

 CEDR Accreditation: 2012

CEDR Panel Admission: 2020

Languages: English | Hungarian

Location: Budapest, Hungary

**Balint Balassa**

**Overview**

Balint is the most renown expert and mediator in the field of conflict resolution within the Office of the Ombudsman at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). He has to his credit over 500 resolved cases ranging from highly escalated interpersonal conflicts, contractual and regulatory issues, professional negligence, health and reputation related grievances.

In addition to his excellent conflict management skills, Balint has a solid education background with 16 years of teaching experience as an instructional designer in both public and private education sectors as well as in human resources development. Working in collaboration with CEDR, Balint coordinated the design and implementation of UNHCR’s Conflict management training package which has been widely delivered accross the globe. The innovative and experiential trainings he designed and conducted mainly focus on conflict management techniques and mediation in an international context with an emphasis on the psychological implications of conflicts, inter-cultural communication and negotiation.

In his current practice as a workplace mediator, he mainly deals with disputes involving employees, teams, individual partners and partner agencies as well as individuals outside of the organization. Balint has successfully led and designed several team interventions around the world in different UNHCR field locations in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Europe.

Balint is a certified mediator since 2012. He is a member of the International Ombudsman Association since 2016. Balint holds a degree in Psychology and in Education. He regularly holds trainings and gives lectures on conflict related topics within and outside his organization. He has contributed to various publications as an editor, author or specialist.

Balint speaks both English and Hungarian and is comfortable mediating in both languages.

**Dispute resolution experience**

Public Sector

* Negotiations between an educational institution and government representatives
* Highly escalated team conflict in an international humanitarian organization

Professional Negligence

* Dispute on alleged professional negligence
* Mediation in conflict related to financial loss as a result of professional negligence

Reputation management

* Threats of reputational damage based on misinterpretation of information
* Facilitation of discussion in conflict related to spreading malicious gossips

Contractual Disputes

* Mediation of interpersonal conflict resulting in non-extension of contract
* Mediation of challenging performance related contract termination
* Mediation of disagreement on interpretation and application of organizational policies

Employment & workplace

* Mediation in interpersonal workplace conflicts
* Dispute between management and team members
* Performance evaluation disputes in a global setting
* Procedural shortcomings in competition for assignment

Personal injuries

* Dispute about expenses of medical treatment in work-related injury

**Professional background**

2016-: Mediator and Conflict Resolution Officer - Ombudsman’s Office, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Budapest, Hungary

2015: Staff Development Officer, trainer, instructional designer - World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Geneva, Switzerland

2009 – 2015: Assistant Staff Development Officer, trainer, instructional designer - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Budapest, Hungary

2005 – 2009: Teacher of Methodology, Literature, Rhetoric and Creative Writing - Torok Sandor Waldorf Teacher Training Institution, Solymar, Hungary

1996 – 2009: Class Teacher, High School Literature Teacher and Primary School English Teacher, Chair of the Teacher`s Board, Pesthidegkut Waldorf School, Budapest, Hungary

**Studies and Qualifications**

2019 Bachelor’s in Psychology, University of Debrecen, Hungary

2016 Certification in Foundations of Organizational Ombudsman Practice, Seattle, USA

2014 Certification in Organizational Network Analysis, Budapest, Hungary

2012 CEDR Accredited Mediator

2012 Cross-Cultural Coach, Prague, Czech Republic

2011 Certification of the UNHCR Trainer and Facilitator Development Program, Budapest, Hungary

1999 Masters in Literature, Hungarian Language and Education - Eotvos Lorand University, Hungary

1993 Certification of class teacher - Emerson College (United Kingdom)

**Conferences, lectures, publications**

**Conflict as a Crisis – Three Misbeliefs About Conflict Management**

Study in Preventing and Managing Crises, Oriold, Budapest 2020 (Author)

**The Active Bystander Campaign**

European Ombudsman Conference, Geneva, Switzerland 2018 (Presenter)

**Where Do We Learn Conflict?**

International Ombudsman Association Annual Conference, Minneapolis, USA 2017 (Presenter)

**CEDR Negotiation Handbook**, 2015 (Specialist contributor)

**Re-enactment in Conflict Management**

Kassak Museum, Budapest , 2013 (Lecturer)

**Mediation Style**

Mediation, almost without exception, is preceeded by a tense period of disagreement and feelings of hopelessness. Balint skillfully combines his conflict management and psychological competencies to help the parties overcome the mental effects of the conflict. He makes the parties reflect on their respective situations while helping them to assess and question their perceptions and assumptions to gain a better understanding of their emotions, expectations and behaviour from different perspectives, while actively encouraging the parties to find an agreement through understanding each other.

*“Balint listens and takes the time to understand both sides of the dispute. He is objective, fair and compassionate. These qualities and approach to mediation has allowed for an environment of trust where both parties to the conflict (with different power ranking) have been able to come together and work out a satisfactory solution which otherwise would not have been possible.”*