

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Zoltán Balogh

Russian artist Dima Shlyonkin's guerrilla statue in Budapest

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Local election campaign events**

**Five pollsters' roundtable ahead of local elections**

**Foreign minister attends Samsung SDI ceremony in Göd**

**Margo Literary Festival and Book Fair opens**

## TOP STORY

# SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY WANTS CLOSER BRAZIL TIES

Hungary wants to develop "the closest ever" ties with Brazil, since the two countries' leaders share very similar approaches to global politics, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó told a joint press conference with counterpart Ernesto Araújo.

Szijjártó added that "this exceptional political understanding" should be used to achieve mutual economic benefits.

Brazil and Hungary attach great importance to the issue of security, to stopping illegal migration, respecting sovereignty and protecting Christian communities around the world, Szijjártó said.

The Hungarian government approved a resolution and strategic proposal in March to place its relations with Brazil on new foundations, he said, adding that the conditions were in place to achieve this goal. Brazil, he noted, is Hungary's second largest trading partner in South America. New agreements on agricultural research, product accreditation and cooperation in water management will greatly contribute to developing economic cooperation even further, he added.

Commenting on political cooperation within the United Nations, Szijjártó said both countries rejected the UN's global migration compact, regarding it as "a very dangerous document". Hungary and Brazil agree that it is every country's sovereign right to decide whom they allow to enter their territory.

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## **PINTÉR: REDISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS WON'T RESOLVE MIGRATION CRISIS**

Europe's migration crisis cannot be resolved with the redistribution of migrants across the continent, Hungary's interior minister said. The real issue is whether or not Europe is capable of protecting its borders, Sándor Pintér told public news channel M1 from Luxembourg.

Hungary has accomplished this and has taken in all genuine refugees, the minister said. But those who are not refugees "have no business being" in the European Union, he added. Concerning the Malta quota plan, Pintér said many EU member states had not even taken in the migrants whose redistribution was agreed upon by the EU's Justice and Home Affairs Council back in 2015. He said data showed that EU member states have only taken in 29% of the 120,000 migrants who were supposed to be redistributed, yet Hungary was the one being singled out for not taking part in this scheme.

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## **ORBÁN TO VISIT ROME, PARIS LATER THIS WEEK**

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán will travel to Rome for a conference of the Centrist Democrat International (CDI) on Thursday, before visiting Paris for talks with French President Emmanuel Macron on Friday, his press chief has said.

The CDI, of which Orbán is a vice-president, will hold its executive meeting in Rome.

The prime minister is scheduled to arrive in Paris early on Friday afternoon for a working lunch with Macron in the Elysée Palace. Prior to their talks, the two leaders will hold a joint press conference in the palace's garden.

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## **PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE: FRAUD PROCEEDINGS DROPPED IF FUNDS REPAID**

The Budapest public prosecutor's office said that in cases involving minor budget fraud, the authority may consider dropping the proceedings if damages are fully repaid. Citing an example, Budapest's chief prosecutor Tibor Ibolya said in a statement that the Budapest 9th district prosecutor had instructed several accused individuals to repay damages caused to the city's treasury, informing them that once this is done no charges will be raised against them. "Special attention must be paid in criminal proceedings to the recovery of damages caused to society," he said. The public prosecutor's office has used the legal institution, enabling the recovery of monies in many cases, he added. Ibolya noted that this also reduced the burden on courts.

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## **HUNGARY TRADE SURPLUS AT EUR 37 M IN AUGUST**

Hungary had a 37 million euro trade surplus in August, the Central Statistical

Office (KSH) said in a first reading of data. The surplus was up 99 million euros from the same month a year earlier.

Exports rose by 2.6% year-on-year to 8.141 billion euros. Imports were up 1.3% at 8.104 billion euros. Trade with other European Union member states accounted for about 80% of exports and 73% of imports. For the period January-August, exports were up 3.7% annually at 72.225 billion euros and imports rose by 5.5% to 68.898 billion euros. The trade surplus for the period stood at 3.326 billion euros, narrowing by 977 million euros from the same period a year earlier. KSH will publish a second reading of the August data on October 31.

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## **HUNGARY RANKED 47TH ON WEF GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX**

Hungary has placed 47th among 141 countries in an annual competitiveness ranking compiled by the World Economic Forum (WEF). Hungary moved up one spot on the index from last year, when the ranking included 140 countries. Hungary's score on this year's Global Competitiveness Index was 65.1 on a scale of 0-100, up from 64.3 a year earlier. The country's score for institutions rose to 55.7 from 54.2, its score for infrastructure climbed to 80.7 from 78.4, and the score for macroeconomic stability was unchanged at 90.0. Hungary's score in the area of human capital rose to 74.8 from 73.3, and its score in the

area of markets edged up to 58.8 from 58.4. Hungary was behind the Czech Republic (32nd), Poland (37th) and Slovakia (42nd) in the fresh ranking. It was ahead of Bulgaria (49th) and Romania (51st).

Commenting on the ranking, the Hungarian finance ministry said the score is an acknowledgement of Hungarian economic policy which aims to further improve competitiveness while maintaining macroeconomic stability. The improved ranking was chiefly thanks to improvement in the corporate environment, macroeconomic stability, the labour market and infrastructure, the ministry said in a statement. The ministry noted that the Programme for a More Competitive Hungary, accepted in 2018, identified six sectors to improve competitiveness: taxation, employment, the public sector, health care, education and corporate environment. The most important aims in economic policy in the coming years will be to further improve competitiveness and productivity. The government's economy and family protection schemes, while having a beneficial effect of society, also boost economic growth, the statement said.

### **LIGET CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL SPACE TO BE 'UNMATCHED IN EUROPE'**

The project to transform Budapest's City Park (Liget) into "a cultural and recreational space unmatched in

the whole of Europe" is proceeding apace, László Baán, the government commissioner for the project, said. The park occupying more than 13,000sqft features around 50 playground installations, including a three-level climbing feature inspired by Pál Szinyei Merse's painting Airship, all opening towards the end of the month. The playground, Hungary's most complex and state-of-the-art, comes on the heels of the inauguration of the renovated Millennium House (formerly Olaf Palme House), he told MTI. Baán emphasised that the City Park would be family-friendly, with a total of seven new playgrounds.

The state's investment in Liget Budapest, the large-scale project that will also transform the Liget into a museums quarter, could be recouped in 15 years, Baán told Wednesday's Magyar Nemzet.

"From 2023, after the renovation of the City Park is completed in a manner befitting the 21st century, the country will have a new cultural attraction of such a scale that state monies spent on the project are expected to be recouped within 15 years through the extra revenue from tourism it generates," Baán said. He added that the Liget, "a cultural and recreational space that will be unmatched in all of Europe", will serve its most frequent visitors first: Hungarians.

Baán, who is also the director of the Museum of Fine Arts, an anchor of the Liget project, said that Hungarian museums drew an annual 20 million visitors in the 1980s, but that number

was halved in the 1990s as they were forced to compete with other attractions for visitors' time and money. He said Hungarian museums were late to adapt to the international trend among such institutions to become less academic and "speak a language intelligible to everybody", but said they "have become and are becoming more visitor-friendly". He also noted the Museum of Fine Art's "ground-breaking role" in getting this process rolling in Hungary some 15 years earlier.

### **RESOURCES MINISTRY SIGNS COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH TURKIC ORG**

Hungary's human resources ministry signed a cultural cooperation agreement with the International Organisation of Turkic Culture (Türksoy) in Budapest. The agreement will promote closer ties in areas including music, theatre, dance, as well as fine and applied arts and literature, said a statement from the ministry.

Türksoy was founded in Ankara in 1993 to promote cultural cooperation between Turkic peoples. Its members are Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

### **BUCHAREST HUNGARIAN JAZZ DAYS TO BE LAUNCHED**

The Balassi Institute of culture will launch a new annual programme in

Bucharest featuring Hungarian Jazz with the first event organised between October 16 and 19, the director of the institute's Bucharest branch said.

The programme dubbed Bucharest Hungarian Jazz Days will present contemporary Hungarian jazz to professionals and the public, András László Kósa told MTI.

The programme will open with a concert by the Boros Zoltán Trió.

The second day will feature the Bohém Ragtime Jazz Band with a repertoire of American music in the 1910s and 1930s. The band will also evoke the times of prospering Budapest before the two wars.

The closing event will be a joint concert by pianist and composer Károly Binder and multiinstrumentalist and composer Mihály Borbély.

**HUNGARIAN PUBLISHERS TO SHOW AT FRANKFURT BOOK FAIR**

Hungarian publishers will show almost 400 volumes at an exhibition organised

by the Hungarian Publishers and Booksellers Association (MKKE) at the Frankfurt Book Fair on October 16-20.

MKKE said Budapest's Petőfi Literary Museum and the Hungarian Cultural Institute Stuttgart are also representing Hungary at the book fair.

The Hungarian stand is being funded by the Petőfi Literary Museum. The stand, inspired by the Bauhaus movement, was designed by Demeter Design Studio.

**ERASMUS DAYS TO OFFER SOME 80 PROGRAMMES NATIONWIDE**

Erasmus days, running from Thursday through Sunday, will offer some 80 programmes nationwide promoting the European Union's Erasmus+ student exchange programme, organisers told MTI. Hungarian institutions engaged in secondary, tertiary and vocational education received nearly 16 billion forints (EUR 50m) funding within the programme in 2019, with 21,000 students gaining

experience in international projects, they said. The Erasmus Days events will take place in 40 countries. In Hungary, 25 towns and cities will participate with a variety of events including interactive city walks, flashmobs and a digital escape room, the organisers said.

**BUDAPEST INTL AIRPORT HANDLES 4.7 M PASSENGERS IN Q3**

Passenger numbers at Liszt Ferenc International airport rose by an annual 6.8% to 4.7 million in the third quarter of the year, airport operator Budapest Airport said. The airport handled more than 1.6 million passengers in July and in August, respectively, and more than 1.5 million in September. The number of take-offs and landings per month was around 11,570, higher than before but still lower than the 12,000 record in 2006. Most passengers travelled between Budapest and London, followed by passengers travelling between Frankfurt, Paris, Brussels and Tel Aviv.

