

Press release

September 24, 2018

The HPPA's lawsuit against the CRCB in Hungary during the Orban's government

A brief story in seven points

Background

1. On January 19th 2018 the CRCB published a research note (<https://bit.ly/2Gjq6cc>) on the data publication standard used by the Hungarian Public Procurement Authority (HPPA, in Hungarian "Közbeszerzési Hatóság") on its official website. We compared the Hungarian protocol with the practices of Zambia and Bangladesh concerning the accessibility of contract award notices. The scope of the analysis was considered important because the latter documents contain the most important pieces of information on public tenders. These pieces of information (i.e. the number of bidders, the contract value, the estimated value, the issuer name, the winner name) are indispensable to evaluate and analyse the public tenders from the viewpoints of corruption risk and collusion. Our research results have drawn attention to some weaknesses and problems of the HPP data dissemination practices in several areas. We documented these problems and published the records with inconsistent data (<http://www.crcb.eu/?p=1322>). The comparative analysis has pointed out that the official sites of Zambia or Bangladesh public procurement authority are more informative than that of the Hungarian is from certain aspects.

2. After the publication of our research note we learned from the news portals close to Orban's government that *Csaba Rigó*, the president of the HPPA was going to take legal actions against CRCB for harming HPPA's reputation, i.e. the HPPA would sue the CRCB. [See *The Public Procurement Authority is going to sue the corruption researcher linked to Soros (Bepereli a Közbeszerzési Hatóság a Soros-féle korrupciókutatót)*, Magyar Hírlap, March 9, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2mXn5VS>; and *Manipuláltak Sorosék? (Have the Soros' guys manipulated the research?)*, Magyar Idők, March 10, 2018, <https://bit.ly/2tN9WCG>.]

3. The prospect of the lawsuit was not a threat. The HPPA did indeed file a lawsuit against the CRCB in the above case. We became aware of this on July 29, 2018, when we received the official letter of the Budapest Capital Court by the post.

The injunction of the Budapest Capital Court (July 16, 2018)

4. The injunction (registration number: 22.P.22.496/2018/3-1) of the Budapest Capital Court (see its photocopy in Hungarian in the Appendix) dismissed the HPPA's claim in July 16, 2018. According to the CRCB's legal experts, rejection was basically based on formal reasons.

The next steps?

5. The CRCB will continue its activities, and we are waiting for the next steps of the HPPA.

6. It is obvious that the results of the scientific research can be debated by the science itself. That is precisely the possibility of the free scientific debate and the possibility for confirming or refuting every research result on the basic conditions of the science - without these there are no scientific results, there is no scientific development.

7. We hope that no one in Hungary will be forced to defend the validity of his research results in court.

Appendix: The injunction

The injunction of the Budapest Capital Court (*Fővárosi Törvényszék*) on the lawsuit of the HPPA against the CRCB

