

Welcome from President Tünde Handó

Dear Mr. Chief Magistrate, Dear Mr. Ombudsman, Dear Distinguished Guests, Dear Colleagues,

As the president of the National Office for the Judiciary I would like to welcome you warmly in the building of the Hungarian Academy of Justice on the first Budapest conference of the series of conferences “Courts and Communication”.

It is a great honour for us to greet you here in this institution established seven years ago to serve the continuing training of the judges and other court staff members of the Hungarian judiciary.

When Mr. Darák, the president of the Curia of Hungary and myself decided to launch this conference, we aimed to create a series of international conferences in Budapest, establishing an interactive forum for the countries of the Council of Europe that offers a chance for an all-European integration of professional experiences, best practices, debated issues and solutions within the main topic of “courts and communication”. This is why I am particularly glad to welcome today as much as 90 participants from 26 countries of Europe.

In order to have the main topic analysed in details, there will be a special field discussed each year. The focus topic of this starting conference will be the questions related to **data protection and data management**.

With the presentations to be held by acknowledged experts on the first day we would like to refine the picture about various national ways of addressing this problem, while on the second day we shall discuss - in the framework of workshops - data management connected to the courts' operation, the rules on information provided at the court as well as the conflicts between data protection and the right to the openness of information.

Why do we consider the issue of **data protection and data management** to be a question worth discussing at an international conference?

The judicial activity of the courts is in a necessary interaction with the information system prevalent in our societies, containing personal and public data. Any data managed in the social, economic and public authority subsystems

might be entered in the court procedures, which also results in turning the courts into data managing parties. Therefore the issue of the management, access and the further utilisation of data created or used in the court procedures is of paramount importance.

We should not forget about the information-rights that have already been institutionalized by now and that penetrate deeply to the foundations of judicial power. The application of these information-rights – that originate from the international norms, and that are fully acknowledged in the Hungarian legislation – is related to questions far beyond the limits of the problem of how to enforce the right to the openness of trials. The relevant provisions provide rules not only for the individual trials but also with regard to the operation of the whole court system.

Accordingly the openness of the courts operation is an important question. Openness of the courts is a key requirement of the rule of law, serving the purpose of both legal and social control.

In addition to the above mentioned key issues there are many other aspects I can't go into details about, but I'm sure will be discussed during the sessions and workshops of the conference.

Regarding the fact that we do not have in Hungary a specific law regulating these questions in a unified way, we are curious to see the potential regulatory methods that might help the Hungarian courts in the elaboration of future legislation in this field.

I'm sure that this conference and the series of future Budapest conferences will offer a chance to draw the attention to the special communicative role of the courts, and to build and shape the international consultation between the countries of Europe by discussing the professional methods and procedures about the internal and external communication of courts, by developing conclusions and by presenting the results.

I wish for all of you a very successful conference with debates that facilitate your professional development and that strengthen your dedication to the judicial profession. Please use this opportunity also for making new friendships and building networks with fellow members of the judiciary coming from other

European countries. I hope that during your stay you will have an opportunity to get acquainted with the facilities of the Academy as well.

I also hope that you will be satisfied with your stay in Budapest and that you also enjoy the programmes we have organised for you to make your time pleasant and unforgettable.

Thank you for your attention!



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National Office for the Judiciary

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