in which it approved their content.

The NJC

- established that the report on the realisation of the budget of the Court system in 2013 and on the expected changes in the budget of 2014 were adequate.
- approved the report of the President of the NOJ on the analysis of the client volume at courts in 2013.
- adopted 30 resolutions on staff matters.
- made 8 other decisions on the functioning of NOJ, e.g.
  - established its sub-committee on the Code of Ethics, and
  - agreed on and supported the foundation and operation of the Coordinating Body for International Relations.

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