

Civil Society Institutions

Judges Web

Making use of all the advantages of the 21st century medium – the Internet, a group of young people has made a major breakthrough in the implementation of the constitutional principle of public accessibility of court practice, making the operation and organization of courts more transparent for the general public.

Guided by the principles of promoting the rule of law and building a civil society, Judges Web was founded in August 1999 as a non-governmental, non-political and non-party civic organization, with the purpose to increase legal safety by enabling people to exercise their right to a quick and effective judicial protection.

The need to establish such an organization emerged as a result of many years of research in the area of court practices all over Croatia. The research has shown that it is often the judges who express the need to get better acquainted with the practices of other courts' judges, pointing at the problem of insufficient knowledge of judicial practices outside their own courts. This may result in erratic application of law and sometimes even totally contradictory judgements being passed in identical cases. The consequence of such practice is a certain degree of legal uncertainty, which is unacceptable in democratic societies. Hence the desire to help people by establishing the Judges Web that is supposed to contribute to a **uniform application of law and transparent court practices**.

To achieve these goals, the Judges Web has focused its activity primarily around the usage of modern technologies – the Internet. You may look for it at the following web address: www.sudacka-mreza.hr. Using the advantages of the medium, they have developed their activities in two main directions: the general public programme and the programme for individuals with legal education. The purpose of the programme designed **for the general public, being accessible to everybody**, is to improve the communication between the people and the courts by providing them with accurate and necessary information. Upon entering their website, all one needs to do is to enter the name of place - under the title "Sudovi" (=courts) – in which a person wants to exercise some right through the court. Based on such inquiry, one gets all the information about the competent court (territorial jurisdiction of the municipal, county or commercial court): address, phone numbers and office hours (for the general public and for lawyers separately) and contact phones for the clerks office, land registry department and the Court President's office, rules of behaviour and other remarks. It is also possible to have a look at brief CVs of the judges holding office at that particular court, as well as the map of the court building for easier cruising from one office to another. However, these valuable data are available only for a small number of courts, because the large majority of them still haven't replied to the inquiries that were sent out. But, even only establishing the territorial jurisdiction and the right ZIP code of a certain court, required for the timely arrival of court submissions (refer to GK No 4), which is possible for all places and courts, will be a great help to people needing such information. Furthermore, programmes are being made that will provide all necessary information on all lawyers, public notaries and expert witnesses for the relevant court, in that particular area.

The programme **for individuals with legal education**, as says the name, is intended for those who possess legal education of a certain kind or are in the process of acquiring it – judges, lawyers, public notaries and law students. Therefore, the access is restricted only to those who

have filled out corresponding forms, based on which they were given their username and a password. The reason for restricted accessibility, as the organization explains, lies primarily in the fact that they publish both the legally binding court decisions and those that are not, which might confuse a layman reader. This part of the programme offers the possibility of viewing a couple of hundred court decisions (in the future they hope there will be about ten thousand available on the web), that can be browsed in several ways: by the judge's name, by legal institution, by word or phrase, etc. This part of initiative is much more widely accepted, as the Organisation states, which is visible from the number of judges sending their court decisions for publication, being on the rise day by day. The very fact that the judges send their court decisions justifies not only the name, but also the activity of the Organization, encouraging the judges to expose their work to the scrutiny of their peers, setting themselves the best example to motivate the others. It is also worth mentioning that there is also some free space provided for the interaction between the judges, being intended only for the judges who use it to share their experience.

There are similar organizations in the West European countries and they are quite advanced in the United States, too. So, no wonder that the quality of work and the possibilities offered by the Organization have been recognized by institutions outside Croatia. Namely, for three years now the Judges Web has been financed mostly by donations of foreign institutions. On the national level, most of the support comes from the relevant Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Local Government, although it sometimes tends to be more of a declarative nature than real. Nevertheless, after some initial disapproval concerning their work, it is obvious that everybody, the judges in particular, are gradually getting accustomed to their work and use the results of their efforts, making the principle of transparency of court practices become ever more real. Naturally, besides gathering information on administrative issues, by visiting the Judges Web the general public will be able to exercise its right to get an insight into the court practices, contributing in that way to the idea of a civil society this website was originally intended for.



Sudačka mreža

Koristeći sve prednosti medija dvadeset i prvog stoljeća, interneta, grupa mladih ljudi napravila je velik iskorak u provedbi ustavnog načela o javnosti rada sudova, približivši njihov rad i organizaciju građanima

Utemeljena na načelima ostvarenja vladavine prava i izgradnje građanskog društva, u kolovozu 1999. godine utemeljena je Sudačka mreža – nevladina, nepolitička i nestranačka udruga građana s ciljem povećanja pravne sigurnosti ostvarenjem prava građana na brzu i učinkovitu sudsку zaštitu.

Potreba osnivanja ovakve Udruge sazrijevala je kroz višegodišnje istraživanje rada sudova u čitavoj Hrvatskoj. Ono je pokazalo da upravo suci često iskazuju zahtjev za boljim poznavanjem rada sudaca drugih sudova, odnosno ističu problem nedovoljnog poznavanja sudske prakse izvan granica vlastitih sudnica. To, naime, rezultira nejednakom primjenom zakona, a ponekad i posve kontradiktornim presudama u jednakim slučajevima te je posljedica ovakvog rada određen stupanj pravne nesigurnosti, što je nedopustivo u demokratskim društvima. Otuda i želja da se građanima pomogne uspostavom sudačke mreže koja bi trebala pridonijeti jedinstvenoj primjeni zakona i transparentnosti rada sudova.

Kako bi ostvarila ciljeve, Sudačka mreža svoju aktivnost bazira prvenstveno na uporabi suvremenih tehnoloških dostignuća – internetu. Stoga ih valja potražiti na web adresi www.sudacka-mreza.hr. Zahvaljujući svim prednostima koje ovaj medij pruža, razvili su svoju djelatnost u dva smjera: program za građanstvo i program za osobe s pravnim obrazovanjem.

Svrha programa koji je namijenjen građanstvu i otvoren svima jest poboljšati komunikaciju građana sa sudovima pružanjem točnih i za to potrebnih informacija. Po otvaranju njihove stranice na internetu potrebno je samo pod naslovom »Sudovi« upisati mjesto u kojem građanin želi ostvariti kakvo pravo putem suda. Na temelju takvog upita, moći će dobiti sve podatke o sudu koji je nadležan za to mjes-

to (mjesno nadležnom općinskom, županijskom ili trgovačkom sudu): adresu, telefon te uredovno vrijeme (posebno za građane, a posebno za odvjetnike) i kontakt telefone za pisarnicu, zemljишnoknjižni odjel i predsjednika suda, kao i pravila ponašanja na sudu te ostale napomene. Također, moguće je pogledati i kratke životopise sudaca koji sude na tom sudu, kao i tlocrt

laze prije svega u činjenici da objavljajuju kako pravomoćne, tako i nepravomoćne presude, koje bi mogle zbuniti neukog čitatelja. Ovim dijelom programa korisnicima je ponuđen uvid u nekoliko stotina presuda (nadaju se da će ih u budućnosti biti i desetak tisuća), koje je moguće pregledavati na razne načine tražeći presude poimenično određenog suca, pravne institute,

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zgrade suda koji bi građanima trebao skratiti put od vrata do vrata. Ovi uistinu korsni podaci dostupni su, međutim, samo za manji broj sudova jer velik broj njih još uvijek nije odgovorio na poslane im upite. Međutim, već utvrđivanje mjesne nadležnosti sudova i broja poštanskog ureda suda, potrebnog da podneseći građana stignu na vrijeme (vidi GK br.4), koji su mogući za sva mjesta odnosno sudove, bit će građanima od velike koristi. Također, u izradi su programi koji će omogućiti građanima da s obzirom na željeno mjesto pronađu sve relevantne podatke o svim odyjetnjima, javnim bilježnicima i sudskim vješticima na tom području.

Program za osobe s pravnim obrazovanjem namijenjen je, kao što i naziv govori, osobama koje imaju pravno znanje određene vrste ili ga stječu – sucima, odvjetnicima, javnim bilježnicima, pravnicima i studentima prava. Zbog toga je pristup dozvoljen samo onima koji ispune odgovarajuće formulare na temelju kojih dobivaju korisničko ime i zaporku (lozinku). Razloge za ograničen pristup u Udrzi na-

maksimalno motivirajuće. Ovdje valja spomenuti i otvoreni prostor za interakciju sudaca, koji je rezerviran samo za suce koji ga koriste za razmjenu iskustava.

Slične organizacije postoje i u zemljama Zapadne Europe, a znatno su razvijene i u Americi. Ne čudi stoga što su kvalitetu rada i mogućnosti koje daje Udruga prepoznale institucije izvan Hrvatske. Naime, u svojem trogodišnjem radu Sudačka mreža finansirana je uglavnom donacijama stranih institucija, a na domaćem planu najviše joj potpore daje matično Ministarstvo pravosuđa, uprave i lokalne samouprave, mada ponekad, ističu u Udruzi, više načelnu nego stvarnu. Nakon početnih negodovanja na njihov rad, vidljivo je da se svi, a najviše suci privikavaju na njihov rad i koriste plovodima toga rada, ostvarujući tako u potpunosti načelo transparentnosti rada sudova. Naravno, i građani će posjetom internet stranicama Sudačke mreže moći, osim dobivanja potrebnih informacija administrativne naravi, ostvariti pravo na uvid u rad sudova, pridonoseći tako ideji civilnog društva kojoj su ove stranice i namijenjene. •