



## ***Pro bono* in the Czech Republic** **Roundtable for Attorneys and NGO Lawyers**

**Prague, March 11, 2008**

CEELI Institute, Havlíčkovy sady 58, Praha 2

Organized by Public Interest Lawyers Association and League of Human Rights, in cooperation with CEELI Institute Prague and Public Interest Law Institute Budapest

### **Program:**

- 13:00 - 13:15    **Introduction and welcoming participants**
- 13:15 - 13:30    **Pro bono in the context of access to legal aid in the Czech Republic**  
Vítězslav Dohnal (PILA director)
- 13:30 - 13:45    **Discussion**
- Issues:**
- pro bono and other elements of access to legal aid in the CR: relation between pro bono and state sponsored legal aid system
  - law firms and types of pro bono work (legal aid in individual cases, legal research and analysis, strategic litigation and public interest law, technical legal aid to NGOs)
- 13:45 - 14:00    **Benefits of pro bono for law firms**  
Mike Haroz (partner Goulston & Storrs, Boston)
- 14:00 - 14:15    **Discussion**
- Issues:**
- transferability of U.S. experience to the Czech environment
  - value of pro bono for relation between law firms and commercial clients
  - pro bono as a marketing tool
  - benefits of pro bono for qualification of young lawyers
- 14:15 - 14:45    **Coffee break**
- 14:45 - 15:00    **Pro bono in perspective of law firm working in the CR and other Central European countries**  
Erwin Hanslik (partner e|n|w|c Attorneys)
- 15:00 - 15:15    **Discussion**
- Issues:**
- perspective of other law firms present at the roundtable

15:15-15:30 **Hungarian and Polish experience with pro bono development**  
Atanas Politov, Tamas Barabas (Public Interest Law Institute, Budapest)

15:30 -15:45 **Discussion**

**Issues:**

- transferability of Hungarian and Polish experience to Czech environment
- the role of Bar associations in pro bono development
- significance of joint pro bono declaration of law firms for pro bono development

15:45 – 16:00 **Pro bono: cooperation of NGOs and law firms**  
Veronika Kristková (League of Human Rights)

16:00 – 16:15 **Discussion:**

**Issues:**

- clearinghouse – practical issues
- how to test clients' means
- specialization of pro bono programs v. general pro bono programs
- pro bono and cooperation of law firms and legal clinics
- pro bono, public interest law and conflicts of interest

16:15 – 16:30 **Final discussion : Obstacles/Challenges for pro bono development in the Czech republic –further problems to solve**

**Issues:**

- economic capacity of law firms to undertake pro bono work v. legal qualification not matching clients needs (interest of law firms in training in other legal fields and practical lawyering skills)
- duty to pay VAT from legal services provided free of charge
- pro bono and court fees and proceedings cost as other obstacles to access to justice
- guarantees against abuse of pro bono legal services
- institutionalization of pro bono legal services in the law firm
- need for creating special platform for pro bono development

16:30 – 17:00 **Wrap-up, informal discussion over coffee**

---

*Round table prepared with the help of the Public Interest Law Institute*



*Funded by Rule of Law program, Open Society Fund Prague  
Funded also by grant from Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway in a framework of EHP financial mechanism  
and Norwegian financial mechanism distributed by NROS.*