

Milestone in the development of pro bono

23 countries and 20 corporations were present at the European Pro Bono Summit in Budapest

A sustainable and powerful civil society could emerge through the strengthening of relationships between corporate and civic organizations – was one of the conclusions reached by the European Pro Bono Summit conference organised in Budapest, in the course of which, Tibor Navracsics delivered a speech on the perspectives of Pro Bono. In the future more enterprises and civil organisations are planning to make use of the possibilities offered by pro bono expertise. The European Commission is also seriously engaged in the dissemination of knowledge based pro bono projects.

Budapest, 26 October 2017 – Corporate pro bono practices based on expertise are developing in Hungary, which constitutes a good starting point for those who would like to make progress in this field. From the point of view of social justice and even sustainability of civil organizations, it is very important to adopt a range of good practices and disseminate them widely. This was one of the conclusions agreed in the Pro Bono Summit.

One of the main milestones of the development in the national pro bono field has been the organisation of the European Pro Bono Summit in Budapest between the 18-20 October, attended by the best known actors of the pro bono movement. More than hundred representatives of 23 countries and 20 corporations participated at the conference. During the two day summit pro bono experts have shared experiences, forwarded ideas and advice to those working both in corporate or civil organizations. The future of pro bono within the European Union was also raised at the event.

*„The European Commission is committed to a solid partnership with volunteering and CSR, an area where business and public sector can cooperate to the benefit of both. The Commission works hard on promoting the dissemination of expertise based pro bono projects in the member states” – said **Tibor Navracsics** EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sports.*

More efficient civil society and effective corporations

The pro bono support is in many cases not only gap filling for the civil society but represents also an added value in terms of effectiveness for corporations and their brands. The experience based corporate voluntary programs compensate the missing business knowledge of civil organisations, allowing these to develop successfully new services, carry out communication campaigns or establish a sustainable finance plan. At the same time, these programs help the adaptability of employees; they serve as an effective tool for talent management within the enterprise and strengthen the employer’s brand.

The innovative corporations taking part in the conference clearly stated that they will intensify the creation and dissemination of pro bono programs in the future, since helping to solve social challenges was also a way of helping the effectiveness of corporations. The

representatives of the invited civil organisations decided to use more widely the possibilities offered by such programs. Thus strengthening corporate and civil relationships will help the development of a solid and sustainable civil society.

„The experience based corporate pro bono practice is getting stronger in Hungary. It is in our common interest that more and more programs be started and developed by corporations, which could then be used to improve business knowledge and help to solve social issues. The common work done within pro bono programs can have tremendous effects on the projects of civil organisations and at the same time are important tools for corporations in areas such as talent management or brand development.” – told **András F. Tóth**, Executive Director of ÖKA, Volunteering Hungary, main organiser of the European Pro Bono Summit.

The experiences described in the conference show that the new online digital apps will play a more important role in the future, which in turn will enlarge the number of beneficiaries implicated in these projects.

„We are proud that this year the first day of the European Pro Bono Summit has been organised in the Váci Greens Business Park. Our firm actively supports the dissemination of CPR in Hungary. Skills based pro bono work as well as volunteering are an important part of our corporate core values. We believe that a corporation like GE could initiate and lead a dialogue allowing corporations, civil organisations, governments and universities to engage in knowledge sharing and become more sustainable and competitive through pro bono activities” – expressed **Joerg Bauer**, President of GE Hungary.

The second day of the event was held at the Central European University where KPMG conducted a workshop targeting representatives of corporations, in which national and international good practices were shared.

„It was a good experience for us to see that the main national corporations have already discovered the possibilities of knowledge-based volunteer programs and have joined the national pro bono movement. At KPMG’s special workshop, participants were able to discover the good practices of these corporations, and jointly work out those practices by which the pro bono programs may become sustainable: close, intertwined relation between business and individual aims; principles and tools for a systematic measurement of outside and inside effects.” said **István Szabó**, KPMG CPR Manager.

Pro bono is the form of CR that is developing more quickly than any other. This is due not only to the fact that it enhances business performance but because it has a real effect on the community and on professional development, helping also employees’ commitment” – told **Joel Bashevkin**, Director of Social Ventures at the Tides Foundation (San Francisco), keynote speaker of the event.

During the Summit, the first Pro Bono FuckUpNight took place at the Prezi – House of Ideas, where four lecturers coming from US, India, France shared their failures and the lessons to be drawn from these failed pro bono projects.

The main organiser of the conference, Volunteering Hungary (ÖKA) is waiting for the application of organisations which by the support given by professionals would like to increase the effectiveness of their work, as well as the corporation's offers through which important knowledge could be given to national organisations. The next Global Summit of the Global Pro Bono Network will take place in Mumbai, February 2018

Key supporters of the program: BMW Herbert Quandt Foundation, Foreign Ministry of French Republic, and GE, KPMG, Dentons, Generali, E.ON, PwC and TESCO were financially supporting the event.

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