

ABOUT HCLU

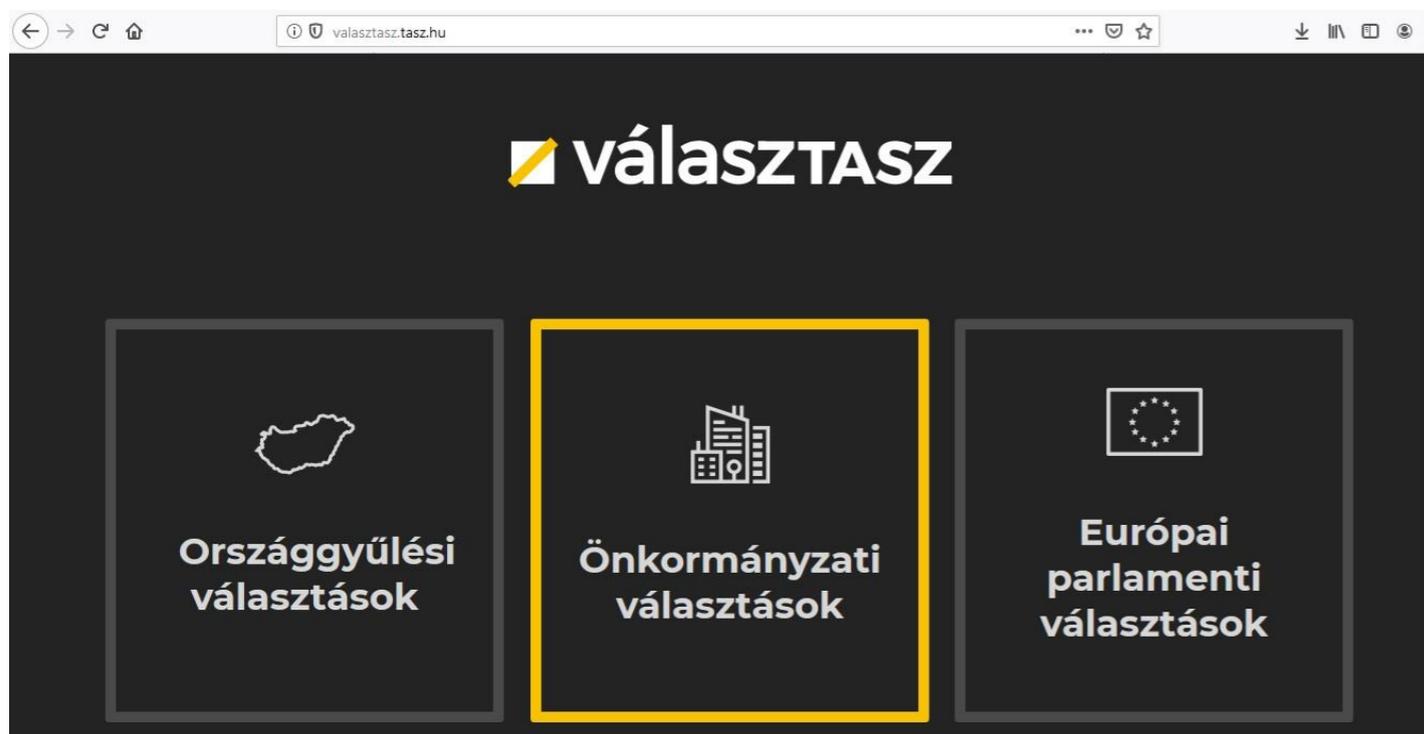


- Human rights NGO dealing with the protection of specific fundamental rights
- Independent from every state, state organisations, and political parties (but gives support also to political parties upon request, regardless on their ideology, in a transparent manner: every interaction between HCLU and a party is published on an online spreadsheet)
- HCLU's services are free of charge and open to every citizen and organisation,
- 3 project groups: equality (people living with disabilities, roma people, mental health issues etc.); private sphere (data protection, healthcare rights, self determination), **political freedoms (freedom of assembly and association, freedom of expression, freedom of information, election monitoring)**

TOOLS - HOW CAN WE HELP ACTIVISTS, ACTIVE CITIZENS AND POLITICAL PARTIES?



- FAQs, step-by-step guidelines and toolkits - published on our websites (tasz.hu, valasztasz.hu, tiltakozz.hu), spreaded via social media
- Legal aid via email - we respond as soon as we can
- Templates - in case of there is no pressing need for legal representation - claims to the authorities and courts
- Direct legal representation (mostly in strategic cases)



TOOLS - HOW CAN WE HELP ACTIVISTS, ACTIVE CITIZENS AND POLITICAL PARTIES?

- Specialised temporary hotlines:
 - “Election information hotline” - operating mo-su, 8-20, during the campaign period and abt. until one week after election day. On election day: cca. 6-22 (opening and closing time of the polling stations). Voters, candidates, parties, journalists etc. can gain information on the legal background of the electoral procedure, they can report alleged violations of the law, ask for legal representation or help for preparing complaints addressed to the election committees etc.



TOOLS - HOW CAN WE HELP ACTIVISTS, ACTIVE CITIZENS AND POLITICAL PARTIES?

- Specialised temporary hotlines:
 - “Freedom of assembly hotline” - operating mo-su, 8-20 (in fact: 0-24). It’s turned on in case of every major demonstration. Participants and organizers of demonstrations and journalists can gain information on the legal background of the freedom of assembly. Detained protesters can ask for help and legal representation with dialing this number (via the prosecutor).

Telephone number -
permanent marker



GOOD PRACTICE

- Mass procedures against young protesters

Several student-protests took place in Budapest in 2017 and 2018, for education rights and for better education in general.



GOOD PRACTICE

- Mass procedures against young protesters

After the official end of these protests, groups of students started a spontaneous demonstration in the nearby streets. The police blocked their way and started a petty offense procedure against them on the ground of traffic offense because they stepped off the sidewalk and marched on the road.



GOOD PRACTICE



- Mass procedures against young protesters

Later, the participants received a fine of 30.000-50.000 HUF (approx. 90-150 EUR). In some cases the police upheld the decision, in other cases the police seized the fine but gave a warning (so they still found the demonstrators liable).

As there were dozens of similar cases, we prepared and published detailed templates for the demonstrators: a letter to the police, a petition to the court and a constitutional complaint so they had the adequate documents and reasoning in every stage of the procedure.

GOOD PRACTICE

- How HCLU helped the freedom of expression and assembly during the mass demonstrations in late '18-early '19
- Freedom of assembly hotline (1. helping the preparation of assemblies, 2. helping people who were in detention or who were arrested)



GOOD PRACTICE



GOOD PRACTICE



GOOD PRACTICE

- How HCLU helped the freedom of expression and assembly during the mass demonstrations in late '18-early '19
- Intensive presence in the independent media - television, radio, online news portals, print newspapers - evaluating the measures of the police and the legal environment, communicating the rights of the protesters etc. - Role of our communication department



GOOD PRACTICE

- How HCLU helped the freedom of expression and assembly during the mass demonstrations in late '18-early '19
- Legal representation (to those who were falsely accused with committing a crime or accused without a proper ground, or who expressed their opinion in an unusual way and to people who became victims of police violence / abuse)
- Various statements published on our website, Facebook etc.



GOOD PRACTICE



- Legal representation in strategic cases

After the new act on freedom of assembly entered in force in October 2018, HCLU noticed that the regulation might cause a limitation of the freedom assembly. Therefore we started strategic litigation in order to force the court to the right (fundamental right-friendly) interpretation of the new regulation. The other aim was to avoid the **chilling effect** of the new act as several people had serious concerns about the regulation.

GOOD PRACTICE

- Legal representation in strategic cases
- Football match on the Kossuth square

Students organised a symbolic football match and a demonstration to the Kossuth square in Budapest, right in front of the building of the Parliament. The police issued a ban of various reasons (alleged infringement of the traffic, cultural heritage protection aspects etc.). None of these were sufficient at the court, however, the court limited the time of the match for 90 minutes because of a concluding demo.



GOOD PRACTICE

- Legal representation in strategic cases
- Litigation for the security fence-free Budapest Pride

Ever since the Pride takes place in Budapest, the police secured the route of the march with security fences. As the organisers provided enough volunteers to protect and organise the event (in cooperation with the police) the fences became unnecessary. As a result of the litigation of the HCLU, fences were used only in order to separate the counter-demonstrators from the march and only in 3 points along the route

2008



2019



GOOD PRACTICE

- Legal representation in strategic cases

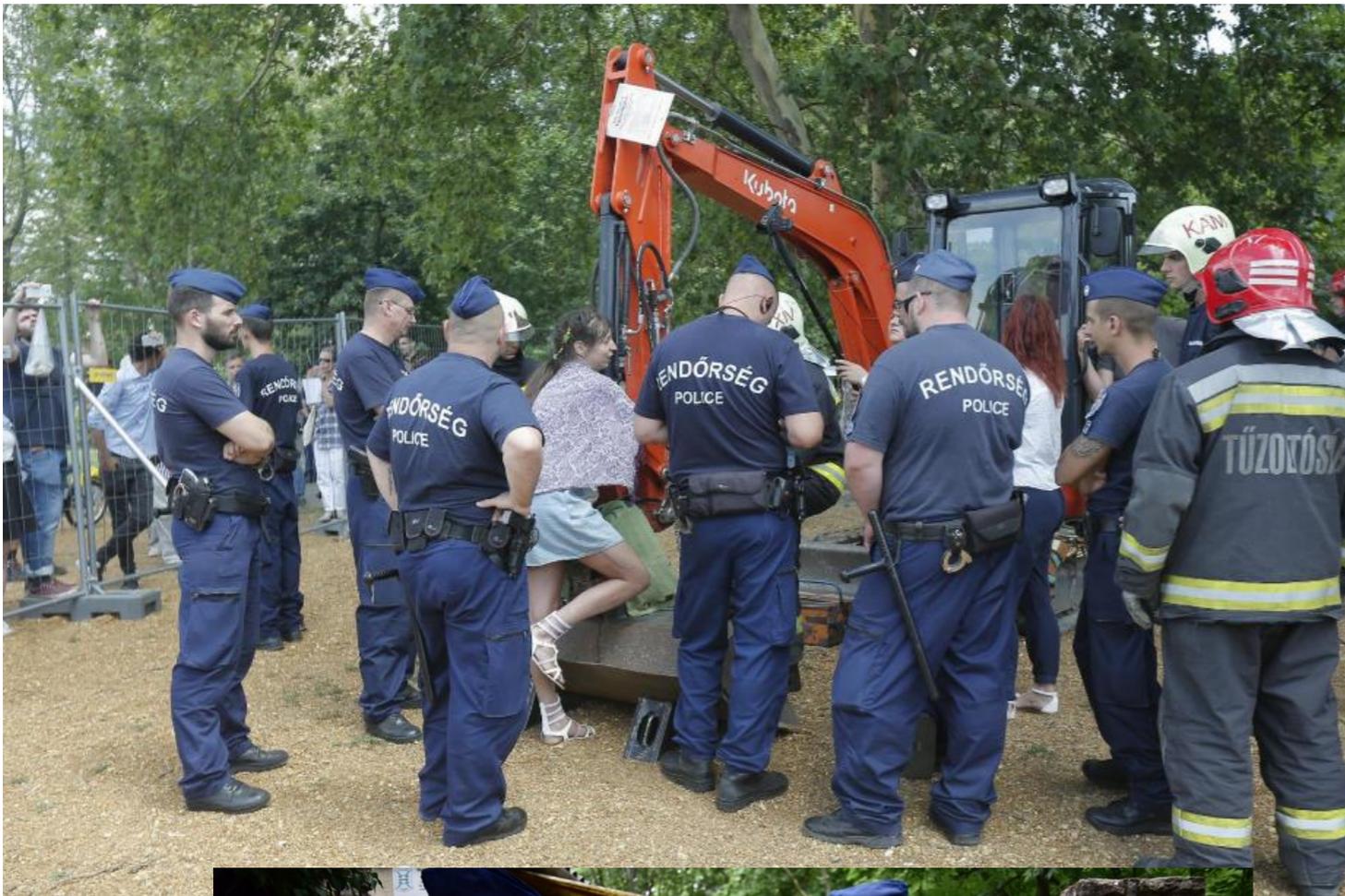
Legal representation for the “Park Protectors”

The government decided to convert the oldest park of Budapest into a museum quarter. Group of environmentalists, town protectors and other activists organised several demonstrations, slowed down and blocked the constructions and wood-cuttings. Lots of procedures started against the activists (misuse of freedom of assembly, truculence etc.) and HCLU provided legal representation for them.



GOOD PRACTICE

- Legal representation in strategic cases
- Legal representation for the “Park Protectors”



GOOD PRACTICE

- Legal representation in strategic cases

Legal representation for the “Park Protectors”



GOOD PRACTICE

- Legal representation in strategic cases

Legal representation in the “Sándor palace case”

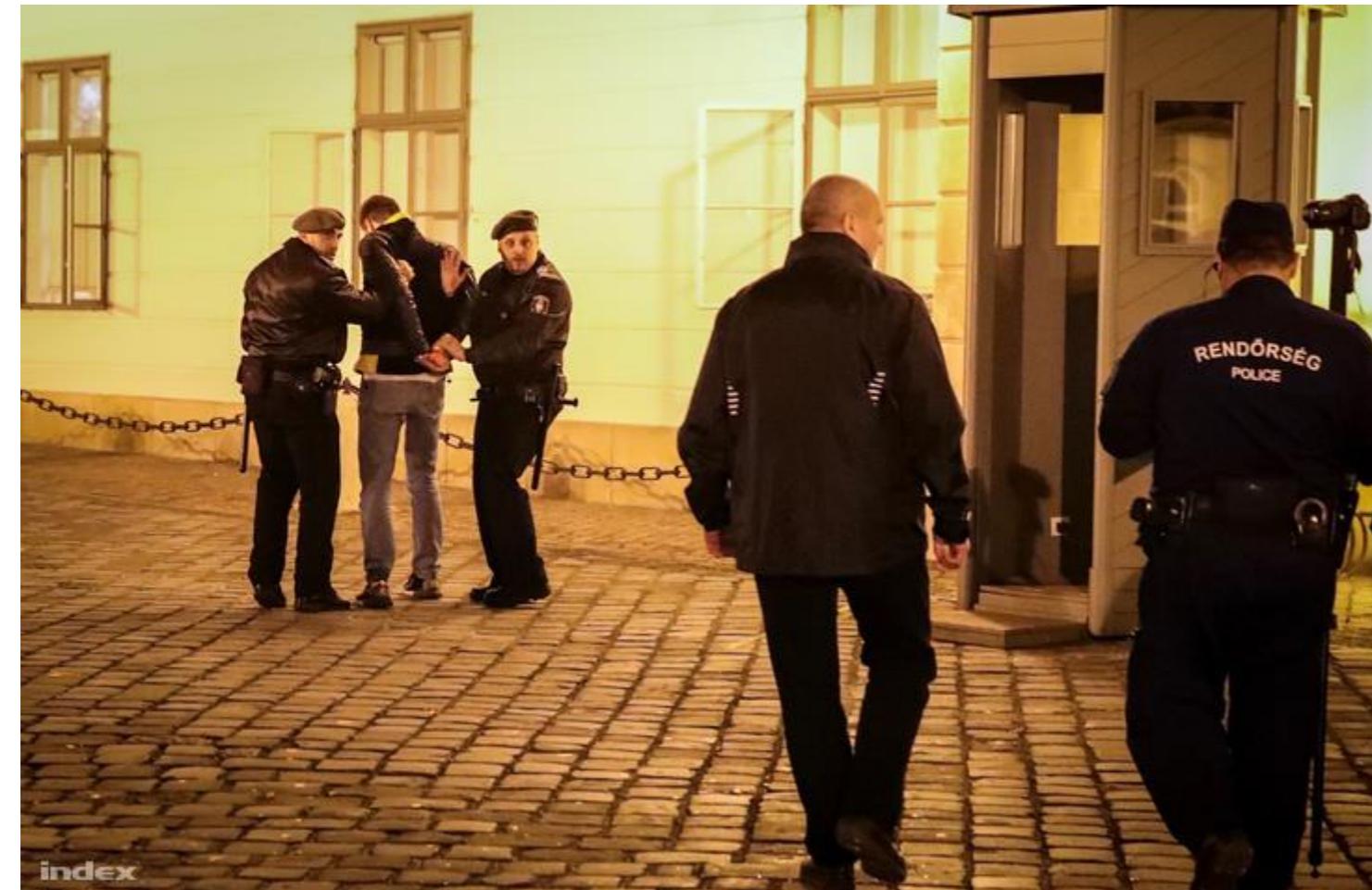


GOOD PRACTICE

- Legal representation in strategic cases

Legal representation in the “Sándor palace case”





“Accelerated procedure”

WHY IS LEGAL KNOWLEDGE CRUCIAL...



... WHEN IT COMES TO POLITICAL ACTIVISM?

- Obstacle or opportunity?
- Knowing your rights;
- Knowing the risks;
- Knowing that you count on someone
- No matter what is your approach, knowing your rights always encourages participation