

Fight against corruption in Hungary

The Minister of Justice and Law Enforcement is responsible for the organisation of anti-corruption tasks, the determination of the major political objectives and for the international representation of the anti-corruption policy of Hungary.

The Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement presented a proposal related to the fight against corruption in May. The purpose of the proposal was to summarize the accomplished tasks and the status of the fight against corruption in Hungary.

The Government approved the proposal by its Decision 1037/2007 on the anti-corruption activity in June. The Government Decision is very significant because of the strategic approach. With the acceptance of this proposal the long term anti-corruption governmental objectives can be achieved in 2007. Accordingly the short-term action plan may thus be completed by the end of this year which will determine the anti-corruption governmental tasks with assignment of terms, responsible organs and assets until 2010 April.

The intention of the Government is to give a new swing to the anti-corruption activity in 2007 and to give more emphasis for the general aspect of prevention and means over legal regulation. In the past few years, governmental anti-corruption activity was based on the Government Decision 1023/2001 (14th of March) on political strategy against corruption. Most of the tasks of this Government Decision have already been achieved, the unsolved tasks needed to be rethought. This justified the repealing of the Government Decision 1023/2001 and rethinking, instituting the unsolved tasks into the governmental strategy document for 2007.

The change was also expressed by reforming the activity of the “Advisory Board for the Public Life Free from Corruption” established by Government Decision 1011/2004. (February 26). The name, the members, and the tasks of the Advisory Board all changed. Actual members of the “Anti-corruption Coordination Committee”:

6 governmental members:

Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement

Prime Minister’s Office

Ministry of Health
Ministry of Finance
Ministry of Economy and Transport
Ministry of Municipalities and Regional Development

6 non-governmental state organizations:

State Audit Office
Chief Prosecutor's Office
Parliamentary Commissioner's Office of Hungary
National Council of Justice of Hungary
Hungarian Competition Authority
Council of Public Procurement

6 non-governmental members:

Transparency International
Pénzügykutató Rt.
Dr. Ákos Farkas, criminologist
Dr. Péter Hack, criminologist
National Criminology Institute
Hungarian Civil Liberties Union

In the future, the work of the Advisory Board will conform to prepare, execute and evaluate the task based on the anti-corruption strategic documents.

The Advisory Board will have a meeting in every month, there will be working groups which will support the work of the Committee and all works will get an extensive publicity.

Results of the last period

1. By the initiative of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior and Prime Minister's Office, the Advisory Board against corruption was established in 2002 with the leadership of the Secretariat responsible for Public Assets. In 2003, the Advisory Board assisted the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Secretariat

responsible for Public Assets of the Prime Minister's Office in the organization of the "National Conference for Cleaner Public Life".

2. With assistance of the UNODC, the Hungarian Government prepared a Draft Action Plan against Corruption and presented it to EU experts within the framework of the UN Global Anti-corruption Program in 2003.
3. Tasks achieved from the Government Decision 1023/2001 (March 14) on governmental strategy against corruption:
 - a. Crimes against the integrity of public life and international public life of the Hungarian Criminal Code as amended by Act CXXI of 2001 and other provisions of the Criminal Code
 - b. The Council of Europe's Criminal Law Convention on Corruption (Act XLIX of 2002)
 - c. Act CXXII of 2003 on the Amendment of Act XV of 2003 on the Prevention and Combating Money Laundering
 - d. Act XXIV of 2003 on the Amendment of Specific Acts Related to the Publicity, Transparency and Control of the Appropriation of Public Funds and the Use of Public Property
 - e. The Council of Europe's Civil Law Convention on Corruption (Act L of 2004)
 - f. Act CLXXII of 2005 on the Amendment of Act CXXIX of 2003 on Public Procurement
 - g. United Nations Convention against Corruption (Act CXXXIV of 2005)
 - h. Act XLIX of 2006 on Lobbying Activities
4. At the Kriminal Expo IT-SEC in November of 2005, the international conference for Cleaner Public Life was held. The international professional expectations for the fight against corruption were represented by the UNODC, GRECO, OLAF and TI. In addition the tasks of ministries and organisations of control were represented by the National Criminology Institute, Prime Minister's Office, Protective Service of Law Enforcement Agencies, Arbitration Committee of Public Procurement, Hungarian Customs and Finance Guard, Protective Service of Law Enforcement Agencies, National Headquarters of the Police.

5. At the end of 2005, the Ministry of Justice prepared a proposal for actual anti-corruption tasks, although this was not accepted, since this was during the end of the governmental term.
6. On May 19th, 2006, within the framework of the “Budapest Forum”, the Ministry of Justice organised a seminar for the experts of Western Balkan countries on the results and experience of the fight against corruption.
7. In the spring of 2006, according to the expectations of the international organisations, the Ministry of Justice published a book on the fight against corruption in 2500 copies. The book – written in Hungarian and in English – *ensures* that both Hungarian and foreign readers gain thorough information of the government’s accomplishments in the fight against corruption.
8. With international collaboration, the British-Holland-Hungarian Twinning Light Program lead to the structural transformation of the Protective Service of Law Enforcement Agencies, thus adopting the best tactics and methods for the fight against corruption, recommended by the European Union.
9. In 2006, with the help of multilateral international contacts, the Protective Service of Law Enforcement Agencies initiated and organized the Central and Eastern European Regional Forum for Internal Defence Organisations, in Budapest. The goal of the forum was the dicussion of corruption activities and the sharing of the many years of experience of its treatment.
10. On November 23-24, 2006, the Protective Service of Law Enforcement Agencies organized the meeting for the European Partners against Corruption (EPAC), with 28 countries and 33 organisations participating.
11. On February 22, 2007, the Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement held a conference for the “Legal and constitutional means to the fight against corruption”, where both the theoretical and practical activities in the fight against corruption were dicussed. The

Ministry of Justice and Law Enforcement will publish a pamphlet and will incorporate the discussed information into the political anti-corruption strategy to be created.

12. A tender was submitted to request funds from the State Audit Office and the European Union Temporary Support (Transition Facility) for “The development of anti-corruption measures and for the promotion of governmental anti-corruption strategy execution.” When accepted, in collaboration with the Twinning partner, a corruption risk map will be created of the Hungarian public sphere.