

theodor heuss stiftung

zur Förderung der politischen Bildung und Kultur
in Deutschland und Europa

A Theodor Heuss Medal for the year 2015
is conferred on the non-governmental organization

Átlátszó.hu

for its outstanding contribution to the creation of a transparent, vital civil society on the road towards the peaceful development of democracy in Hungary.

“Atlatszo” means “Transparency”. Since July 2011, the watchdog organization with its website “atlatszo.hu” has worked in the interests of independent and critical investigative journalism. The organization was founded by prize-winning journalist Tamás Bodoky in cooperation with IT specialist Ákos Maróy. Since 2012, the team has been joined by Attila Mong, also a multiple award-winning investigative journalist. Dr. Csaba Tordai, Dr. Gábor Polyák and Dr. András Jóri, all three well-known Hungarian lawyers, take responsibility for the supervision of the initiative on the legal level. Atlatszo.hu is also supported by a large body of volunteers. The initiative is financed by independent funding programs and by over 1000 private individuals.

Independent journalism is heavily compromised in Hungary by the Media Act of 2011 and by current repressive activities. But democracy as the implementation of popular sovereignty is based on transparency and on civil rights. Atlatszo.hu as a civil rights movement seeks to implement these principles. The organization supports greater freedom of information and places pressure on ministries and authorities to release information. 60% of court cases filed by the organization have been successful. Using platforms provided online, Atlatszo.hu enables citizens to request information themselves. Over 3000 requests have been submitted using this method. An anonymized electronic mailbox often provides Atlatszo.hu with the initial impetus for its reports about corruption and abuse of power, discrimination and misappropriation of public funds across all the parties. High quality articles are published at least once a week on atlatszo.hu, the most important of them also in English.

Atlatszo.hu has prevailed against resistance and achieved a number of successes. Its lawsuit against the Constitutional Court resulted in greater protection for journalistic sources. Its articles reach over 500.000 readers a month. Atlatszo.hu has achieved recognition both in Hungary and beyond. With its commitment to transparency and the Rule of Law, freedom of information and press freedom, this non-governmental organization raises hope for the creation of a future Europe as union of strong democracies.

Stuttgart, May 16th 2015

Prof. Dr. Ludwig Theodor Heuss
Chair of the Management Board

Prof. Dr. Gesine Schwan
Chair of Trustees