

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



MTI/Zsolt Szegedváry

Museum of Ethnography to reopen in world-class new home next spring

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Plenary session of parliament**

**Stats office reports on Sept foreign trade**

**Events at the Planet Budapest 2021 Expo**

**Coronavirus updates**

## TOP STORY

# HUNGARY 'COMMITTED TO CLIMATE NEUTRALITY'

Hungary has taken decisive action towards achieving climate neutrality, the minister of innovation and technology told public media at the Planet Budapest 2021 sustainability expo and world conference.

László Palkovics said after his presentation that climate protection and energy production went hand in hand, and by 2030 more than 90% of electricity generation in Hungary would be carbon-free. Both nuclear and solar energy would play a key role in ensuring this, he said, adding that plans were to drastically increase the capacity of solar power plants to 6,000MW. Palkovics said big polluters and energy companies should take their fair share of reaching climate protection targets. He said the greenification of transport, including rail developments, was a priority. The government has also launched large-scale green programmes in the road transport system, he said, noting tenders invited for the procurement of electric cars and bicycles. Among the green measures, Palkovics highlighted the conversion of the Mátra Power Plant, a major coal polluter, into an environmentally friendly plant using a zero emissions technology. As regards the modernisation of household energy use, he noted a government scheme supporting the development of solar systems and energy-saving heating systems.

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**SZIJJÁRTÓ CALLS FOR  
‘SENSIBLE, RESPECTFUL’  
EAST-WEST DIALOGUE**

“Sensible and respectful” dialogue between East and the West is “always best for us Hungarians and central Europeans”, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in a video published on Facebook on Wednesday. In his video recorded during a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Latvia, Szijjártó said: “Hungary has no interest whatsoever in a new Cold War or in engendering a psychotic state reminiscent of a Cold War,” adding that even such a state would “seriously harm our national security interests”. Hungary, he added, supported all NATO and European Union initiatives aimed at creating further communication channels “between East and West, between Russia and NATO, and between Russia and the EU,” the minister said. “We have an interest in resolving problems through dialogue, through diplomatic channels,” Szijjártó added.

**SZIJJÁRTÓ: NATO MUST  
FOCUS ON CHALLENGES  
FROM SOUTH TO PROTECT  
EUROPE**

NATO must effectively handle challenges from the South and counter terrorism and migration if it is to guarantee European security, Péter Szijjártó, Hungary’s foreign minister, said in Riga on Wednesday. On the second day of the meeting

of NATO foreign ministers, Szijjártó noted ongoing migration pressure coming from Europe’s southern and south-eastern flanks involving security risks such as terrorism, according to a ministry statement. He warned of an intensification of migration waves through the Western Balkans, adding that “even greater masses may appear at Hungary’s southern border.” The capabilities of countries to the south must be developed if security challenges are to be handled more effectively, he said, noting Hungary’s support for efforts in Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and Egypt to strengthen state structures for combatting terrorism. “A clear link between terrorism and migration is evident in two respects,” he said. First, terrorism triggers migration waves, and these in turn intensify the chance of terrorist acts when terrorists can easily hide among migrants and reach ever more distant parts of the world, he said.

“In Europe, we must avoid this,” Szijjártó said, adding that aid must be exported to where troubles lie instead of importing security threats from the South.

**SZIJJÁRTÓ: NATO ‘SERIOUS  
MISCALCULATION’  
IN AFGHANISTAN**

NATO has “seriously miscalculated” the situation in Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Riga on Wednesday. He said the causes should be investigated and conclusions drawn. Speaking on the second day

of a meeting of his NATO counterparts, Szijjártó said the Afghan government’s collapse was “a tragedy for Afghans and a shock for NATO”, whose members had planned to continue providing financial assistance until 2024. “But the political and security structure we were supporting in fact collapsed days after [NATO’s] pullout,” he said. The causes of NATO’s incorrect assessment of Afghanistan’s “political, social, and security aspects” should be understood, “whether they are of a personal, procedural or strategic nature, or whether NATO’s tactics led to this [outcome]”, the minister said.

Managing the security risks that evolved after NATO’s pullout is an important task for Europe and central Asia, Szijjártó said. Each day 30,000-35,000 people set off from Afghanistan, resulting in a “dramatic” increase in the number of illegal migrants at Hungary’s southern borders, he added. Central Asian countries should receive assistance through aid and partnership programmes so they can protect their borders and retain their stability, or else the exodus from Afghanistan will mount further, Szijjártó said. He also said that some of Hungary’s “big allies” had evacuated people from Afghanistan without prior security screening, many of whom were temporarily accommodated in the Western Balkans. “Quite a few of them are now unable to pass strict security checks applied in the US and other countries, and the question is what will happen to them and whether they pose a security risk,” he said. “If

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there are hundreds or even thousands of them in the Western Balkans, that will indeed impact central Europe's security," Szijjártó added. Hungary will carry on maintaining strict border controls so that "neither those people nor illegal migrants can make their way into the country or to Europe through Hungary," he said.

### **SZIJJÁRTÓ: HUNGARY 'GENEROUS' IN ITS SUPPORT OF UKRAINE**

Hungary has been "extremely generous" in its support of Ukraine in recent years, but still "firmly expects" its north-eastern neighbour to respect the rights of its ethnic Hungarian community, Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó said in Riga. Despite its tensions with Ukraine, Hungary has not suspended its support to the country in recent years, the foreign ministry cited Szijjártó as saying ahead of talks with his Ukrainian and Georgian counterparts Dmytro Kuleba and David Zalkaliani. Speaking to reporters, Szijjártó noted that most of the western natural gas imported by Ukraine last year had been shipped via Hungary, and that the Hungarian government had organised summer camps for thousands of Ukrainian children from families affected by conflict in eastern Ukraine. Further, Hungarian hospitals have treated dozens of Ukrainian soldiers and Hungary has donated more than 100

ventilators to the country. Hungary is also giving more financial aid to Ukrainian hospitals, cultural institutions, schools and churches, he added.

"We're extremely generous and we will continue to be," Szijjártó said. He added, at the same time, that hopefully the Ukrainian authorities would respect the rights of the country's ethnic Hungarian community in the future, arguing that Ukraine was "constantly infringing on their rights". Szijjártó called on Kiev to restore the rights of its minority communities.

On the topic of potential arms deliveries to Ukraine by NATO countries, Szijjártó said the matter would be discussed at a meeting of NATO foreign ministers today. "We're interested in peace in the region given our very bad memories from the time of the Cold War," Szijjártó said, adding that central Europe had always lost out in conflicts between East and West. "We want to live in peace and stability, and we'd prefer if everyone respected this," he said. Asked about Georgia's potential accession to NATO, Szijjártó said the alliance should take Tbilisi's NATO aspirations "far more seriously" and should aid its integration process. Szijjártó said Georgia had been the biggest non-NATO contributor to the alliance's mission in Afghanistan and regularly participates in the organisation's operations. "I don't know what more we could expect," he added.

### **BRITISH EMBASSY: UK NATIONALS IN HUNGARY HAVE ONE MONTH LEFT TO APPLY FOR RESIDENCY**

UK nationals living in Hungary have only one month left to submit their residency application, the British embassy said on Wednesday. So far 1,200 UK nationals have applied for residency but there are still many who need to do so before the deadline, the embassy said in a statement. "UK nationals living in Hungary before the 1 January 2021 must apply for residency by 31 December, including those who have a residence permit issued before Hungary's accession to the EU (pre 2004) or those married to a Hungarian national, unless they are Hungarian citizens (dual nationals)," it said in the statement. The embassy quoted Paul Fox, the ambassador to Hungary, as asking those "who have British friends, neighbours or family members who arrived in Hungary before January 1" to "ask them whether they have applied and, if not, encourage them to start the process now".

### **JUSTICE MIN: MOST EVENTS IN FUTURE OF EUROPE CONFERENCE SERIES HELD IN HUNGARY**

Out of the 395 registered events in the conference series on the future of Europe, Hungary is holding the most from among EU member states, Judit Varga, the justice minister, said on

Facebook on Wednesday. Varga said this was further proof of Hungary's commitment to exchanging of views on the future of the bloc for which the opinion of Hungarians was indispensable. In her English-language post, she wrote: "Those who keep crying wolf and accuse us of being anti-EU or eurosceptic must be in big trouble now. Greetings also to those key politicians of the European 'models' who have so far tried to expel us from the community!" "We will stay. With heads held high, clear ideas and a competitive vision. We are not going anywhere. Because we want to keep the Union as it was when we joined it," she added.

### **HOLLIK: LEFT 'SIDING' WITH 'LGBTQ LOBBY'**

Hungary's left-wing parties have "sided with the LGBTQ lobby striving to get inside schools", István Hollik, communications director of the ruling Fidesz party, said in a video statement on Wednesday. Hollik's statement followed Tuesday's parliamentary vote giving the green light to a referendum aimed at supporting Hungary's child-protection law, a vote which the opposition boycotted. The ruling parties consider sex education the exclusive right of parents, Hollik said, adding that left-wing support for the "LGBTQ lobby" was obvious and that its proposals had been endorsed by the Democratic Coalition and Momentum parties. "It is point-blank in Momentum's programme that

LGBTQ education should be ensured at schools," Hollik said, adding that former Momentum leader András Fekete-Győr "has gone as far as to admit that he would allow transsexuals to hold so-called awareness classes in kindergartens."

"It's already visible in the West what would happen if Hungarian voters failed to curb the LGBTQ lobby," Hollik said. In the Netherlands, for example, "they start sex education from the age of four, and this includes gender identity and homosexuality."

### **HUNGARY RECORDS 192 COVID DEATHS, 11,152 NEW INFECTIONS**

Altogether 192 patients died of a Covid-related illness over the past 24 hours, while 11,152 new coronavirus infections were registered, [koronavirus.gov.hu](http://koronavirus.gov.hu) said on Wednesday. So far 6,132,549 people have received a first jab, while 5,847,405 have been fully vaccinated. Altogether 2,559,096 Hungarians have received a booster jab. The number of active infections stands at 187,856, while hospitals are treating 7,546 Covid-19 patients, 562 of whom need respiratory assistance. Since the first outbreak, 1,114,260 infections have been registered, while the number of fatalities has risen to 34,713. Fully 891,691 people have made a recovery. There are 53,551 people in official quarantine, while the number of tests taken stands at 8,474,664.

### **HUNGARY DONATES 150,000 COVID JABS TO TAJIKISTAN**

Hungary is delivering 150,000 jabs of the AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine to Tajikistan, Péter Szijjártó, the minister of foreign affairs and trade, said on Facebook on Wednesday. "Hungary has enough vaccine, so in fact it can help others. We're sending 150,000 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine to our Tajik friends to ensure the success of their protection efforts, too," Szijjártó said.

A government resolution published in the latest issue of the official gazette Magyar Közlöny mandates the donation of 150,000 AstraZeneca jabs to Tajikistan.

### **GOVT: HUNGARY COVID BOOSTER VACCINATION RATE HIGHEST IN EU**

Hungary has administered coronavirus booster shots to a greater share of its population than any other European Union country, according to a government social media post. According to a table posted on the government's social media platform, fully 26.19% of Hungary's population has received a booster jab compared with the EU average of 10.5%. Malta has also administered booster shots to over 20% of its population (23.42%), as has Austria (22.11%), according to the table. Fourteen other countries have given booster shots to less than 20 but more

than 10% of their population, with the vaccination rates being the highest in Ireland, Slovenia, Belgium, Denmark and Estonia. Less than 10% of the population have received the booster jab in the Czech Republic, Romania, Sweden, Poland, Finland and Bulgaria. Meanwhile, the Netherlands, Croatia, Latvia and Slovakia have not supplied any data on their booster vaccination rates, according to the table.

## **HUNGARY'S SZABÓ DELEGATED TO WADA BOARD**

The sports ministers of the European Union have delegated Tünde Szabó, Hungary's state secretary for sports, to the Foundation Board of the World Anti-Doping Agency. Szabó will become a board member on Jan. 1 as one of three officials representing the EU, her secretariat said in a statement on Wednesday. Szabó's duties will include making preparations for WADA decision-making as well as liaising with other anti-doping officials and organisations fighting challenges posed by doping in sports.

## **HUNGARY Q3 GDP GROWTH SLOWS TO 6.1%**

Hungarian economic output increased by an annual 6.1% in the third quarter, down from 17.8% in the previous quarter, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said Wednesday, confirming its preliminary data.

GDP in the third quarter grew at the same rate when adjusted for calendar year and seasonal effects. Quarter on quarter, it edged up 0.7%. In the Q1-Q3 period, the economy grew by an annual 7.1%. Due to parts supply bottlenecks, the energy crisis and new waves of the pandemic, analysts told MTI that economic growth may wane further.

Péter Virovác of ING Banks said the data clearly showed that the fast recovery had stopped in its tracks and negative external factors had reached the Hungarian economy. The fresh Covid wave could have an extreme impact on the economy in the coming quarters, he added. Both industry and construction are contending with global supply chain issues, and this is likely to endure, he said. Services are the sole growth engine, though this too could be stymied by any shutdowns due to Covid. Absent of government spending in the fourth quarter or the first quarter of 2022, Hungarian economic growth could slow down significantly, he added. Full-year GDP growth of around 7% was possible, he said, adding that growth risks for next year had grown significantly.

Gábor Regős of the Századvég Institute said the third quarter data had underperformed expectations, adding that declines in the agriculture and education sectors were surprising. A decline in net exports dampened growth considerably. Without the worsening trade balance, growth could have approached 10%, he

added. Growth in the full year may exceed 6.5% and clock in around 5.5% in 2022, he said.

János Nagy of Erste Bank said the economy was likely to slow down further in the fourth quarter, with a waning external demand a key driver of this tendency. He cited high energy and commodity prices and uncertainty on the back of the omicron variant for the negative outlook. Erste Bank's experts expect economic growth of 6.7% for the full year, he added.

## **HUNGARY INDUSTRIAL PPI UP 18.5% IN OCT**

Hungarian industrial PPI increased by an annual 18.5% in October, quickening from 14% growth in the previous month, the Central Statistical Office (KSH) said on Wednesday. KSH noted the higher cost of raw materials, feedstock and vehicle fuel prices behind the increase. Prices for domestic sale increased by 26.6%, while export prices rose by 14.3%.

## **HUNGARY PMI EASES TO 52.2 IN NOV**

Hungary's seasonally adjusted Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) was 52.2 points in November compared with 52.9 in October, Halpim, the organisation that compiles the index, said on Wednesday. A PMI over 50 signals an expansion in the manufacturing sector. The new orders index rose from the previous month, while the production volume index fell,

but both remained over the 50-point mark.

**BARTÓK SPRING  
INTERNATIONAL ART  
WEEKS TO BE HELD  
IN APRIL**

The 2nd Bartók Spring International Art Weeks presenting classical concerts and exhibitions will get under way next April in Budapest and several other cities. Péter Eötvös's opera Sleepless, commissioned by the Berlin Staatsoper, will receive its Hungarian premiere, while concert performers will include pianist David Fray and the Liszt Chamber Orchestra, as well as star cellist István Várdai and celebrated violinist Kristóf Baráti. Ton Koopman and the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra will perform Bach's B Minor Mass, while the Batsheva Dance Company will present three choreographies by Ohad Naharin, Csaba Káel, the chief executive of the Palace of Arts, the festival's organiser, told a news conference on Wednesday. Celebrated trumpeter Boban Marković will perform with his brass band together with the Székesfehérvár Ballet Theatre, while the Branford Marsalis Quartet

and the Hungarian State Folk Ensemble will also perform.

**ETHNOGRAPHY MUSEUM  
TO REOPEN IN WORLD-  
CLASS NEW HOME NEXT  
SPRING**

The Museum of Ethnography will reopen at its new home, a "state of the art" new building near City Park, with large-scale exhibitions in the spring next year when it will celebrate its 150th anniversary, ministerial commissioner László Baán said. The construction of the new 7,000sqm building which will be three times the size of the museum's old facility at Kossuth Square near Parliament is nearing completion, he told reporters at a walk-through. The architect firm, Hungary's Napur Architect, was selected by an international jury from among plans submitted to a competition by eminent designers such as Zaha Hadid and the Bjarke Ingels Group, Baán said.

"As the owner of one of Hungary's most significant public collections, the Ethnography Museum celebrating the 150th anniversary of its foundation has been given a

home designed and built for the first time according to its needs," he said. The museum will reopen next March with a temporary exhibition entitled "We Have Arrived" showcasing 150 highlight artefacts of its collection across more than 1,000 square metres, Baán told MTI. Another exhibition opening in the same month will present several hundred items including the oldest, a Szekler gate from 1673, and a 7-metre trunk boat in a 500sqm exhibition space dubbed ZOOM, he said. The new building will also house a grand Ceramics Space with 3,000 works of art on display, which will be permanently open to the public free of charge, the commissioner said.

In January next year, another hallmark building of the museum quarter Liget Budapest Project, the House of Hungarian Music designed by Japanese star architect Sou Fujimoto, will open to the public, said Baán, who is in charge of the Liget project. The Museum of Ethnography won World's Best Architecture in 2018 and the House of Hungarian Music won Best Public Service Architecture in Europe in 2019.