

# The Civil Guard

## Legislation on the Auxiliary Police

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In the field of public security activities, volunteers play a significant role, of which we can see many examples both domestically and abroad. In our country, the civil police is the organisation that has the legal authority to carry out social crime prevention activities as an element of complementary policing. The author of the study undertakes to present, as a practicing law enforcement professional and civil police leader – after a brief look at the establishment of the movement and its reasons – the most important previous and currently running priority programs of the civil police, their reasons, implementation and significance. The author wishes to contribute to the comprehensive scientific research and mapping of the operation of the civil police, recognising the fact that the researched topic of crime prevention, civil participation in maintaining public order and public safety is a timely issue, that under the current circumstances, the role of civil police is an indispensable aid to the police, and that the priority programs contribute to the high-quality performance of civil police tasks, thereby improving the subjective sense of security of citizens. A necessary element of research conducted on this topic is the discussion of the above questions.

**Keywords:** civil guard, security, prevention, service, program

### The creation and role of the civil police: a short introduction

The significant increase in crimes during the period of the regime change made it necessary for self-organising groups to be formed in order to prevent crimes and other illegal acts and to participate in the establishment and maintenance of public order and public security. Over time, self-defence groups were grouped into organisations, which was made possible by Act II of 1989 on the Right of Association. In order to achieve public security

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through civil cooperation and to assist state bodies, civil guards and civil guard associations began their activities, which became socially accepted and respected. As a result of their successful activities, the National Association of Self-Defence Organisations was established, which on 30 November 1991 – due to the significant expansion of tasks and the expectations of the population – took the name of the National Civil Guard Association.<sup>2</sup>

Under the leadership of the National Civil Guard Association, the civil guard associations and their regional associations, which operate legally in Hungary, are self-organised by the population, and were established for the purpose of preventing social crime and accidents, protecting children and youth, and protecting the environment in the interest of stronger public order and public safety, and have become social crime prevention organisations with unified action, the same approach, well-organised and with definite objectives, at the same time embracing the largest number of members. They have become organisations that could be suitable for contributing to the establishment and maintenance of public order and public safety and for cooperating with other organisations to this end. The establishment and maintenance of public safety is the result of the close cooperation of several actors – local governments, police, civil and private organisations – or, as László Christián puts it, the product of cooperation.<sup>3</sup>

### The importance of programs in the activities of the civil police

Since its establishment in the early 1990s, the civil guard has undergone significant development in several aspects. The number of organisations and volunteer civil guards has increased. The role of the movement in creating and maintaining public safety has continuously grown, and its activities have become more diverse. Over the years, the police have increasingly viewed the civil guard as a strategic partner. Joint services have become regular, involving the civil guard in activities that could not be carried out solely with the capacities of the police. In addition, it has carried out social crime prevention as its own activity by providing public services and exercising other activities.<sup>4</sup>

When we mention crime prevention, security and public safety, we should talk about them in a broader sense. Perhaps the most accurate way to put it is to say that we consider it the task of the civil police to comprehensively participate in the prevention of illegal acts, including all those undesirable behaviours, phenomena and even events independent of human factors, which influence the subjective sense of security of citizens.

The goal of the civil guard is to improve the sense of security of the population, and in doing so, to deal with issues that affect the sense of security of the population of the settlement and the country as much as possible in their place of residence. The programs of the National Civil Guard Association are of particular importance in working towards this end, which are organised by the civil guard with the aim of preventing crime and taking

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<sup>2</sup> BACSÁRDI-CHRISTIÁN 2018.

<sup>3</sup> CHRISTIÁN 2020.

<sup>4</sup> KARDOS 2024.

action against phenomena that disturb the population and negatively affect their sense of comfort, as well as providing assistance.

## Priority programs of the civil police

The priority programs of the civil police gained special importance in the 2010s. The earliest and one of the most significant was the civil police program called “300 × 100 Safety”, which is also worth looking back on because as a consequence or result of it, we can still encounter programs running today in the civil police’s activities.

### “300 × 100 Safety”

The experiences of the civil police activity in the two decades following the change of regime – in line with the results of criminological scientific research – have confirmed that crime is a complex social phenomenon, which can only be effectively combated with the cooperation of every citizen and the local community. Taking into account international and Hungarian “good practices” of environmental and community crime prevention, and based on the requests and guidelines of the National Crime Prevention Strategy, the Ministry of the Interior and other cooperation partners – in particular the police and local governments – the National Civil Guard Association regularly announced and successfully implemented crime prevention programs.

Creating and maintaining complex security, improving the quality of life, well-being and spirit of citizens, in addition to general measures, requires that we continuously pay special attention to the local characteristics of settlements and the environment. Based on these, measures affecting public safety and the crime prevention methods applied should be determined.

With the special support of the Ministry of the Interior, the professional guidance of the National Police Headquarters, and in cooperation with the National Crime Prevention Council, the presidency of the National Civil Guard Association initiated the announcement of the differentiated “100 × 100 Security” model citizen guard program strengthening public security in 100 settlements of the country. Based on the experiences of the successes achieved, an additional 150 settlements joined it in 2014, so the program was called “250 × 100 Security” in 2014–2015. In 2016, it already affected 300 settlements, where “100 percent public security” was announced, the name of the program was changed to “300 × 100 Security” and lasted until the end of 2017.

The programme aimed to:

- designating medium-term citizen guard action goals and priorities that can be implemented (to be implemented) in settlements (settlement parts) with public safety challenges that take into account the population’s sense of security and that are different from the average, defining the methods of implementation and providing special support

- obtaining the support of the Ministry of the Interior and other cooperating organisations, as well as citizens, for a specific program that treats special characteristics and local peculiarities as a priority
- contributing with the practical results of the effective community-building, public safety-maintaining and security-improving programs of the National Civil Guard Association, county associations and associations to the elimination of inequalities, to the introduction and acceptance of norms and behavioural rules accepted in society
- popularising citizen guard, increasing its recognition, and increasing the number of citizen guard associations (with special attention to young citizen guards)
- research and implementation of cooperation opportunities, evaluation and utilisation of experiences
- documenting the main aspects and results of the program's implementation (in writing, audio and video recordings), making recommendations to competent institutions, organisations, as well as citizens and their communities

The program brought the civil guards and district commissioners closer together, and established and strengthened relationships and cooperation with public area supervisors (settlement guards), professional game wardens, forest and field guards, nature conservation guards, and social fish and game wardens. The association's system of relationships with other civil society organisations, established for crime prevention and charitable purposes, also expanded. In 90% of the participating settlements, the number of registered crimes decreased significantly, and the subjective sense of public safety of the residents increased.

As mentioned above, other programmes and tasks have been implemented in connection with the above, which are still ongoing and will be discussed later.

### **Metropolitan Crime Prevention Program of the Police and the Civil Guard**

The crime prevention program described above was primarily aimed at small settlements with a small population, where the civil police are present. However, it is necessary to mention settlements with larger areas and populations, large cities, where civil crime prevention faced different challenges due to the characteristics of the settlement. The problems of large cities had to be addressed at least as much, which is why the Metropolitan Crime Prevention Program of the Police and the Civil Police was also carried out at the same time as the "300 × 100 Security" program.

The National Crime Prevention Strategy updated crime prevention tasks and provided a comprehensive analysis of the complex social phenomenon of violations that occurred in the previous decade. It set general objectives to enhance public safety, improve people's subjective sense of security, control the processes that lead to crime and reduce the quantity of crime. The implementation of the strategy was realised in action plans for specific periods, in which vigilante organisations played a significant role.

As we have previously predicted, with the experience of the first twenty-five years of the civil police, with legal authorisation, as the only civil society organisation for crime prevention, as a strategic partner of the police, and with the professional and service guidance of the police, it initiated crime prevention programs that met social and community needs, which it successfully implemented.

During the objectives, special attention had to be paid to urban crime prevention. Among other things, the place of residence also plays a significant role in becoming a victim, and crime is primarily a phenomenon associated with cities, especially large cities. In an urban environment, relationships between people are looser and community cohesion is weaker than in a small settlement. The most common places of commission are the streets of cities, deserted parks, other secluded areas, staircases or elevators of larger apartment buildings, public transport, busy meeting points visited by young people in large numbers (shopping malls, plazas, their parking lots, arcades, train stations and their surroundings, metro junctions, stops of surface public transport or popular night spots). A significant proportion of crimes committed in public areas, such as vandalism, disorderly conduct, assault and robbery are committed in or around entertainment venues.

The potential targets of criminals are invariably elderly people living alone in their homes. Perpetrators usually enter the property at night or in the early hours of the morning by deception or physical force, where they obtain the victims' money and valuables not only through intimidation but also with increasingly brutal violence. In order to increase the efficiency of urban crime prevention, the National Civil Guard Association and the National Police Headquarters – with the support of the Ministry of the Interior, the National Crime Prevention Council and Aegon Hungary General Insurance Ltd. – announced the Metropolitan Crime Prevention Program for the years 2016–2017.

The aim of the programme was to implement the partnership tasks included in Government Resolution 1744/2013 (X. 17.) on the National Crime Prevention Strategy. The defining task and objective were the police – civil guard cooperation that can be implemented (to be implemented) in large cities (or city districts) with public safety challenges that greatly influence the subjective sense of security of citizens, the designation of action goals and priorities, the definition of implementation methods and their special support.

For the specific programme that prioritises special urban characteristics and local specificities, it was necessary to obtain the special support of additional cooperating organisations and the population for the years 2016–2017.

The aim of the National Civil Guard Association, the county associations and other associations was to contribute to the dissemination and acceptance of accepted norms and rules of conduct in society with the practical results achieved during the effective community-building, public safety-maintaining and safety-improving program. In addition, the aim was to popularise the civil guard and police, increase their recognition, increase the number – and staff – of civil guard associations, the practical implementation and improvement of cooperation opportunities in cities (districts), and evaluate and utilise experiences.

Documenting the implementation, main moments and results of the program (in writing, on audio and video recordings) and making further proposals based on these

was essential for the competent institutions, organisations, as well as citizens and their communities.

The program involved:

- citizens' patrol associations operating in county capitals, supported by county associations and county police headquarters, with a crime prevention program that includes the specificities and vulnerabilities of the operating area
- citizens' patrol associations operating in the districts and agglomerations of the capital, supported by the Pest County and Budapest associations, the Pest County Police Headquarters and the Budapest Police Headquarters in the Budapest area
- the list of citizens' patrol associations participating in the program (making commitments) will be provided by the county–capital associations after the program has been accepted and the action plans have been compiled

The main content elements of the Metropolitan Crime Prevention Program (action plan) were as follows:

- developing the public safety and crime prevention strategy of the city (district – city district) with the cooperating partners, and if they already have a strategy, reviewing and modernising it
- learning, studying and thoroughly evaluating the locations and circumstances of events with unusual public safety challenges, the risks endangering young people, the characteristics determining the population's sense of security, the reasons enabling the commission of crimes and violations, and the processes leading to the commission; within this, the reasons for committing crimes, the factors influencing becoming a victim, the reduction of opportunities facilitating the commission of crimes and the determination of applicable methods of prevention
- planned implementation of the basic tasks of the civil guard associations (public area patrol service – surveillance service – signal guard activity) coordinated with collaborators (with the professional coordination of the police)
- multi-level, multi-sectoral reconciliation of interests in crime prevention and preparation and implementation of prevention plans based on consensus, including close cooperation with the police, the local government, professional organisations, local institutions and members of local society
- definition of priority objectives and tasks of great importance:
  - establishment of a coordinated duty and alarm system
  - establishment of communication conditions between collaborators
  - ensuring responses to emergency calls and reports
  - support for the establishment of civil guard associations in higher education institutions (organisation of the "Youth Patrol")
- effective transmission and continuous communication of the program and related information: informing all age groups of the population – with special attention to those at risk – distributing crime prevention and public safety and

- traffic safety advice and leaflets with the involvement of young civil guards and young people performing community service and through the media
- proactive participation in architectural crime prevention, reporting situations requiring action (public lighting, vandalism, malfunctions, etc.)
  - contribution to the suppression of the most common types of disorderly and violent violations in public areas
  - strengthening community trust in the civil guard, the police and other state institutions, local governments and among citizens
  - positive shaping of civil thinking
  - implementation of the “Respect for the Years, Safety for the Elderly!” program in housing estates; organisation of a “Night Watch” service with the involvement of suitable elderly people
  - organisation and management of the “Neighbours for Each Other Movement”
  - active use of the opportunities of “Public Safety Coordination Forums”, regular organisation of public information, participation in the operation of Crime Prevention Centres
  - contribution to the organisation and support of useful leisure time, the development of social competencies of young people, the building of small communities (initiation of evening and night programs)
  - reducing crime opportunities related to key events (holidays, shopping periods, cultural and leisure events), contributing to prevention and detection, and securing endangered areas
  - participation in national campaigns initiated by partners and collaborators, especially in the police’s “We’re Going Home” crime prevention program

### **“The Periphery Security”**

The Ministry of Agriculture and the National Civil Guard Association announced a program entitled “Safety of Outer Areas, Protection of Our Environment” in November 2019. The goal of the program was to pay greater attention to the protection of forests, fields, arable crops, vineyards and farms, and to contribute to the prevention of violations that harm the environment and destroy our environment.

Agricultural property protection is a particularly important task and a common interest of the country. In order to increase the efficiency of agricultural activities, it is advisable to further deepen the cooperation between field guards – as persons performing law enforcement tasks – and civil guards.

The aim of the civil guard program was to prevent violations of law – thefts from enclosed gardens, fields and forests – to guarantee the safety of people living on farms and in rural areas, to protect farms, valuable assets and resorts, and to perform field guard duties in settlements where there is no field guard service. The general goal is to take an active role in environmental and nature protection. The slogan has become: “Those who sow shall reap.” To this end, civil guard associations must create a so-called “Outer Area



Security Network”, which in practice means that the associations organise a significant part of the civil guard services in the outer areas.

Crime in the outer areas is moderate and seasonal. In winter, wood thefts are typical, and in summer and autumn, arable crops, vineyards and orchards are at risk. People living on farms can be potential targets for offenders.

The National Civil Guard Association declared 2020 the year of “Security of Rural Areas”. The program was implemented primarily by civil guard associations, but also by field guards, nature conservation guards, fish guards, hunting associations, professional hunters and affected property owners.

Launched with the principled support of the Ministry of the Interior and the professional supervision of the National Police Headquarters, the program was attended by 2,000 associations of the National Civil Guard Association and approximately 63,000 civil guards, including the Mounted Section. The Ministry of Agriculture allocated 40 million HUF as funding, which covered the security of the outer areas and the resource and equipment requirements of the crop safety program.

### **Child and youth protection: “One School – One Civil Guard” Program**

The family, the institutional system of child and youth protection, educational and upbringing institutions, the police and civil organisations, including the civil police, play a significant role in preventing children and young people from becoming offenders and victims.

The National Civil Guard Association stated in its medium-term strategy that, in order to reduce child and youth crime and prevent victimisation, the civil police should be more organised in schools and develop cooperation opportunities that promote accident prevention, contribute to improving school children’s traffic knowledge, and prevent sources of danger to children.

To this end, in October 2006, it announced the “One School – One Civil Guard” program and asked the teaching community to implement it by mutual assistance in the following main areas:

- general crime prevention, as well as the prevention of child and youth crime and victimisation
- drug prevention in particular
- accident prevention, compliance with traffic rules
- training of civil guards, summer camps

The legal basis for the program is provided by Section 4/A (3) of the Civil Guard Act, according to which the civil guard – based on a cooperation agreement concluded with the civil guard and the kindergarten and primary school maintainer – is entitled to perform traffic signal duties in the immediate vicinity of kindergartens and primary schools in order to facilitate the safe crossing of children on the road.



The Statutes of the National Civil Guard Association highlight, among the goals and tasks, the contribution to the prevention and detection of crimes, the search for missing persons and the prevention of child accidents within the framework of the “One School – One Civil Guard” program. The Organisational and Operational Regulations of the National Civil Guard Association emphasise that in order to achieve the objectives of the civil guard movement, the activities of the civil guard organisation include participation in the educational work of child and school crime prevention.

After the program was announced, it started with 5 schools in each county, and more and more schools joined. Currently, 778 schools and nearly 1,000 teachers are participating in the program.

Within the framework of the program, it was recommended that students receive information and training on crime prevention issues affecting them during class (classroom teacher’s class) or optionally (e.g. professional club) or as part of leisure activities (competitions, summer camps).

Its implementation requires that theoretical training be primarily conducted by civil guards or teachers who have pedagogical flair, sufficient professional preparation and sufficient practical knowledge.

During practical sessions, highly qualified professionals (police officers, civil guards, teachers) can also be involved. It is important that the person conducting the training has a thorough knowledge of the educational institution’s legal requirements and related social expectations.

The training was implemented during a 3 + 1 hour theoretical and a 22-hour practical training. The practical and theoretical training ensured that the children learned about the regulations related to crime and accident prevention, the conditions for avoiding becoming a victim and the measures that can be expected of them in the event of surveillance, event security, minor accident scenes, etc.

The schools participating in the program included the training of civil police and crime prevention skills in addition to the development of correct traffic behaviour in the “Pedagogy Program” prescribed by the National Core Curriculum and the Education Act.

The schools must appoint their own specialist teacher who is responsible for the training included in the program. A suitable non-teacher member of the civil police association may also participate in the training as an instructor. The civil guard associations have designated those civil guards who are contact persons, liaison officers, and directly assist the institution in training, education and maintaining school order.

An important element of the program is traffic safety, which is most prominent in the life of schools in connection with periods (school start, events). The civil guards typically assist in classic police tasks – patrolling, securing the area. As a result, the area of prevention is the one in which they can participate effectively, and this is the basis of the program. They can do excellent work in this educational propaganda activity by using its widest possibilities. A key period is the start of school in September, when the civil guards participate in traffic control in cooperation with the police. The police have now made a decade-long commitment to assess the traffic safety situation around schools even before the start of the season, and the civil guards also have a role in this.

## Civil guards for the safety of the start of the School Year Program

As part of the program, timed to coincide with the start of the school year, the civil guards, independently and in cooperation with the police, primarily participate in crime prevention and traffic safety tasks. The declared goal of their presence is to prevent harm to children – related to drugs, alcohol, sexual and property crimes – and to avoid child accidents.

As part of the start of the school year activities, the civil guard associations strive to prevent child accidents around schools and to prevent illegal acts aimed at harming children (distribution of drugs and pornographic products, pedophilia and other violent incidents).

The safety of children is a common concern for all of us, therefore it is necessary to activate and involve teachers and parents. Civil guard associations must be involved in the implementation of the police's "School Police" program. They must provide regular information about the measures and initiatives taken to prevent crimes and traffic accidents and protect youth with the help of local media. Preventive and investigative actions are constantly necessary, the organisation of which must be coordinated with educational institutions and parent working groups. It is particularly important to keep away deviant persons and homeless people who pose a great danger to children, to expose these persons and to prevent their illegal behaviour. In this context, reporting to the police – and the civil police – is essential.

Based on a cooperation agreement between the civil police and the kindergarten and primary school operator, the civil guards regularly perform traffic signal duties in the immediate vicinity of kindergartens and primary schools to facilitate the safe crossing of the road by children. In many cases, police officers and municipal police inspectors are involved – at least during the first few weeks of the school year in September.

## "Respect for the Years, Safety for the Elderly!"

By the mid-2010s, the number of crimes committed against the elderly – primarily property crimes, petty crimes and violent crimes – had increased. Unworthy, rude and insulting treatment of the elderly became common. The crimes were characterised by the credulity of the elderly, their inability to defend themselves due to their deteriorating condition, and the exploitation of their poor living conditions.

Within the framework of the Hungarian Red Cross's "Crime Prevention and Social Safety Net" program, the National Civil Guard Association launched the "Respect for the Years, Safety for the Elderly!" program in order to improve the living conditions and sense of security of the elderly, the basic principles of which were:

- prevention of victimisation
- humanity
- neutrality
- independence
- voluntariness

- activity
- complexity
- continuity
- publicity
- direct partnership
- responsiveness

During the implementation of the program, the association leaders must coordinate the plans of the crime prevention public patrol and joint patrol services within the framework of police cooperation. They organise personal contact between patrols and elderly people in need, and inform those affected about the options for requesting help and raising an alarm. The continuous transfer of information necessary to prevent becoming a victim of crime between and towards law enforcement actors is essential.

In order to ensure continuous protection and rapid assistance, good neighbourly relations must be continuously strived for in the living environment of elderly people in need of support, to strengthen them, and to ensure that they become familiar with the good practices of the Neighbours for Each Other Movement. Elderly people with limited mobility but who want to take action for the safety of themselves and their living environment must be prepared and involved in Neighbours for Each Other Movement activities.

With broad cooperation, special attention should be paid to organising outlying patrol services in settlements with significant farm areas. Depending on the conditions, regular (daily) telephone contact should be maintained with elderly people living on farms far from settlements who can be considered potential victims.

Charitable activity indirectly, and sometimes directly, significantly improves the subjective sense of security of the elderly, who are struggling with basic livelihood problems and who have a pessimistic view of their future. In order to provide effective assistance, the primary task is to identify problems and find solutions based on local cooperation. County and association civil leaders and association members should take the initiative in positively shaping the attitudes of people living in their areas of competence and be active in helping elderly people in need of support.

Efforts should be made at regional and local levels to use modern communication tools, especially the most popular emergency call devices among the elderly, such as mobile phones, signalling systems and remote monitoring. In order to increase the effectiveness of their use, elderly people should be informed about the purchasing and use options for the most advantageous devices for them.

The “standby duty” system and the response capability must be further developed at the association level. In order to provide more efficient, quality crime prevention and victim assistance activities, it is necessary to initiate the provision of personal and material conditions for 24-hour permanent county duty, which can relieve the duty of state agencies and provide significant assistance to the remote surveillance system serving charity, victim assistance and crime prevention for those in need.

## Neighbours for Each Other Movement

“It is better to prevent crimes than to punish them” – we know from Cesare Beccaria.

Crime threatens what is most precious to every person: our loved ones, our own lives, our health, our cherished values and our safety. In the fight against crime, we cannot do without the help and participation of the community in crime prevention. Crime can be prevented where it can be realised, and it can be prevented by those who are primarily threatened.<sup>5</sup>

The National Civil Guard Association, during its decades-long activity, has purposefully and consistently spread its wings towards various segments of civil crime prevention. This led to the establishment of the Neighbours for Each Other Movement Working Committee. The years that have passed have proven that the renewal and reorganisation of the Neighbours for Each Other Movement has become relevant. From experience, we can say that this is the cheapest and most effective segment of crime prevention, which only requires adult thinking and will. As many young people and women as possible should be involved in this work, because this form of crime prevention is not just a question of men and women, and it is not age-dependent.

The aim of the movement's activities is to reduce the causes and circumstances that enable crime at the local level, to help prevent victimisation, to improve the community awareness and spirit that support each other, so that everyone can contribute to the protection of their own, their neighbours' and community property, so that they can help each other not only in the event of a crime, but also in other events (e.g. accidents, illnesses, fires, etc.).

The importance and expansion of the Neighbours for Each Other Movement can be a very serious force in the palette of crime prevention, because an immeasurable amount of power is hidden within the walls of houses, which is why we want and need to activate their residents. When we talk about the Movement, we are talking about a social crime prevention program that aims to prevent crimes and other dangerous events occurring in the residential community, and to create safer living conditions. To this end, it is necessary to strengthen people's respect for each other, devotion and community awareness.

In general, despite the decrease in the number of crimes, cruel acts committed against the elderly and single people increase, and in order to prevent these acts, we must get ahead of them. One of the equivalents of this is the Neighbours for Each Other Movement. In order for our program to expand sufficiently, we can think of different methods and solutions with the same goal. In order to operate more efficiently, the necessary organisational structure must be developed within the National Civil Guard Association, those responsible must be determined, and the leaders of the county associations must be made aware that the program should be broken down into regions to find the appropriate personal conditions who will make these noble ideas a success, both for the benefit of society and for the common good of all of us.

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<sup>5</sup> FÖLDVÁRI 2001: 43.

## Pick it! – Volunteer for a Clean Hungary campaign

Pick it! is the largest volunteer movement in our country. As part of the garbage collection campaign, TeSzedd! [Pick it!] volunteers clean up all over the country.

The National Civil Guard association also considers the protection of our environment to be a particularly important task, which is why it participates in the national Pick it! campaign with great effort every year. It is committed to implementing the program, and accordingly asks everyone to register and participate in the campaign as much as possible.

## 2024 is the year of preventing illegal dumping

The theme of the campaign was that 2024 was the year of prevention of illegal waste dumping by the civil police. Illegal waste dumping has increased significantly in many locations across the country, both in the inner and outer areas of settlements. In March 2024, the National Civil Guard Association announced a program to detect landfills, which the government supported with 200 million HUF. The associations participating in the program received a reimbursement of 150 thousand HUF each.

During their patrols – a significant part of which was carried out in rural areas – the associations sought to detect illegal waste dumps. In addition to detection, the civil guard's job was to collect evidence. If anything was found in the waste that could lead to a conclusion about the owner or the transporter, i.e. the possible perpetrators, they recorded it by taking photos or videos, and then notified the local government, or, if it was industrial quantities of waste, the police.

The mounted section of the civil guard helped find illegal dumps at several locations in the country on the Serbian–Hungarian border, for which the civil guards could now also use drones.

The program was a significant success. As András Túrós, President of the Hungarian National Police put it, the civil police fulfilled what they undertook with five stars. 25,000 civil police from a thousand civil police associations collected 15,000 cubic meters of waste nationwide, and approximately 3,000 reports were made to the authorities regarding illegal waste dumps.

## Young civil guards – Community service

As we have mentioned, there is a unanimous opinion that young people are needed in the civil guard organisation. They need their drive, their will to do, their new outlook, their modern worldview and their knowledge.

There is an opportunity that can ensure that young people get to know the civil guard and get a taste of the beauty of working for the community. They experience the joy and satisfaction that a person feels after overcoming obstacles and difficulties, knowing that

they have done a lot for the community. This opportunity is School Community Service, which can take place at the civil guard.

Students can participate in the following activities at civil guard associations:

- “Respect for the Years, Safety for the Elderly!” program
- “Local Environmental Protection Program”
- “Peer Helper”

Students participating in the programs do the work in pairs or trios. If only one student works in a small town, a civil guard will accompany him.

The aim of the program is for young people to recognise the need for community volunteer work and civil guarding can be the perfect base for this. If we can fill these 50 hours – which are mandatory – with meaningful activities that also motivate young people, they can become members of the civil guard after the program.

## Summary

As this study also shows, the civil police has undergone significant development over the past three decades. It was the efforts of neighbours concerned about the order of their neighbourhoods, looking after each other and their immediate surroundings for their own safety, that led to the nationally established organisation of today’s citizens, with its diverse activities, diverse responsibilities and qualified membership, which, as a strategic partner of the police, is one of the custodians of the country’s public security – as András Túrós, the President of the National Civil Guard Association, underlines it in an interview.<sup>6</sup> Its role is decisive in the performance of law enforcement tasks aimed at creating and maintaining public order and public security. Its service activities are uniform and of high quality, therefore the government, strategic partners and the country’s population can count on it to perform a wide variety of public security-related or people-helping tasks.

The various programs of the civil police, primarily aimed at preventing crime and other violations of the law, or traffic safety and public cleanliness, or charitable purposes, enrich the activities of the civil police, significantly contributing to achieving results, efficient task performance, and thereby improving the subjective sense of security of citizens.

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<sup>6</sup> LIPPAI–KARDOS 2021.

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