

EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS
COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME

THIRD SECTION

DECISION

Application no. 55648/15
Igor PAUER against Slovakia
and 2 other applications
(see appended table)

The European Court of Human Rights (Third Section), sitting on 23 November 2017 as a Committee composed of:

Luis López Guerra, *President,*
Dmitry Dedov,
Jolien Schukking, *judges,*

and Liv Tigerstedt, *Acting Deputy Section Registrar,*

Having regard to the above applications lodged on the various dates indicated in the appended table,

Having regard to the declarations submitted by the respondent Government requesting the Court to strike the applications out of the list of cases,

Having deliberated, decides as follows:

FACTS AND PROCEDURE

The list of applicants is set out in the appended table.

The applicants' complaints under Articles 6 § 1 and 13 of the Convention concerning the excessive length of civil proceedings and the lack of an effective remedy in domestic law in that respect were communicated to the Government of the Slovak Republic ("the Government").

THE LAW

Having regard to the similar subject matter of the applications, the Court finds it appropriate to examine them jointly in a single decision.

After unsuccessful friendly-settlement negotiations, the Government informed the Court that they proposed to make unilateral declarations with a view to resolving the issues raised by these complaints. They further requested the Court to strike out the applications in accordance with Article 37 of the Convention.

In all three applications the Government acknowledged the excessive length of the civil proceedings in question. They also acknowledged that, in the first application, the applicant did not obtain redress at domestic level. They offered to pay the applicants the amounts detailed in the appended table. The amounts would be payable within three months from the date of notification of the Court's decision. In the event of failure to pay these amounts within the above-mentioned three-month period, the Government undertook to pay simple interest on them, from the expiry of that period until settlement, at a rate equal to the marginal lending rate of the European Central Bank during the default period plus three percentage points.

The payment will constitute the final resolution of the cases.

The applicants were sent the terms of the Government's unilateral declarations several weeks before the date of this decision. The Court has not received a response from the applicants accepting the terms of the declarations.

The Court observes that Article 37 § 1 (c) enables it to strike a case out of its list if:

> "... for any other reason established by the Court, it is no longer justified to continue the examination of the application".

Thus, it may strike out applications under Article 37 § 1 (c) on the basis of a unilateral declaration by a respondent Government even if the applicants wish the examination of the cases to be continued (see the principles emerging from the Court's case-law, and in particular the *Tahsin Acar v. Turkey* judgment (preliminary objections) ([GC], no. 26307/95, §§ 75-77, ECHR 2003-VI)).

The Court has established clear and extensive case-law concerning complaints relating to the excessive length of civil proceedings (in respect of Slovakia see, for example, *Ištván and Ištvánová v. Slovakia,* no. 30189/07, 12 June 2012 and *Obluk v. Slovakia,* no. 69484/01, 20 September 2006).

Noting the admissions contained in the Government's declarations as well as the amount of compensation proposed – which is consistent with the amounts awarded in similar cases – the Court considers that it is no longer justified to continue the examination of the applications (Article 37 § 1 (c)).

In the light of the above considerations, the Court is satisfied that respect for human rights as defined in the Convention and the Protocols thereto does not require it to continue the examination of the applications (Article 37 § 1 *in fine*).

Finally, the Court emphasises that, should the Government fail to comply with the terms of their unilateral declarations, the applications may be restored to the list in accordance with Article 37 § 2 of the Convention (*Josipović v. Serbia* (dec.), no. 18369/07, 4 March 2008).

In view of the above, it is appropriate to strike the cases out of the list.

For these reasons, the Court, unanimously,

Decides to join the applications;

Takes note of the terms of the respondent Government's declarations and of the arrangements for ensuring compliance with the undertakings referred to therein;

Decides to strike the applications out of its list of cases in accordance with Article 37 § 1 (c) of the Convention.

Done in English and notified in writing on 14 December 2017.

Liv Tigerstedt Acting Deputy Registrar	Luis López Guerra President

APPENDIX

List of applications raising complaints under Article 6 § 1 and Article 13 of the Convention
(excessive length of civil proceedings and lack of any effective remedy in domestic law)

No.	Application no. Date of introduction	Applicant name Date of birth	Representative name and location	Date of receipt of Government's declaration	Date of receipt of applicant's comments, if any	Amount offered by the Government for pecuniary and non-pecuniary damage and costs and expenses per applicant (in euros)[i]
1.	55648/15 02/11/2015	**Igor Pauer** 23/01/1976	Richard Kovalčík Košice	04/07/2017	19/09/2017	1,620
2.	2278/17 02/01/2017	**Štefan Opánsky** 04/02/1961		29/09/2017	23/10/2017	900
3.	14825/17 16/02/2017 (3 applicants)	**Martin Mérés** 20/01/1982 **Martina Mérésová** 16/07/1974 **Anastázia Mérésová** 17/05/1954	Martina Mérésová Levice	06/09/2017	28/09/2017	900

[i] Plus any tax that may be chargeable to the applicants.