Former trainee of Hungarian air traffic service provider launches a crowdfunding campaign

**Gábor Kaszás applied to the air traffic controller training to HungaroControl in 2009 and was deemed suitable after a multi-step, serious vetting process. Two years later, right before the end of the training he was expelled due to ‘lack of skills’, and the fee of the training was demanded from him. After a lawsuit, he has to pay nearly 85,000 dollars, which he is trying to secure through crowdfunding.**

The admittance of Gábor Kaszás to the training was preceded by a selection process consisting of four steps. Applicants had to pass a special computer test designed for air traffic controller candidates, a medical fitness test, a psychological evaluation test, and an interview. In 2009, out of the several hundred applicants, only 9 young people were selected, among them Gábor Kaszás.

The training began in October, and it turned out only then, from the contract that the fee of the training is 18.8 million Forints (62,000 Dollars), which the company automatically covers. In exchange the trainees will have to work for HungaroControl for a minimum period of 5 years.

After the theoretical training, the simulator training was conducted by the instructors using unacceptable tone, and by overstepping their boundaries. When he mentioned this, he was only reprimanded. After all this, lies regularly appeared on his assessment sheet, but he had no say in these matters, and the management received these documents containing false information.

Later, during the on-the-job training he received negative feedback as well, as he was told that had made no progress. He thinks the reason for this lack of adequate progress was the fact that as opposed to his fellow trainees, he was allowed to work an average of 3 hours out of the 12-hour shifts, and sometimes only 45 minutes. Even after asking repeatedly to increase his work load, no changes were made.

In September 2011, at the 24th month of the training, he found out that he wouldn’t be allowed to take his final exam, and his training will be discontinued, as, according to the instructors, he was unable to handle stress during work, so was not up to the standards and would fail the exam.

Although it is proven that there had been no precedent for this, after letting Gábor go, the new management which has been leading the company since 2010 demanded the fee of the training up to what had already been paid, along with the housing support, which amounted to 2.5 million Forints (8,300 dollars). On the advice of his lawyer, Gábor didn’t sign the agreement, he would only have agreed to the mutual consent if he did not have to bear the financial obligations as he didn’t finish the training because the company wouldn’t let him.

Four months later, in January 2012, he was informed that due to the discontinuation of his training, the contract will be voided, and he will be forced to repay 18.2 million Forints. This he refused to do, as in his opinion the company has to bear the financial risk if someone is deemed unfit having been found suitable at the company’s own vetting process. Moreover, he believes that he didn’t break the contract as it was HungaroControl that wouldn’t let him take the exam.

The company filed a lawsuit against Gábor, in which the court failed to take into account several crucial circumstances, such as the professional opinion of a psychologist, which was in contradiction to what HungaroControl claimed. After 7 years of trials, the court ruled in favor of the state owned HungaroControl in everything.

It is interesting to note that up until November 2019, Gábor Kaszás has been the only person in Hungary, from whom HungaroControl demands the whole fee of the training and its interests, along with the costs of the lawsuit and the lawyers, amounting to 85,000 dollars, despite the fact that he is not the only one who didn’t finish the training under similarly interesting circumstances, due to the decision of the company.

As he has no other option, he wants to secure the twenty-five million Forints through crowdfunding.

**“With this demand and ruling they ruined me and took my future. I will have to work till the end of my life to pay back the cost which I owe, because a Hungarian state owned company deems me unfit for a career, which they originally found me suitable for, and for which they selected me from several hundred people. I can’t have savings, possessions, I can’t have a home of my own, I can’t have a life. The training took 2 years from my life. Another 7 years were ruined by the trials. And now they took my future.”** - writes Gábor Kaszás on the website (<https://gogetfunding.com/helpgabor/>) set up for the crowdfunding, where he makes the whole story public.