



## CASE STUDY

# Hungarian anti-hate crime associations and local police started working together

This case study was developed by Glopolis and it captures the story of the most significant change that happened to the civil society organisations (CSOs) network thanks to the Stronger Roots Program. The network was awarded EUR 20,000 under the project and was provided with 30 hours of capacity development support.

### Network

Working Group Against Hate Crimes in Hungary

### Country

Hungary

### Period when the change was observed

November 2021

# The most significant change that the network achieved

Since 2012, the Working Group Against Hate Crimes in Hungary (WGAHC) has been advocating for better legislation against hate crimes. Although the legal framework has improved, hate crimes are still underreported and the issue is often overlooked at the local level. CSOs working on hate crimes are

concentrated in the capital, relevant knowledge and skills do not reach frontline police officers and victim support staff, hate crimes do not appear on the policy agenda of local governments, and **there is no dialogue between local CSOs working with different minority groups, or between CSOs and public bodies.**

Through Stronger Roots, the WGAHC was able to reach local authorities which work directly with hate crime victims, and thus **influence the institutional framework so the affected authorities can respond to hate crimes better.** Thanks to connections made at WGAHC workshops, associations fighting hate crimes and local police authorities **began working together in new, proactive ways.**



*“With the police’s proactive and supportive attitude, a new type of collaboration has emerged that shows that the police can be flexible and open. Preventive measures like this contribute to a more effective institutional framework, and encourage the network to try and find new ways of working with public bodies.”*

*Robert Buzsaki, Háttér Társaság*

# How the project contributed to the change

The WGAHC held workshops on how to tackle hate crimes for non-profit organisations and public authorities. These workshops created a space where people from local non-profit organisations and public bodies could share their concerns and feel confident that effective solutions would be developed. Holding workshops in-person helped the WGAHC **find relevant local institutions and employees who are in touch with hate crime victims**, so that they could be informed about how to treat victims and how to encourage them to report the incidents and emphasise the importance of reporting. These new contacts will make future cooperation easier and faster.

At one of the workshops in Budapest, a person from the local LGBT organisation asked the workshop

organiser if she has any contacts at the local police office because they were about to open a new office in the district and **expected violent attacks from far-right organisations**. After the workshop organiser forwarded their request, the local police responded quickly and appointed a liaison officer responsible for the safety of the new office. The police then inspected the office location with a person from the LGBT organisation, and **discussed possible threats and the organisation's concerns**. The police also ensured that surveillance cameras near the office were fully functional and operating, which means that the police were coordinating steps with the local government, which is responsible for operating the surveillance system.

Without the workshop, the local LGBT organisation's representative would not have known who might connect her with the local police, or if she had just contacted the police without any personal contact, the solution might not have been as profound. A simple request during a discussion at one of the workshops **turned into cooperation with multiple public bodies**.

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**The Stronger Roots** Program is jointly implemented by a consortium created by Open Society Fund Prague (CZ), Open Society Foundation Bratislava (SK), Glopolis (CZ) and the NIOK Foundation (HU). The Program aims to increase the resilience of civil society organizations and their networks in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, strengthen their social capital and embed them in the communities and societies in which they operate. Within the Program, the concept of transversal collaboration was developed and tested on 9 networks of civil society organizations.

**Glopolis** is an analytical and networking center with an 18-years long outstanding think-tank experience in research, policy monitoring, advocacy and campaigning, relationship development, resource mobilization and facilitating collaboration at the Czech, CEE and EU-wide levels. Glopolis mission is to support transversal collaboration beyond the non-profit sector towards resilient civil society and sustainable democracy. Therefore, it seeks out and expands the field of shared aspirations of the CSOs, governmental and business representatives and engages them in solving common, societal challenges.