

# PORTRAIT

**Dr. Katalin Csere**  
**Judge, Head of Panel at the Criminal Department of the Curia**



*Consciousness plays an indispensable role in judicial work. Judges should adjudicate in full awareness of their responsibility and with constant regard to their own actions and thoughts. I have never categorised lawsuits as small or big cases, since the party to a proceeding always considers his case as the most important legal dispute. Respect for human dignity has consistently been my guiding principle throughout my career.*

In 1981, I graduated from the Faculty of Law of Eötvös Loránd University, but I had already been working at the Pest Central Districts Court as of the year 1978. My work as a court assistant and later as a trainee judge, partially under the tutorage of Judge Ágnes Frech helped me to master the application of criminal substantive and procedural law and had a decisive impact on my entire career. Both Judge Frech and University Professor Imre Békés strengthened my commitment to criminal law. Being assigned to Judge László Gábor, head of a traffic crimes panel at the High Court of Budapest gave me a final push of encouragement, I started to seek the opportunity to hear traffic cases and try negligently committed criminal offences.

I can say that I have worked at each and every instance of the court system and, with the exception of a small detour to the Judicial (Criminal) Department of the Ministry of Justice, I have dedicated my whole career to the judiciary. I had adjudicated cases within the traffic crimes panel of the High Court of Budapest for almost 14 years, later I was appointed judge of the then established Regional Appellate Court of Budapest. In 2006, I became judge of the Supreme Court, in 2012, I was appointed head of panel at the Curia. At the supreme judicial forum, I had been given the chance to learn from the greatest criminal judges and heads of panels, namely from Judge Győző Szabó, Judge Annamária Schaffer and Judge Sándor Katona.

My career development and advancement to higher levels within the judiciary has been facilitated by my belief in the method “learning by teaching”. Hence, I held seminars and later on gave lectures on criminal substantive law at Széchenyi István University (formerly Széchenyi István College). In recognition of my academic achievements, I was awarded the status of honorary associate professor in 2005. In addition, I participated in the work of a number of uniformity decision panels and jurisprudence-analysing working groups at the Curia.

As my judicial career – based on my own decision – is shortly coming to an end, being bestowed the award “Judge of the Curia in 2016” is of particularly great importance to me.