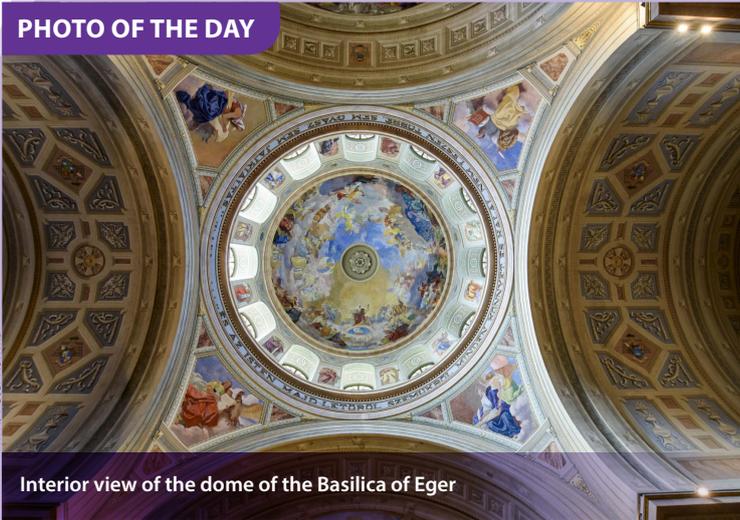


## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTV/Péter Komka

Interior view of the dome of the Basilica of Eger

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**EU defence, foreign ministers hold informal meetings in Helsinki**

**Stats office releases Q2 investment figures**

**Local election campaign events**

**Groundbreaking of EuroVelo bicycle path between Budapest and Szentendre**

## TOP STORY

# GULYÁS: GOOD V4 TIES KEY FOR JAPAN INVESTORS

Good cooperation between the Visegrad countries increases the significance of central Europe and makes the region more attractive for Japanese investors, the head of the PM's Office said after wrapping up a three-day visit to Japan.

Gergely Gulyás visited Japan at the invitation of the International Judo Federation. According to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office, Gulyás met Mitsuchika Tarao, the vice-governor of Tokyo, Takao Makino, Japan's deputy farm, infrastructure and tourism minister, MP Seishiro Eto, head of the Japan-Hungary parliamentary chapter, as well as IJF head Marius Vizer. Gulyás and leaders of the IFJ were received for lunch by Princess Tomohito.

Hungary and Japan celebrates the 150th anniversary of diplomatic ties this year. To mark the anniversary, Princess Kako will visit Hungary in September, the statement said. President János Áder and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán are also scheduled to pay visits to Japan this year, it said.

Concerning bilateral ties, the statement said that economic cooperation was in the focus, adding that Japan was Hungary's greatest Asian investor with 160 companies active in the country.

The PM's Office chief added that Japan's preparations for next year's Olympic Games indicate that the country will be an "excellent host".

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## **HUNGARY JOBLESS RATE EDGES UP TO 3.4%**

Hungary's three-month rolling average jobless rate reached 3.4% in May-July, edging up from 3.3% in the previous three-month period, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said. The May-July rate was down from 3.6% twelve months earlier. The rate covers unemployment among those between the ages of 15 and 74.

In absolute terms, there were 157,900 unemployed, 2,400 more than in the previous period and down 8,300 from a year earlier. Meanwhile, the employment rate was 60.9%, up 0.6 of a percentage point. The number of employed 15-74 year-olds stood at 4,517,900, up 34,300 compared with the same period a year earlier. The number of employed included 109,700 Hungarians in fostered work programmes and 117,800 working abroad. The number of those employed on the domestic primary labour market rose by 1.7% from a year earlier to 4,290,400, while the number of fostered workers dropped by 31%. The number of people working abroad was up 9.7%.

Commenting on the data, Finance Minister Mihály Varga said on public news channel M1 that Hungarian labour market was continuing on an upward trajectory. Jobs were created in the services, production and farm sectors, the minister noted. The government's economy protection

plan is expected to create more jobs in the coming months, he said. The government aims to continue integrating workers in fostered work programmes, pensioners and more women into the primary labour market, Varga said. The finance ministry said in a statement that the number of jobholders grew by more than 20% to over 4.5 million from 3.7 million since 2010. The number of those employed in the primary labour market grew by 73,000 last year, the statement noted.

Századvég Gazdaságkutató's macroeconomics analyst Gábor Regős noted that the number of jobholders has stayed level at 4.5 million for the third month in a row and their number has grown by 776,000 since 2010. At the same time, the data show that it is increasingly difficult for employers to attract new workers. Takarékbank analyst András Horváth said the 75.3% employment rate in the 20-64 age group was well above the European Union average of 73.2%, but further efforts were needed to catch up with the Czech figure of 79.9%, a major competitor of Hungary's. ING Bank senior analyst Péter Virovác said Hungary's labour market was stabilised at a record strong level. The low level of employment among women still represents a major reserve, he added. The unemployment rate for women continued to improve but it remained unchanged for men, he said.

## **TARLÓS: 10,000 TREES PLANTED IN BUDAPEST**

Some 10,000 spots designated for newly planted trees in Budapest are almost filled, Budapest Mayor István Tarlós said, adding that the daily Népszava had misquoted him as saying "there was no more room" to plant trees in Budapest.

In an interview with the commercial ATV television channel, Tarlós said the local authority has planted 9,947 trees since 2016, averaging at 2,000 trees a year, up from 200-300 before 2010, he said. Budapest joined the Under 2 initiative three years ago, pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the city below 1990 levels by 2050, he said. The Budapest assembly also accepted a climate strategy a year and a half ago, addressing "all important environmental issues" such as heat waves, floods and air quality, he said.

Meanwhile, at a press conference ahead of the municipal assembly's meeting in Budapest, Budapest councillor József Gál of green opposition LMP said that introducing a congestion fee for motorists in the city centre would free parking places, and "two trees could be planted in every spot". Gál said the city should declare a "climate emergency" due to the current heatwave and also develop a climate action plan. At a separate press conference, Socialist Party Budapest representative Csaba Horváth said Budapest must be made green and freed from all the swathes

of paving that he blamed the Fidesz administration for laying. Horváth cited Tarlós as saying that there was no longer any room in Budapest to plant trees, and the Socialist blamed this on Fidesz for laying “grey paving everywhere”.

### **HUNGARIAN MAN SUSPECTED OF VIENNA MURDER TO BE EXTRADITED**

The Budapest Metropolitan Prosecutor’s Office, acting on a European arrest warrant the Austrian authorities issued in connection with a murder that allegedly took place in Vienna in May, has ordered the provisional extradition of a Hungarian man to Austria. The office said in a statement that the extradition of a Hungarian citizen who is resident in Hungary can take place under the country’s laws if the Austrian authorities provide by Sept. 5 a guarantee of return if the person sentenced asks to serve their term in prison in Hungary. The man is suspected of carrying out the killing on May 14 or 15. The Austrian authorities informed the Hungarian police on Aug. 22 that the 41-year-old suspect was thought to be hiding in Budapest. He was arrested on Aug. 24 in Kispest.

### **GOVT AID AGENCY SIGNS COOPERATION PACT WITH ECUMENICAL CHARITY**

The government’s Hungary Helps Agency has signed a broad cooperation agreement with the Ecumenical Charity. Tristan Azbej, the state secretary in charge of helping persecuted Christians, said after the signing of the agreement that the government will launch two joint support programmes with the Ecumenical Charity, which it considered a strategic ally. One of the projects will involve the reconstruction of northern Iraq’s Sinjar district, which was seized by the Islamic State in 2014 and liberated in 2015. This project will also see the two organisations helping to improve the living conditions of the Yazidi minorities living in the Khanke refugee camp, the state secretary said. The second project will involve the establishment of a family crisis centre in the civil war-torn city of Kherson in southern Ukraine, Azbej said.

The Hungary Helps Agency was established earlier this year with the aim of coordinating projects within the Hungary Helps humanitarian aid programme and ensure their transparency and efficacy.

### **PÉCS MUSIC FESTIVAL TO FOCUS ON MARRIAGE OF CLASSICAL, FOLK MUSIC**

The Zenezüret (Musical harvest) festival in Pécs, southern Hungary, will feature some 50 events centering on classical and folk music between September 5 and 7, organisers told a press conference. Péter Fülöp, the human resources ministry’s state secretary for art, said the festival aims to “move classical music beyond concert halls”. The festival is a forerunner of a nationwide programme returning classical music to public spaces, he said. It aims to organise “events in front of churches, in main squares and other places where people meet,” he said.

The Pécs festival will include jazz, folk and classical concerts in various venues in the city, in addition to family events such as folk dancing, storytelling and the presentation of musical instruments. Performers include the Jazzformers, István “Szalonna” Pál and his Band, the Szeged Symphony Orchestra, and Ertüngaalp Alpaslan conducting the Budapest Strings. The Philharmonic Brass Quintet, the Pécs Percussion Project and the Harmonia String Quartet will also perform.