



EDITORIAL

Introductory word to our annual report 2015 will be a little bit different. I am writing it in a moment when the parliamentary elections 2016 redrew the political map of our country and when the majority of our society feels disillusioned over the new context. I daresay that since the period when Vladimír Mečiar was leading the Slovak government the desire for justice, purity of politics and equality before law has never been as strong as it comes to be in this moment.

When people feel that the law does not apply equally to everyone and when they see that politics are rather than a service to the public a business activity, they recourse to extreme solutions. Fatigue from the democracy and a deep mistrust into the public institutions came to collect their first huge tax.

I do hope that in the struggle for the character of the State even VIA IURIS is making an important contribution and step by step we work for a more democratic and free society where governs the law. These visions guided us in our work even in 2015 and although the change has been happening slowly we do not give up.

For an illustration, we needed 6 years to convince the public, the politicians and the judges that a quality performance of the judges' work requires adoption of a code of ethics, which was finally adopted by the Judicial Council of the Slovak republic in De-

cember 2015. We improved 9 laws, some of them after a work lasting several years and endless hours we dedicated to analysing and difficult promoting of their regulation. In the past year we naturally did much more things which you can read about on the following pages. Nevertheless I would like to underline one point:

We do believe in the joining of forces because as a civil society we face a major power. And that is why together with Alliancia Fairplay we have been for already 8 years helping and awarding

White crows and with Foundation Pontis, Foundation Let's stop the corruption and the Slovak Governance Institute we created and launched the campaign "Chinking for the change". Our initiative keeps going and we invite you to join us, we really need your support.

All we can do we do it thanks to our supporters, who provide us selflessly with precious advices, financial means but also with immense moral support. On behalf of whole team I want to express our thanks to you. I believe we did not disappoint you in the year 2015 and that we won't either in the upcoming years.

MILAN ŠAGÁT executive director

VIA IURIS FOR MORE THAN 20 YEARS HAS BEEN STANDING ON THE SIDE OF JUSTICE AND FIGHTING IN CASES WHERE POWERFUL PEOPLE MISUSE THE LAW TO THEIR ADVANTAGE. WE WANT RULES TO APPLY EQUALLY TO EVERYONE. SO WE SUPPORT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND WE PROMOTE EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE FUNCTIONING OF THE JUDICIARY, PROSECUTION SERVICE AND POLICE.

We are an expert organization who uses mainly legal tools to defend and enforce public interest

We develop and enforce legislative amendments, we elaborate analysis, provide consultations and representation of people in strategic cases. We help to White crows, we organize expert conferences, we point out to injustice and we present our ideas to expert and broader public.



2015 IN BRIEF

- We improved 9 laws. For an illustration we were successful in enforcing a wide access of the public to courts in the new Code of the administrative court procedure. Thus thanks to us people obtained an effective tool to protect the environment because they can challenge administrative decisions and generally binding regulations having a negative environmental impact.
- It is also thanks to us that finally after 14
 years judges have new Code of ethics.
 Clearly formulated ethical principles
 and their application might contribute
 to increase the trust of the public in the
 Slovak judiciary.
- 10 strategic cases and 60 consultations required more than 560 hours of our time and expertise. That is how we succeeded together with 2000 persons to stop the investor in Pezinok, whose intention was to build there a waste dump using a non-tested technology.
- We became the first civil organisation in the history who the Judicial Council officially asked for the cooperation. It happened after we carried out our public survey which revealed that the trust of the public in Slovak courts was historically on its lowest level. The Council asked us for collaboration in the designing of a new survey this time focusing on causes of this high mistrust. That would further help them to adopt targeted measures in order to increase the trust.
- In presence of the President of the Slovak republic we delivered for the eighth time the award White Crow.
 This year awards went to nurse Magdaléna Kovačovičová and to doctor Alan Suchánek, who pointed out to an overpriced purchase of a CT scanner in the hospital of Piešťany. Reporter Andrej Bán and priest Anton Srholec were awarded for their long-term attitudes.

JUDGES HAVE NEW CODE OF ETHICS

Judges are a key to quality judiciary. Therefore we have pressed for clear rules and strict criteria in tender procedures of judges and for defining limits in the performance of their function in form of the code of ethics and functional disciplinary proceedings.

Judges Have New Code of Ethics

When 6 years ago we started to work on ethics of judges it was an unknown topic in Slovakia. Since then we carried out various activities in order to bring it to the attention of judges, experts and broader public. We organized international conferences, expert seminaries with respected law professor from USA Jim Moliterno, we elaborated expert publication, and we addressed a lot of calls to the Judicial Council and to the Minister of Justice. In December 2015 the Judicial Council finally adopted new principles of ethic of judges.

So thanks to us in professional circles the issue of professional ethics of judges has become a vividly discussed topic, which was even incorporated into the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. After 14 years the Judicial Council prepared a draft of new code of ethics, which we analysed, pointed out to its serious defects and called on the Judiciary Council to modify it. As a result we have now new and better quality principles of the ethics of judges which in upcoming months will be completed by the interpretation rules.





Other Activities Related to the Justice:

Public Interest Law Conference

In February we organized an expert conference with focus on the topic of "Tender procedures of judges". Together with judges, attorneys, academics and representatives of the Government and of the Parliament we were searching for solutions how to guarantee more transparent and objective tender procedures. This conference resulted into recommendations for changes which were further addressed to the Minister of Justice and to the Parliament.

Topic of the State Capture and Campaign "Chinking for the Change"

In the past year in respect to the problem of state capture and impunity of this phenomenon we focused our analysis beside the judiciary also on the functioning of the prosecution service and of the police. It resulted into a series of measures which need to be adopted in order to free police and prosecution service from political influence. Before Parliamentary elections we offered and promoted these measures together with other four topics through a coalition with three other NGOs in the framework of the campaign "Chinking for the change".

Our goal was that parties with strong chances to get to the Parliament adopt our measures and commit to enforce them. Six out of eight parties which we approached made this commitment.

Disciplinary Liability of Judges

We dealt with the topic of the disciplinary liability also in the context of controversial decisions of the senate of Štefan Harabín which had for consequence liberation of sentenced criminals. In the framework of the campaign "Chinking for the change" we suggested concrete systemic changes related to this thematic area.

The Judicial Council

On a regular basis we monitored meetings of the Judicial Council. At the end of the year we addressed to the Ministry of Justice legislative recommendations which might improve the functioning of the Judicial Council.

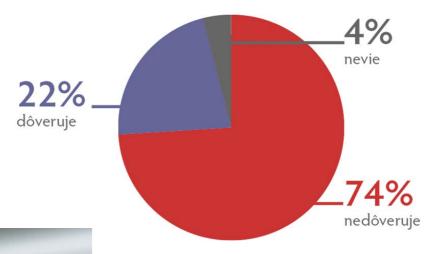
UP TO 74% OF PEOPLE DO NOT TRUST IN THE SLOVAK JUDICIARY

Public surveys are complementary to our analytical, legislative and advocacy activities. They reflect current situation in the society, they support our argumentation when promoting systemic changes, they help us to popularize our topics and they constitute an interesting source of information for media and public.



DÔVERA V SÚDY A SÚDNICTVO

% všetkých respondentov, september 2015



74 % of people do not trust in judiciary and in courts. This fact results from the public survey we realized in September. At the same time up to 64 % of respondents did not note any positive change in the past year and that despite the fact that since last year there has been new president in the Supreme Court and also in the Judicial Council. These results are alarming given that mistrust in courts has never been so high in Slovakia.

After publishing the survey the president of the Judicial Council approached us in order to discuss causes of the high mistrust and possibilities to decrease it. Further the Judicial Council discussed the survey in a separate point of its December meeting where we were asked to participate in. It represents a significant moment insinuating a progressive change of the atmosphere in the Slovak judiciary. We will work together on a more complex survey focusing mainly on causes of the mistrust. We will do so keeping the independency and impartiality of our activity.

PEOPLE CAN CHALLENGE ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS BEFORE COURT

For the enforcement of systemic changes legislative amendments represent an important tool. Thus we keep an eye and comment laws, we suggest our own proposals for legislative changes, and we communicate with the Government and the Parliament. We strengthen the rights of the public in the decision-making on public affairs and we promote more accountable execution of the public authority.





Since July 2016 people will have at their disposition new tool to protect the environment. We refer to the entry in force of the new Code of the Administrative Court Procedure which is a new code regulating proceedings before courts concerning legality of administrative decisions. It is precisely administrative authorities who in a big extent decide how our environment looks like, where the forest will be cut down, where a waste dump or a dam will be constructed. If administrative authorities proceed in this type of decision-making illegally, often the only solution how to change these illegal decisions is to challenge them before court. This was the case of Pezinok waste dump, of the gold extraction in Detva or construction of various small hydroelectric power plants. However up to now the public had very constrained possibilities to bring action before court and in some cases only prosecutor could act.

New Code of the Administrative Court Procedure brings thanks to us an essential change. Since the commencement of the preparatory works on this law we were promoting that people should have a possibility to challenge administrative decisions which threaten environment directly before court. We made it. Big innovation is that the public who cares about the environment can challenge such administrative decisions before court and that even in cases where they were not a party to proceedings before. The public can challenge even the generally binding regulations of cities and municipalities, e.g. land-use plans, what before was only the prosecutor's competence. The position of the public in respect to the protection of the environment got improved also in other aspects.

In the new procedural codes we also enforced higher quality standards for the reasoning of court decisions.



Apart from the Code of the Administrative Court procedure we commented 9 laws, for example:

Act on law-making process regulates the process of elaboration of legislative regulations and guarantee to the public possibility to participate in the elaboration of laws and other legal regulations. We expect from this regulation that in case where the rights of the public in the law-making process would be violated, people could bring an action before court.

Act on the integrated prevention and control of the contamination of the environment regulates authorisation of installations which might have a considerable impact on the tranquillity of the life and healthy housing. In the amendment of the act we enforced stronger rights for municipalities and their residents.

More than 2 years we had been working on new Construction Act. Draft of the act included our proposition that in the authorisation of buildings could participate also persons who would be affected already by the process of construction. We also defended competences of the municipalities and citizens in the process of elaboration and adoption of land-use plans. Nevertheless in the final phase under very unclear circumstances the Government withdrew the law from discussion in the Parliament and thus concluded all legislative process.

We also commented an express amendment of the existing Construction Act, which was supposed to facilitate the authorisation of constructions being of economic interest and which was elaborated in reaction to the planned investment of Landrover-Jaguar in a neighbour area of the City Nitra. In this respect we created a collective comment which in few days was supported by more than 3 500 supporters. Despite of our efforts the Parliament adopted this purpose-built amendment.

Amendments of Acts on prosecution service resulted into even bigger introversion of the prosecution service. We were successful in defending rights of the public to present motions at the Prosecution service. Instructions of superior prosecutors on removal of cases will still have to be reasoned and published. Nevertheless various negative changes which we were opposed to were adopted.



WASTE DUMP IN PEZINOK WILL NOT BE CONSTRUCTED

We help individuals, activists and local initiatives to protect public interest and to decide how their municipality or community will look like and function. Well organized community with legal assistance can be successful even in cases where powerful people misuse laws to their advantage.

Waste business with a technology which is not used in any place in the world. Moreover in contradiction with the land-use plan of the city. That was the intention of the investor who wanted to build a waste dump in Pezinok.

People from Pezinok who were for more than 10 years fighting against the construction of a waste dump in their city, radically refused this experiment. In the present case we provided legal assistance to more than 2000 citizens, associations and to municipalities in the process of environmental impact

assessment of the waste dump. We objected mainly the contradiction of the project with the land-use plan of the city, its negative impact on human health and the fact that technology was still being tested only on the academic level.

Investor finally decided to retract the project. Once again people from Pezinok proved that well organized civil engagement is able to change things in better and that the struggle with economically superior power can be successful.



IN 2015 WE ALSO HELPED TO:

White Crow L'ubica Lapinová, who was dismissed from the National forestry centre when she refused to modify findings from the control she carried out. District court this year a ruled that the dismissal was illegal. National forestry centre appealed against this judgement so the case moves to the regional court.

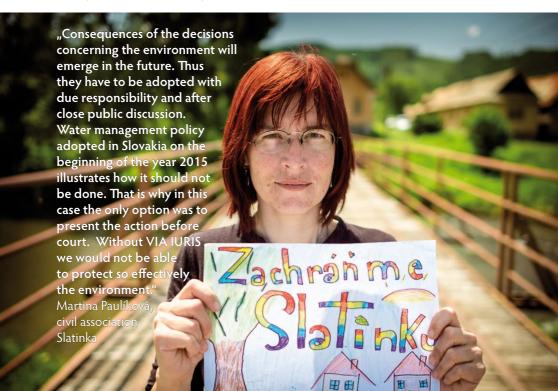
Residents of Banská Bystrica who have faced illegal adoption of the new land-use plan of the city. The latter allows construction of all controversial buildings/installations which the public has been fighting against on a long-term basis.

The Association Slatinka (Združenie Slatinka) and the Green Coalition (Zelená koalícia), who commented the National strategy of the water management policy but the Ministry of Environment ignored their rights and refused to discuss with them.

Residents and environmental associations in their efforts to stop construction of many small hydroelectric power plants planned on Slovak rivers. For example only on the river Hron there is planned nearly 40 hydroelectric power plants which would completely change the character of the river and the life in it.

Civil association Centre for environmental activities from Trenčín, to which the City Hall for almost 5 years has illegally refused to provide a report from city's legal audit and that despite the clear order pronounced by the court.

Civil association Protection of the air Dolný Liptov which has been for years trying to protect the environment in Ružomberok and its neighbour areas against the contamination produced by the local cellulose industry.



WHITE CROW

White crow is awarded for a brave and socially beneficial civil action and VIA IURIS provides legal assistance to White crows.

We do believe that people who defend the justice, the truth and the public interest should be an example to be followed by all of us. Often the contrary is true. These people experience injustice, bullying, lose their jobs and often stayed abandoned in the fight against power-



ful people. That is why together with Alliance Fair-play we search for these persons and we express them our thanks and award them. We spread stories of white crows in the world and we try to inspire people and remind them values which nowadays are disappearing.

In 2015 we awarded nurse Magdaléna Kovačovičová and doctor Alan Suchánek who revealed a case of an overpriced purchase of a CT scanner in the hospital of Piešťany. Award for long-term attitudes was given to the photographer and reporter Andrej Bán and to the priest Anton Srholec. President Andrej Kiska inaugurated the ceremony with his opening speech.

We feel happy that stories of white crows are alive even after they received the awards

and various have even a happy ending. Erika Lakatošová who pointed out to an uneconomical management of municipal finances, became afterwards mayoress of the village Ruská. In the case of financial inspector Ľubica Lapinová District court ruled that she was dismissed illegally. Teacher Vladimír Crmoman is one of the leading personalities in the Initiative of Slovak Teachers.

Since 2008 in 8 years of the award we awarded 26 White crows. Among awarded there are citizens from Pezinok who were for more than 10 years fighting against a waste dump. Zuzana Melicherčíková, who as an employee of the Law faculty in the University of Komenský in Bratislava pointed out to the suspicious admissions of students or Ivan Cehelský, who despite of various threats on his person protected the nature of Strážovské vrchy.



SUPPORT US

We work on systemic changes which is a way how we little by little change Slovakia and enforce the rule of law. We reduce the space for systemic corruption, irresponsibility of powerful people and for the abuse of power. We keep an eye on legislation which allows us as to citizens to influence things around us.

Even in 2016 a lot of work is waiting for us. After Parliamentary elections we will follow the parties who signed under our anti-corruption measures to be sure they really enforce these measures in laws. We will continue to help people in cases where the rights of the public are ignored. We will also continue to work on the judiciary issues.

We are ambitious, however we believe that with your support we can change Slovakia and make it a better place where the path of law so VIA IURIS is followed. If this vision is also yours join us and support our activities with a donation. Like this you can help us to work independently and objectively. Enforcement of systemic changes is a long-term struggle but with your support we have a strong chance to successfully implement our plans.

You can support us on:

www.viaiuris.sk/podpora



Milan Šagát executive director



Veronika Čukášová manager of the project White crow



Monika Jankovičová communication and projects

TEAM VIA IURIS



Zuzana Čaputová attorney



Kristína Babiaková attorney



Eva Kováčechová attorney



Imrich Vozár lawyer



Ivana Figuli lawyer



Marek Vagovič investigation



Magdaléna Grambličková finances and projects



Zdenka Tesárová accountability

Andrea Ochránková

Judita Hrubalová

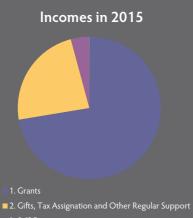
Peter Horváth

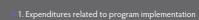
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Tomáš Kamenec attorney, Dedák & Partners Andrej Majerník attorney, Majerník & Miháliková Juraj Rizman
communication director for CEE,
Greenpeace
Ondrej Smolar
executive director, Soitron
Jozef Vozár
director, The Institute of State and
Law, Slovak Academy of Sciences

INCOMES IN 2015

	Amount	Percentage
	321413€	100,00%
1. GRANTS	232 662 €	72,30%
Think tank fund (Open Society Foundations)	82 383 €	25,60%
Norwegian Financial Mechanism (Open Society Foundation)	52 190 €	16,20%
Norwegian Financial Mechanism (Ekopolis Foundation)	35 305 €	11,00%
Fund for Transparent Slovakia (Pontis Foundation)	21 000 €	6,50%
Slovenská sporiteľna Foundation	10 000 €	3,10%
Let's Stop the Corruption Foundation	15 970 €	5,00%
Telekom Fund	5 500 €	1,70%
Eset Foundation	5 000 €	1,60%
US Embassy	4313€	1,30%
Central European Foundation	1 000 €	0,30%
2. GIFTS, TAX ASSIGNATION AND OTHER REGULAR SUPPORT	75 308 €	23,50%
Tax Assignation	8 905 €	2,80%
Gifts	51403 €	16,00%
Amicus Club membership fees	15 000 €	4,70%
3. SELF-FINANCING	13 285 €	4,10%
Income from the rental of premises and associated services	980 €	0,30%
Income from trade and other contracts	12305€	3,80%
4. OTHER INCOME	158 €	0,10%
Interests	153€	0,10%
Other income	5 €	0,00%





■ 2. Management and organization develpoment

Expenditures in 2015

- 3. Operating expenses
- 4. Other expenses

EXPENDITURES IN 2015

	Amount	Percentage
	292 002 €	100,00%
1. EXPENDITURES RELATED TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	191979€	65,70%
Analytical and publication activities	17856€	6,10%
Strategic litigation and consultations	26288€	9,00%
Legislative activities	14226€	4,90%
Campaign "Chinking for the change"	16076€	5,50%
Trainings realted to public participation	11429€	3,90%
Conference "Tender Procedures of Judges"	14054€	4,80%
Online manual "Legal procedures and manuals"	3 571 €	1,20%
White Crow Award	27 945 €	9,60%
Academic literature, software	497 €	0,20%
Media coverage of the program outputs	22 189 €	7,60%
Management of projects and of grants	37 848 €	12,90%
2. MANAGENEMT AND ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT	73 210 €	25,10%
Presentation materials	2 903 €	1,00%
Capacity Building	1 715 €	0,60%
Fundraising	18 199 €	6,20%
Strategic planning and organization's management	36785€	12,60%
Costs for the provision of commercial activities	13 608 €	4,70%
3. OPERATING EXPENSES	23 233 €	8,00%
Office running costs	16 344 €	5,60%
Travel expenses	2 594 €	0,90%
Communication-related expenses	1 174 €	0,40%
Computing and communication technology	803 €	0,30%
Taxes (on income, property, interests)	572 €	0,20%
Consultations and meetings	369 €	0,10%
Bank and administrative fees	476 €	0,20%
Financial audit	900 €	0,30%
4. OTHER EXPENSES	3 579 €	1,20%
Other expenses	3 204 €	1,10%
Membership and contributions to international organizations	375 €	0,10%

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

to statutory body of civic association VIA IURIS

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of VIA IURIS, which comprise the balance sheet as at 31 December, 2015, and the income statement for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Responsibility of the VIA IURIS

Statutory body of VIA IURIS is responsible for the preparation of these financial statements in accordance with the Act on Accounting no. 431/2002 Coll. as amended, and for such internal control as statutory body determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those Standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the management, as well as evaluating the presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements of the civic association VIA IURIS for the year ended December 31, 2015 are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Act on Accounting.

Independent auditor's report in English language is translation of independent auditor's report in Slovak language which comprises financial statements in Slovak language prepared in accordance with the Measure of the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic of 28 November 2007 No. MF/25682 / 2007-74 as amended.

čislo licencie

Banská Bystrica, 29th March 2016

MONAREX audit consulting, s.r.o. ČSA 24

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