

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Prime Minister Viktor Orbán opens the ActiCity Dance and Movement Centre in Veszprém, a European capital of culture

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events related to the war in Ukraine

TOP STORY

EUROPE 'MUST BALANCE SOVEREIGNTY, COOPERATION'

Europe must strike a precarious balance between national sovereignty and European cooperation lest it falls into "the minefield of national conflicts or becomes a bureaucratic machine of power," Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said.

That balance hinges on tolerant and strong, "Hungarian-style" leaders who love their countries as much as Europe, Orbán said in Veszprém, in western Hungary, opening the ActiCity Dance and Movement Centre. Instead, "there is often intolerance, weakness and heartlessness," he said. The prime minister said cooperation between European states had always been "difficult and complicated". The EU was created as the modern form of European cooperation to achieve peace and prosperity, he said. But today, "we are up to our jugular in a war", he said, adding that the economic situation and prospects were gloomy. "If the European Union can't fulfil its original mission, what is it for?" Unless that question is answered, "the days of lovely traditions and programmes like the European capital of culture are numbered," he said. "But let us not torture ourselves with such difficult questions today. We came to celebrate; let us be happy to have reason to do so. Long live the cultural capital of Europe, long live Veszprém! Long live the European Union!" he said.

ORBÁN: VESZPRÉM 'A SPECTACULAR SUCCESS STORY OF HUNGARY'S RENEWAL'

The city of Veszprém, a 2023 European capital of culture, "is a spectacular success story of Hungary's renewal since 2010", Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said on Friday, opening the ActiCity Dance and Movement Centre in the western Hungarian city. The developments and investments connected to the programme have put Veszprém back among the top Hungarian cities, he said. One of the oldest cities in Hungary, it is steeped in "civic culture, Hungarian education and confidence", he said. "Veszprém's citizens have always thought that being from Veszprém came with a certain quality," he said. The government has supported Veszprém in becoming "a worthy cultural capital of Europe", he said. The government has poured 100 billion forints (EUR 270m), "almost to the last penny", into developments in Veszprém, Orbán said. "It seems we have made the right decision," he added. The prime minister said Veszprém strengthened belief that "it is good to be Hungarian, and living as a Hungarian is a worthy way of living life".

Orbán thanked Regional Development Minister Tibor Navracsics who fought to include 116 other localities in the programme besides Veszprém. Veszprém citizens have "created a true community

with the localities on the shore of Lake Balaton and included [them] in the European cultural capital programmes", he said. He also thanked the EU "and Brussels bureaucrats" for choosing Veszprém "and so Hungary". At the same time, the city's performance "shows that Hungary and Brussels could do great things together if only Brussels bureaucrats managed to master their well-developed Hungarophobia," he said. "What a shame that Veszprém's example is the exception and not the rule," he said.

OFFICIAL: ETHNIC HUNGARIAN WEEKEND SCHOOLS PROLIFERATE AROUND THE WORLD

Ethnic Hungarian weekend schools are getting stronger around the world and their number is on the increase, an official of the Prime Minister's Office said on Friday. Deputy state secretary Péter Szilágyi told a conference held in Budapest for voluntary teachers of ethnic Hungarian weekend schools that they now operate at pre-Covid levels, even exceeding these in many places. The ministry knows of some 250 schools and communities of children operating in ethnic Hungarian diasporas, and it maintains active links with 150 ethnic Hungarian weekend schools, he said. They operate even in far-away locations, he said, citing Tokyo, Abu Dhabi and Singapore where regular Hungarian classes started in 2022.

He highlighted the strengthening of the ethnic Hungarian school of Columbia and expressed thanks to all the teachers working in such schools. Tenders have been invited since 2018 for supporting diaspora Hungarians and their organisations, and weekend schools are getting help under a dedicated scheme starting from this year, he said. Funding is available for teachers and educational experts for further training, the acquisition and distribution of textbooks, and for renting space for educational activities. Resources are also offered for weekend schools to develop links between each other, organise study trips and participate in study competitions. The application deadline is June 5 and implementation period is January 1 to December 31, he said.

MCC BUYS INTO TOP PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN AUSTRIA

Mathias Corvinus Collegium (MCC) has bought a stake in Modul University of Vienna, thereby offering new training and education opportunities for Hungarians and students from the Carpathian Basin studying there, MCC said on Friday. MCC is continuing to build its international network and is getting involved in serious international research projects, it added.

Modul University was set up 15 years ago as a private university focusing on tourism, and its academic programmes have been continually

expanding. It is now considered an internationally recognised elite university, the university said in a statement. As against 80 students in three educational programmes in 2007, it currently has 1,100 students studying international management, sustainable development, applied sciences, tourism and service management at campuses in Vienna and Nanjing, the statement added.

Modul University also offers high-level practical training and carries out research projects which can now be joined by MCC's teachers and researchers. MCC launched a training programme in Brussels last autumn in which students can get first-hand experience about the operation of the European Union, and signed a cooperation agreement with ESMT university of Berlin a few weeks ago, allowing 20 students annually to attend Germany's top business school, the statement said. Additionally, an agreement signed with The Roger Scruton Legacy Foundation enables MCC students to attend the UK's top universities. Thanks to the new acquisition, teachers from Notre Dame University, Columbia University and the London School of Economics will help in MCC's expansion.

HUNGARY MARCH INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT DOWN 4.1% - KSH

Output of Hungary's industrial sector fell by an annual 4.1% in March, the

Central Statistical Office (KSH) said in a second reading of data on Friday. March output dropped by 4% when adjusted for the number of working days. Month on month, output edged up a seasonally and working day-adjusted 0.2%.

Industrial exports edged up an annual 0.4%. Automotive exports jumped by 31%, while electrical machinery manufacturing was up 23%. Output of the food, drinks and tobacco segment slipped by 13.3%. Industrial sales fell 7.5% in March. Export sales edged up 0.4% but domestic sales dropped by 17%. For the period January-March, output dropped by an annual 3.1%.

NBH RAISES INCOME THRESHOLD FOR UPPER PAYMENT-TO-INCOME RATIO

The National Bank of Hungary (NBH) on Friday said it decided to raise the income threshold for the upper, 60% payment-to-income ratio from 500,000 to 600,000 forints (EUR 1,600) from July 1. The measure was taken because of the high inflation environment and nominal wage dynamics, the central bank and market regulator said. A 50% payment-to-income ratio applies to borrowers with incomes under the threshold. The NBH also decided to raise the threshold for smaller loans exempt from the payment-to-income

ratio requirement from 300,000 to 450,000 forints.

NEARLY 12,000 REFUGEES ENTER HUNGARY ON THURSDAY

Fully 5,865 refugees entered Hungary at the Ukraine-Hungary border on Thursday, while 5,932 came to the country via Romania, according to the national police headquarters (ORFK). Police issued temporary residence permits valid for 30 days to 51 people, ORFK said on Friday.

CHESS GRANDMASTER ANDRÁS ADORJÁN DIES AT 73

International chess grandmaster, Chess Olympiad winner and writer András Adorján died at age 73 after a long illness, his stepbrother Károly Jocha said on his official website on Friday. Adorján helped Hungary capture the gold medal at the Chess Olympiad of Buenos Aires in 1978 and he was a three-time Hungarian champion. At the age of 16, he received the qualification of international master in 1970 and grandmaster in 1973. He won a gold medal at the European Championship in Plovdiv in 1983. As a professional writer, he became renowned for the theory dubbed Black is OK!, concerned with the success of black pieces.