

## Establishment of the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations

### Protecting the Future

More than twenty years has passed since the idea of protecting future generations first arrived in Hungary. Civil society groups such as “Protect the Future” finally found success in parliament in 2008 when the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations of Hungary started operating. The Commissioner is required to remain politically neutral, must have expertise in future generations, is actively working for future generations, and is well funded. An act designed to empower the Commissioner to protect the environment and aspire towards sustainable development was created: The Ombudsman Act. Since then, the Commissioner has been able to investigate hundreds of complaints, and guide economic activities as well as act as a consultant to other offices.

### Moving forward:

Conflicting economic interests are the main challenges that the Commissioner faces in their responsibilities. In these cases, the Commissioner is often targeted and undermined both legally and personally. Communication between stakeholders is a main strategy for the Commissioner, however much of this relies on developing awareness of sustainability concepts. The model has demonstrated that just the announcement of the Commissioner launching an investigation is enough for actors to consider sustainability and environment in their development projects. This is a strength that could be transposed to international frameworks.

### In this context we ask:

- How does the establishment of the Commissioner include unrepresented stakeholder perspectives in sustainable development?
- In what ways does the digitalisation of lives, jobs and free-time put the Commissioner at risk?
- How does the Ombudsman act engage with future generations outside of Hungary?
- How should the Commissioner approach understandings of economic development and “needs” of present and future generations?
- Who should decide the power behind the Commissioner?



Figure 1: Dr Sandor Fulop, Former Commissioner for Future Generations

### Case Literature:

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Future Generations of Hungary and his Impact by Éva Tóth Ambrusné