

Presentation of the report on Hungary

Vienna, July 15th 2019

At the conference on „Europe and the rule of law“, held in Vienna on July 15th, the Austrian Judges Association organized a presentation of the EAJ report on Hungary (<https://www.iaj-uim.org/iuw/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Report-EAJ-Hungary.pdf>). The background and outcome of the fact-finding-mission in April 2019 was presented by Honorary President Gerhard Reissner. Judit Oltai, President of the Hungarian judge's association MABIE, informed about the latest controversy regarding salary of judges, which urgently needs an increase, and the fact that additional financial benefits totally depend on the goodwill of the President of the National Office of the Judiciary. She also described the current problems MABIE is confronted with after publicly criticising the President of the National Office of the Judiciary. Our Hungarian colleague Etelka Halasz, delegate to IAJ and EAJ, gave some impressive examples of undue interferences in appointment procedures by the National Office of the Judiciary. At a later podium discussion Viktor Vadasz, Member and Spokesperson of the National Judicial Council, described the situation of the Council, which is under strong pressure and prevented from exercising its control over the President of the National Office of the Judiciary. He underlined the urgent need for strengthening the rule of law in Hungary.

The conference and presentation were also attended by the Austrian Federal Chancellor Brigitte Bierlein who mentioned the ongoing Article 7 procedure in her speech on international cooperation of Constitutional Courts. The event was closely followed by the media. Austrian print and online media as well as the prime-time TV news reported on the situation in Hungary (see Twitter of Austrian Judges Association Richtervereinigung @richter_in).