



PÉCSI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM  
UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS

uni pécs

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I N T E R N A T I O N A L



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# BRIGHT, YOUNG PEOPLE

*Several thousands of bright, young people arrive at the University of Pécs each year: a warm welcome to all of you in the current, 2022/23 academic year! Let us hope that you will be learning something new every day, deepening your knowledge in the field that you have chosen to study! Set aside some time for sharing your ideas with friends and caring for your loved ones as well. Let the bright light of your minds and warmth of your hearts guide you on your way!*

*Zsolnay Light Festival Pécs*

*(Photo: Szabolcs Csontos)*

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# AFTER CHALLENGE, **BEFORE CHALLENGES**

*Interview with Dr. Attila Miseta, the long-standing new Rector of UP*

*A new rector's term started at the University of Pécs on 1 July. We asked Dr. Attila Miseta, the long-standing new Rector, about the details and current events.*

Éva Harka  Szabolcs Csontos

**Who are your new vice rectors, what area do they work in and why did you choose them?**

Professor Ferenc Jakab has already started his work, for the time being he has a mandate to work mainly on the field of innovation. We are filing a good number of patents, but there is a lot to be done in terms of innovation management, exploitation of patents, and partnering with industry and service providers. I think, we need to make significant progress in this area, which will be good for the university. On 1 September, Professor Zoltán Schepp will take up his post, and I expect him to help improve communication between academia and the business community. His tasks will also include helping to develop how the university's management strategy should adapt to the rapidly changing situation. In this respect, the model change is a particular challenge.

Innovation used to be the responsibility of Attila Fellingner, he now deals with academic and scientific areas, only his responsibilities related to innovation and innovation management have been transferred to Professor Jakab. József Betlehem, Vice Rector for General Affairs, Connections and Strategic Affairs, and Tamás Fedeles, Vice Rector for Education, have retained their responsibilities.

**In your application you defined a target of 25,000 Hungarian students as an achievable goal. What measures do you plan to take to achieve this?**

This means no small challenge. We are well aware that a significant proportion of students from our catchment area continue their studies in Budapest. We need to be more active in presenting the developments and excellence that have taken place at the University of Pécs. And, of course, in this line, we need to provide additional benefits for the socially disadvantaged.

It would be good to increase the number of dormitories, and if everything is true, the Balassa dormitory,



which will be able to accommodate an extra 300 people, will open its doors in September. But we also have long-term concepts to increase the number of places, to provide financial support for rented accommodation and, in the long term, to build a dormitory. The latter is also dependent on being able to apply for funding.

**I understand that a special working group is dealing with the issue of dropout prevention - will there be any changes in the new school year as a result of this work?**

Obviously, this can only be introduced gradually. Funding is no longer based on the number of students entering, but on a certain number of students. On how many students can be in a given training portfolio. This is both to ensure that students progress according to

the curriculum and preferably do not interrupt their studies. It is not important to increase the number of students enrolled at all cost, but to increase the quality of the intake, i.e. to recruit students who will stay at the university. I think that dropping out for academic reasons is a natural process in a university.

While increasing the number of students is a natural objective for the university, a more important aim is to increase the quality of students and teachers.

**Deregulation was a prominent part of both your first and second rectorship applications. What is still to be implemented during your term as Rector?**

Unfortunately, not in the way it should have been. Our administrative system is over-complicated, still too paper-based, requires a lot of signatures, and this creates a lot of room for error. In terms of deregulation, we are actively working with the Chancellor and the UQA Board of Trustees to develop a truly efficient administration.

**You strongly support the internationalization of the teaching staff. What is the Rector's leadership doing to promote this?**

Some faculties have the culture and resources with regards to this field. The Board of Trustees has provided a fund to enable faculties and units that have not been able to do so until now due to financial constraints or as part of their culture to do so to strengthen internationalization. One element of the internationalization of the teaching staff is to attract researchers who have retired from other institutions but are still active, or to take on those who have not retired for shorter periods, and to retain those foreign doctoral students who are worthy and to offer them the right prospects for continuing their academic careers here.

**The introduction of a uniform performance assessment system is imminent in all units. What are the hurdles you have encountered so far and what can you expect? What can be known about the 15% promised to employees?**

The payment of the 15% and the increase in the minimum wage took place at the same time. It is an unfortunate circumstance that inflation has broken loose, so it has taken some of this wage increase. However, the basic objective is that the remaining amount should be distributed by the university in connection with performance assessment.

So far the faculties have had performance assessment systems of varying degrees and quality. The uniform performance assessment system will bring about major changes to these. Those elements that relate to the core product of the university, that is education, will be treated in a uniform way. The assessment of academic advancement will also be standardised. What cannot be measured by international standards will be measured according to faculty recommendations. But everyone must have performance targets and everyone must move towards them. This will also mean a change of approach.

**At important recent events, I have talked to several non-academic people who all emphasized the strengthening of the role of the UP by linking it not exclusively and explicitly to traditional higher education functions, but to, for example, virus control or economic recovery. How do you see the role of the university?**

A key objective is to strengthen the university's third mission, which involves both social engagement and good relations with social actors - not only industry and service industry, but also city, county and regional leadership. I think that in this context, the role of the university has been strengthened, but there is still plenty to be done.



## UP LEADERSHIP

Rector: **Dr. Attila Miseta**

### VICE RECTORS:

**Dr. József Betlehem**, Vice Rector for General Affairs,  
Connections and Strategic Affairs

**Dr. Tamás Fedeles**, university professor in charge of the  
duties of Vice Rector for Education

**Dr. Attila Felinger**, university professor in charge of the  
duties of Vice Rector for Science

**Dr. Ferenc Jakab**, university Professor in charge of the  
Vice Rector for Innovation

**Dr. Zoltán Schepp**, university professor in charge of Vice  
Rector economic affairs

Chief of Staff of the Rector's Cabinet: **Gergely Kresák**

Rector's Envoy: **Attila Lengvárszky**

# IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE UNIVERSITY THAT THOSE **WHO WORK AT UP LIVE WELL**

*Interview with Professor József Bódis, Chairman of the UQA Board of Trustees.*

Éva Harka 📷 Szabolcs Csontos



**I would like to clarify the relationship between the Board of Trustees and the University. Am I right in saying that the Board of Trustees may set directions, tasks, indicators for the University, things that it sees fit, but it is the University, which manages the implementation of these as it wishes?**

Yes. Our basic ambition is to have a single channel of communication. This is not because we insist on hierarchy, but to avoid chaos. The university is a huge institution by nature, with 21,000 students, including almost 5,000 of them who come from abroad, a staff of 8,600, and a very large number of premises in several cities. This must be managed. If we add to this an element of uncertainty meaning that we all voice our opinion waiting for the results, it would not be effective. Therefore, and the rectorial leadership also agreed, we decided to have a single channel of administration/communication between us to strengthen uniformity. This does not mean that we do not want to meet with students, it does not mean that we do not go to faculties, or visit institutes and various events. The world is more colourful than that. But

the main decisions determining our work will always be implemented by the Rector's leadership. I do not want to limit the autonomy of the university in any way, because I grew up in it, and I would say that I am a child of it. We would like to see the development of this autonomy.

**What about the uniform performance assessment system, which is also the basis for the second 15% pay element?**

The Board of Trustees expected the performance assessment system to be operational at the University of Pécs from January 2022 – and unfortunately it is not the case. We had to realize that working this out on an institutional level is a more difficult and slower task than anticipated. I know that the basis of the performance assessment system has been approved by the Senate and is being implemented. Some faculties, building on their history, have made good progress with this and have been able to complete it, while other units have not so much. I think we will be satisfied, if by the end of 2022 the performance assessment system is up and running.

But what is the point of this? It became obvious relatively quickly that a new wage structure was needed - but it has not become clear to all workers what they would have to deliver above and beyond the new guaranteed basic wage. A performance assessment system only works well, if it is possible to know, on an individual basis, how much the guaranteed wage is and what additional tasks the person will have to complete to receive the additional elements of his or her wage. It is in the interest of the Board of Trustees and the University that those who work at UP live well and that this is reflected in their income.

**The strategy included four priorities. One of them was teaching methodology.**

Even as Rector, I wanted the University to take action in the field of digital education, and as Secretary of State, I

have tried to keep this issue on the surface. Then came the coronavirus epidemic and solved the problem, as the situation forced higher education institutions to accelerate online education as much as they could. We experienced that hybrid education is a progressive form. A university such as ours can use the opportunities of online education to strengthen its position in the international arena. This requires licences, educational programmes that can be used there and new methodologies. I think this is an important opportunity.

**In terms of innovation and the ecosystem, biotechnology in particular is the area the UQA intends to show as its flagship. What about the other areas?**

A university cannot give up any innovation. Beyond innovation manifested in courses, methods and processes, higher education offers much more sophisticated innovation opportunities, from the development of application systems to the production of serious instruments or products. Where we are strong, is in medicine, health sciences and biotechnology. Obviously, this is the area that promises the greatest success. But that does not mean that we should neglect other areas, we just do not pay that much attention to them. But any researcher or research group at any faculty that shows productivity in innovation will be embraced and supported.

**Internationalization is also an objective - what is the focus of UQA in this context?**

When the number of Hungarian students decreased, and I was preparing for my second candidacy to be rector, we came up with the idea that what the Medical School, the Faculty of Business and Economics and psychology education had done in terms of internationalization, the other faculties should also start doing. I am convinced that the greatest achievement of the University of Pécs over the last decade is that today almost 5,000 of our 21,000 students are international. This is an incredible achievement, impressive not only in terms of numbers, but also in the spirit behind it! What is more, it is predicted that this number could be increased to reach 6-8 thousand. What we have not been able to make much progress on - and this applies not only to UP but also to other Hungarian universities - is increasing the proportion of international lecturers. The Board of Trustees has set up a special fund for this, because we want to strengthen this field. There are several ways to expand the staff of international lecturers: one of them is to retain foreign students who have graduated here, especially doctoral students, which allows for organic development. But we cannot give up the idea of bringing teachers from abroad to Hungary to work in targeted fields of science.



**When presenting the strategy, you said that the renewal of the organizational frameworks may also be imminent, but you emphasized that this does not mean that the faculties would be dismantled. What did you mean by that?**

When I was in my last year as rector, I started to deal with issues concerning the organizational framework of education. This is how the concept of "school" was born and implemented in the Rules for Organization and Operation. I see that the modern universities of the world do not necessarily operate in faculties, but in so-called school systems. It is not easy to answer the question whether the situation is ripe for this in Pécs, but it is certain that this rigid faculty system is strained by various contradictions. I think that there are tasks to be solved that are not linked to one faculty. Such as dentistry, sports science, information technology or teacher training. A "school" may be a better form of organization because it only has to manage the curriculum that is its main profile and can manage courses in complementary disciplines with courses offered at other faculties. Therefore, this system is also much more efficient. Such developments take two forms: revolutionary, where we blow them up and then build something new, and evolutionary. I am an advocate of the latter. I think that in areas where there are tasks to be done functionally, we should create a school and see how it can work within the existing organizational framework. I am of the opinion, that we should discuss with the citizens of the university, how we can solve our tasks in a new, more efficient system.

# RESEARCH CENTRE FOR NATIONAL REPRODUCTIVE METHODOLOGY

**T**he Research Centre for National Reproductive Methodology has been established at the UP with the help of a 2.5 billion Euros of state fund. The foundation stone of the future building was laid in early 2022.

*The professional traditions of the University of Pécs Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology/ Reproductive Centre go back a long time: the quality of work of the in vitro fertilization laboratory is best illustrated by the fact that the first test-tube baby of the country was born here in 1988, and since then, thousands of babies have been born here thanks to their work.*

*The establishment of the Research Centre for National Reproductive Methodology will increase the number of ward beds from the current 7 to 14, with the creation of double wards. A modern and highly civilized waiting room of almost 130 square metres will be established, together with two new consultation rooms for patients. A chemistry research laboratory for molecular diagnostics will also be created to support research. The works are provisionally scheduled to be completed in early 2023.*

# THE MOST **BEAUTIFUL CAMPUS OF HUNGARY!**

**T**he new wing of the Medical School of the University of Pécs, for which the Modern Cities Programme provided 14 billion HUF resources, was officially handed over.

The main building of the prestigious Medical School of Pécs has been expanded with a new 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> wing, which includes the latest technological innovations, thus providing students, educators and researchers with an even higher level of theoretical and clinical education environment than before.

In the new wing, 4 lecture halls and 34 seminar rooms serve the educational and learning conditions, and the state-of-the-art medical technology provides the background for the training. In addition, the 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> park has been renewed around the wing, which, with its plants, state-of-the-art pavement system and public furniture and artificial lake, provides a wonderful community space for students.

# DOUBLE DEVELOPMENT AT THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF THE CLINICAL CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS

*The Child and Adolescent Psychiatry building has been renovated, at a cost of nearly HUF 1.2 billion. The new section was opened this spring. The investment including three stories and totalling around 1,000 m<sup>2</sup>, has replaced the previous 15-bed unit with a separate 25-bed child psychiatric ward. In addition to the wards, outpatient rooms and medical rooms have been added on 3 floors, totalling 975 m<sup>2</sup>.*

*In spring 2022, the foundation stone of the future Children's Emergency Unit was also laid. The new building will cover 1300 m<sup>2</sup> and almost the same amount of space in the existing children's hospital complex will be renovated at a total cost of nearly HUF 2.5 billion. In the framework of this development, a new state-of-the-art operating theatre block will be constructed, the paediatric surgery department will be remodelled, and larger and more modern, child-friendly wards will also be built. The tender will also provide more than half a billion Forints to modernise the equipment.*

# ULTRA-MODERN DENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS!

*21<sup>st</sup> century dental care and dental education/research is made possible by the Dental Education Centre, which was inaugurated on 3 March.*

*The gleaming white, multi-storey block stands on Szigeti road, opposite the Medical School. The five-storey building, which covers almost 3,000 square metres, houses the entire spectrum of dental care and training. The backbone of dental training is provided by more than 60 state-of-the-art dental workstations, in a circular panoramic layout, surrounding the central corridor and patient lounge on each floor. The new centre will provide theoretical and practical training for 600 students, with student, research, teaching and administrative space on the upper floors.*

*This is an important milestone for the city and the region, around 46,000 patients are going to be treated here each year.*

*The Dental Education Centre of the University of Pécs will be fully operational from autumn 2022.*

# HUNGARIAN GENOME PROGRAMME

*Therapy that can be personalized on the basis of genetics. In short, this is what the Hungarian National Genome Programme is making available in Hungary, and the Szentágotthai János Research Centre of the University of Pécs has reached a key point in its development.*

In autumn 2021, the high-performance sequencing system and related bioinformatics tool developments procured under the nearly HUF 800 million tender were handed over. This will create opportunities that were previously unavailable not only in Hungary but also in Central Europe.

The Hungarian National Genome Programme aims to define the genetic characteristics of the Hungarian population and to facilitate the development of disease-specific genetic panels and the identification of new drug targets.

The plan is to sequence tens of thousands of complete genomes. The project will focus on people with rare diseases and their families, as well as cancer patients. Population genomics studies will also be carried out, which will not only benefit individual patients but also contribute to scientific discoveries.

# PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS, FRIENDSHIPS, HOME

*It is always our brightest celebration when we have the chance to inaugurate honorary doctors, habilitated doctors and doctors before our national holiday on 15 March – said Rector Dr. Attila Miseta at the Ceremonial Senate Meeting, held in March in the Dr. Halasy-Nagy József Aula.*

Éva Harka |  Szabolcs Csontos

The University of Pécs conferred the title of "Doctor Honoris Causa" on Professor Mária Cseh, Head of the Doctoral Programme in Human and Organizational Learning at George Washington University, the first and founding Head of the Department of Human and Organizational Learning at the University of Pécs; and Professor Attila Chikán, Professor Emeritus of the Corvinus University of Budapest, a full member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Mária Cseh's relationship with the University of Pécs started in 1997 and the cooperation has been uninterrupted ever since. In 2016, we established the Centre of Excellence in Occupational Health and Work Science, with the participation of the Faculty of Law, the Medical School, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Pécs. We received the founding certificate of the Centre together with Antal Tibold from the then Rector József Bódis – emphasized Mária Cseh some of the highlights of their joint work, in addition to conferences, scientific articles and studies. *When I am in Pécs, it feels like home to me. I hope that this will be the case for many years to come, and that our work will contribute to a better, more beautiful and more sustainable world.*

Attila Chikán also spoke about his strong ties to Pécs: *Among my best my students were those, who founded the predecessor of the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Pécs, the then subsidiary department of the Karl Marx University of Economics.*



*Later, they were also responsible for the establishment of the independent Faculty, said Attila Chikán.*

From the very first moment of the economics education in Pécs, the professor has maintained regular and close contact with the teachers and researchers working in Pécs. He underlined:

*The faculty in Pécs has achieved great results at international level, especially in research on competitiveness, including international comparisons of corporate competitiveness.*

# UP PREPARES THE **ENERGY EFFICIENCY** RENOVATION OF 17 BUILDINGS

Éva Harka | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

In recent years, the University of Pécs has paid increasing attention to becoming a "Green University". These efforts are already reflected in objective indicators, as UP is ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> in the GreenMetric World University Ranking 2021, and the best of the 11 Hungarian universities participating in the initiative. One of the pillars of the sustainable, green concept is the sensible management of environmental resources, that is energy efficiency. However, when looking at the scores in the GreenMetric ranking category of infrastructure condition referred to above, it is obvious that there is room for improvement at UP, and that it is therefore justified to improve the energy efficiency of buildings in poorer condition.

This is why the University of Pécs has applied for and received a total of HUF 421 489 814 from the Environment and Energy Operational Programme (KEHOP) funding to prepare the energy efficiency renovation of its 17 buildings. In the tender, UP undertook to prepare the implementation plans and to conduct the public procurement procedures for the energy efficiency renovation of the buildings as a preparation for future investments.

The energy performance certificates, which show the planned state of the building, call for a complete energy efficiency renovation of several buildings, including replacement of windows and doors, thermal insulation, installation of solar panels, modernisation of lighting, heating, and ventilation systems. The energy efficiency improvements listed above would upgrade all but one building to a better energy class and 9 buildings to BB energy class, i.e., close to zero energy demand, so the project might provide significant savings for the University in the medium and long term.

The buildings included in the project are as follows: Education Building, Medical School; Institute of Biophysics; Buildings "B" and "D" and the technology wing at the Faculty of Sciences and Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences; UP Vocational School of Health and Social Care; Chancellery; Heart Clinic; Internal Medicine Clinic II; Traumatology Centre; Mihály Babits Secondary Teacher Training School; Ferenc Deák Secondary School. In Szekszárd: Education Building, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Education and Regional Development; IGYK Secondary Teacher Training School, IGYK Teacher Training School Kindergarten.



# THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS STANDS FOR PEACE AND HELPS THOSE IN NEED

*War is raging in our neighbourhood: Ukraine and Russia are at war. As a result of the military offensive that began on 24 February and the recent escalation of fighting in eastern Ukraine, people have constantly been leaving the country, and the basic water, gas and electricity supplies are threatened on both sides of the conflict. Several civilian casualties have been reported in the press. The military conflict is generating a humanitarian crisis, with up to several million civilians estimated to be forced to leave their homes. It is a difficult situation, and the University of Pécs is always trying to help those in need, said Rector Attila Miseta in his message at the end of February.*

Éva Harka |  Szabolcs Csontos

The University of Pécs was one of the first in Hungary to develop a programme in order to help refugees from Ukraine, especially those students who were forced to leave. UP has opened a special application platform for students who are fleeing the war in Ukraine but also intend to continue their studies. Refugees can continue their studies in more than 100 English-language and several hundred Hungarian-language study programmes at the ten faculties of the University of Pécs. Students are automatically exempted from paying the application and dormitory fees, and the University is working on developing further student-friendly financial details. The University of Pécs is committed to providing each student with the most appropriate, individualized support for their studies.

*I am sure that every UP citizen has thought about what they can do, how they could help in the most efficient way. It is very important that we do not start this process ad hoc, without professional knowledge and experience so that goodwill will not go to waste and the right donation will go to the right place, so that it would mean real help. One of the partners of our university is the Hungarian Red Cross, which, along with other national charities, has started to work in a coordinated way to help refugees arriving from the war zone. To this end, the organisation is launching a nationwide fundraising campaign to help those affected by the situation in Ukraine. The incoming donations will be used for humanitarian activities, Attila Miseta told the university. In this spirit, UP has already organised several fundraising activities.*



Fundraising is organized by the University Student Union within the framework of the University. The Students' Union has set up donation collection points at all the faculties of the university where citizens can drop off non-perishable food, blankets and hygiene products. In cooperation with the Hungarian Red Cross, volunteers were also expected at the Ukrainian-Hungarian border areas.

The Parish of the Cathedral of Pécs and the Faculty of Music and Visual Arts organised a joint charity musical prayer service and exhibition in March in the Basilica of Pécs to help those suffering in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict and those fleeing the war. The donations were distributed among those in need through the Catholic Charity of Pécs.

**For further information:**

<https://pte.hu/en/help-for-ukraine/news>

# "I WAS CONVINCED THAT THIS COULD NOT HAPPEN IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY"



*Violetta Gerasenko is one of the students from Ukraine who fled to Hungary to escape the war. She was a student at the Taras Shevchenko National University in Kiev, currently she would like to continue her studies in psychology at the UP Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and stays in one of the dormitories of the University of Pécs.*

## What happened next?

My university communicated with us and offered help if anyone needed it. I honestly do not remember exactly how the communication took place in the first weeks, because then I only followed the news. My mother was in Hungary at the beginning of the war, and my brother was in Kyiv with his grandmother, and I was with my boyfriend's family. So, we thought about how to reunite with my brother and go to Hungary. In about two weeks we were able to do it. We went to my grandmother's village, which is in a less secure area of Ukraine, and from there we came to Hungary.

## What is your opinion about the war?

I think this is a terrible, brutal and unjustified war. This is a total crime against the entirety of Ukrainian people, and I cannot call it anything other than the genocide of the Ukrainian people.

## Why did you flee to Hungary, and why did you choose the University of Pécs?

I came to Hungary because my mother works here. And Pécs because I found a university here and decided to try to enter it to study and bring quality knowledge to my country.

## What kind of problems do you have, in which the UP could help?

I believe that the university has already helped me and other Ukrainians a lot by giving me the opportunity to study and live here. I am very grateful for this opportunity.

## How do you imagine your future?

I see my future in a free independent Ukraine. Without war and without Russian influence.

*April 2022.*

Luca Adrián | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

## The news of war have come as a bit of a shock to many people in Hungary. Did you know in Ukraine what to expect?

I was one of those people who said that there would be no war until the very end. I was convinced that this could not happen in the 21st century. But still everyone was discussing it and there was a feeling in the air that something was happening. I was not getting ready for war, and at the time it began, I was completely unprepared.

## What did you experience from the war?

I will not say that I experienced any terrible events. At the beginning, my boyfriend and his family quickly left Kyiv and went to a village near Kyiv. All I saw and heard from the war were propellers and fighters flying over our house. This sound was very loud and scary, it seemed as if the plane would launch a rocket directly into our house. The airspace over Hungary is relatively busy, and it is difficult to get used to the fact that planes like these are used to bomb cities. But I would say this is a rather small part of the war. Because it cannot be compared to what people saw in Bucha or Mariupol.

# WHAT MAY LIE AHEAD OF US IN TERMS OF CORONAVIRUS (AND ALL OTHER VIRUSES)?

*We interviewed Professor Ferenc Jakab, Head of the National Laboratory of Virology and Vice Rector of UP.*

Éva Harka |  Szabolcs Csontos

## **When is the next wave of the coronavirus epidemic expected?**

There are many epidemiological factors that can influence the infection rate of a given virus, so it is not worth talking about waves in this regard. We must recognise that the coronavirus is among us and will remain among us. In the autumn-winter period it will be more intense, with more cases, more hospitalizations, more deaths, more severe cases, and this will be followed by a period of relative calm, mild latency, and a decreasing number of infections in spring and summer. The latter does not mean that the virus has disappeared, it just means that there are fewer cases, and in my opinion, the number of infections will never be zero.

## **Do you think that one day there will be a drug specifically against coronavirus, or can we expect vaccines to be administered before the seasonal period and/or can we get through a guaranteed period by taking vaccination once? The latter seems so uncertain these days.**

There is a huge difference between the situation now and the time when this epidemic broke out and we needed to put out the fire. Initially, we had to do our best in the fields of epidemiology, healthcare, and vaccine development in order to bring the coronavirus epidemic to an end in some way, because it was terribly damaging from a health, economic and social point of view. We have passed this stage, we no longer have to put out the fire, but we have to look after the remaining embers, so as not to let them flare up again. I think these embers will never go out. We can avoid mass disease with vaccines and with those drug treatments that we are constantly developing all over the world, including here in Pécs. Better and better vaccines will be developed, including some that will be able to trigger an immune response not only against one type of coronavirus but against several types of coronavirus together. I am also sure that drug therapy prevention



will also evolve, as vaccines do not always achieve the goal, not all people can be vaccinated - they need to have the option of drug treatment. I would warn everyone

against giving themselves a vaccine every 3-4 months, I do not think it makes sense. I think that the first two vaccines were very important in fighting the fires, and the third vaccine is also terribly important to prevent the epidemic from flaring up again. But vaccinations from now on are music for the future. I think, we will get to the point where we will have to have a booster vaccination once a year before the season, similarly to



*Glass artist Dorka Borbás' Covid memorial statue in the park of the Medical School, on the cover of the magazine.*

flu, to give our immune system a bit of a boost. But it depends on what kind of vaccines we will have. If it is one that is suitable for all subtypes, all variants together, that is a winner. If we cannot achieve that, and we might have to mix the vaccine ingredients every year, then we will have to have new vaccines year after year, just like the flu vaccine.

**What do you think about the potential of the laboratory in Pécs, where can you integrate your innovation to treat coronavirus in the future?**

Our coronavirus research has not stopped, but we have also relaunched those research projects that we had to stop immediately because of the coronavirus, so that we could focus one hundred percent on Covid diagnostics and research. We are currently conducting both vaccine and drug trials and vaccine development, and in many cases, we are already in the animal testing phase. Naturally, we will continue our coronavirus research until these are completed, but if a new company approaches us with an innovative idea to test and develop together, we are obviously open to partnership, as we aim to increase our innovation activities.

**There is more and more so-called citizen science, i.e., we can read about more research in which the public can "contribute" with data and observations. How can people help you in this respect?**

Research activities do not stop at our doorstep. Involving the public is an important element. For example, in our mosquito project, people are contributing very important and valuable information to the scientific work. Besides, it is also important that they listen to us. We try to communicate with people in an honest, open, yet professional way and explain the risks and results in a way that is understandable to lay people. However, if we fall on deaf ears, that is a problem. Together we can achieve a lot, because our scientific results are worthless if they do not have an impact on society as a whole.

The other element is research, development and innovation in cooperation with firms and companies. We need to take our scientific results out onto an innovation platform so we can develop a product or process that is useful for the society. This does not mean that only applied research is important, basic research is also crucial, as its results can be built upon. The coronavirus epidemic has shown us that a large part of society is open to learning about what goes on in a scientific laboratory, what results are produced and what the social implications are. I think that the coronavirus in particular has opened the door to society and there is a certain curiosity in people. We have to take advantage of that.

**Can you give us some kind of itinerary that we can put into everyday practice to prevent the most dangerous infections?**

No. There are so many infectious diseases and so many prevention strategies. You simply have to listen to the experts and do what they recommend. That is all.

*(July 2022)*

# NATIONAL LABORATORY OF RENEWABLE ENERGIES

*The University of Pécs is launching a project worth HUF 6,304 billion with ten consortium partners. This is the National Laboratory of Renewable Energies (MENL), which is the third priority national-level organization, after the National Laboratory of Human Reproduction and the National Laboratory of Virology, to contribute to the development of Hungary under the leadership of the University of Pécs. The official foundations of the laboratory were laid on 17 June 2022 at the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology of UP.*

Éva Harka |  Szabolcs Csontos

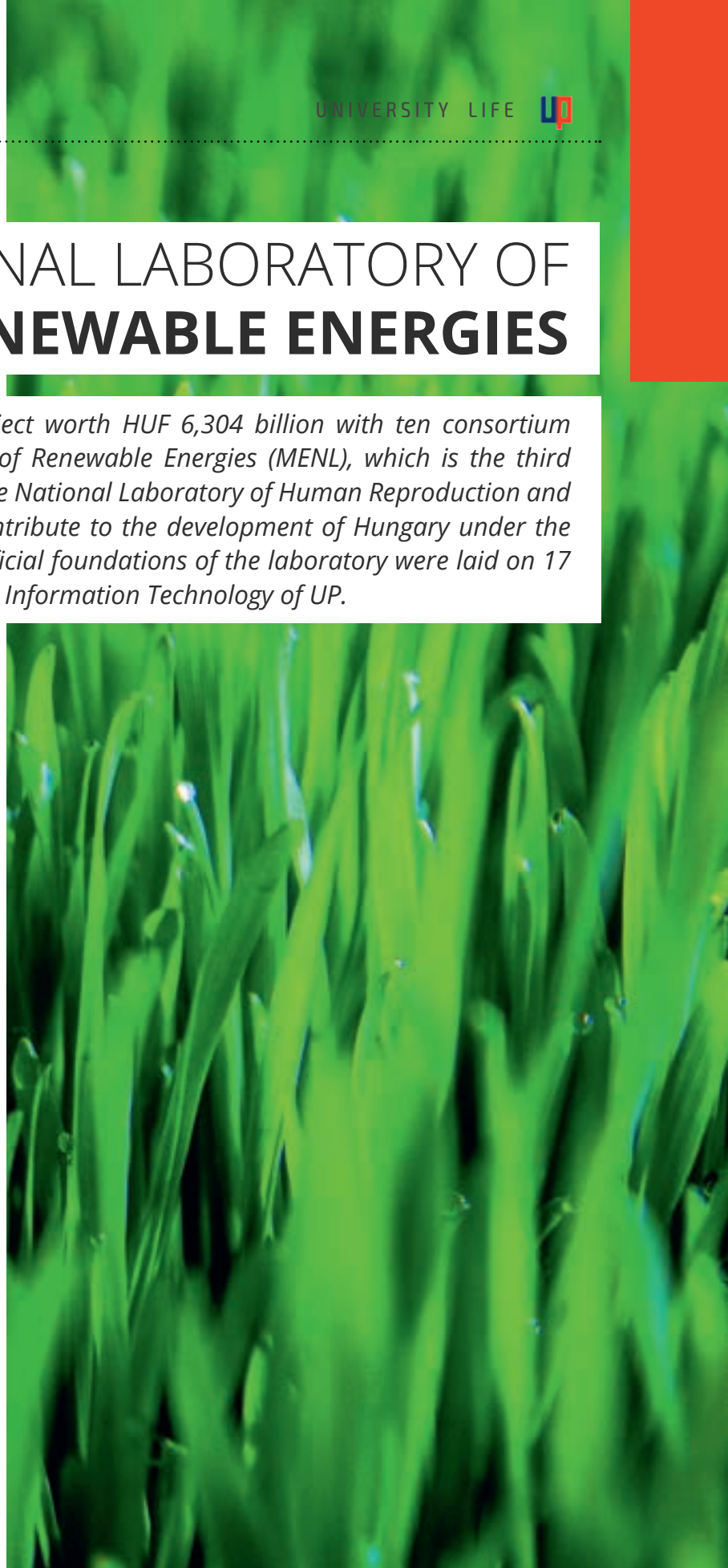
*There have been reorganizations at the level of the ministries, but this does not affect the cordial relationship that has been established so far, said dr. Attila Miseta rector, who highlighted the potential of the model change. More and more people are recognizing the opportunities created by the new way of working, but it is not a done deal, as there are challenges. One of these is the role of the university in the economic recovery of the city and the region, which requires not only a change of attitude on the part of UP, but also closer contact with decision-makers, said the rector.*

## National context

At the event, László Palkovics spoke about Hungary's energy system in the context of MENL. It became clear that, in addition to the growing climate crisis, the energy crisis and supply crisis caused by the Covid epidemic and the Russian–Ukrainian war are catalysts for Hungary to adopt more modern, environmentally friendly and predictable energy systems than the current ones. The establishment of the National Laboratory of Renewable Energies could not have been timed more appropriately.

Among the current challenges, the minister highlighted the growth in energy demand, partly due to industrialization, energy sovereignty, rising energy prices, energy efficiency, the need to improve electricity grids, sustainability and environmental protection, and the use of innovative technologies.

László Palkovics also said: Hungary has set 2050 as the target date for full climate neutrality,





*but fortunately it is also making much faster progress towards meeting its energy and climate policy targets than it has committed to.*

### **More favourable conditions for universities**

After a comprehensive presentation of the national plans, dr. László György, minister of culture and innovation, followed minister Palkovics with a laconic, and remarkable speech.

He said that *the funding for higher education will be increased from €210 billion to €400 billion; the existing €20 billion for the University of Pécs will be increased to €42.6 billion, and €270 billion will be spent on infrastructure development at universities over the next 5-8 years.*

*"Why?" asked dr. László György, and then answered: So that we can maintain our Hungarian values and way of life in a predictable way in a visibly dangerous and changing world.*

*It is important to preserve our relationship to work, he stressed, referring to the fact that the present is displacing newer and newer jobs and that there will be a demand for newer and newer jobs, the latter linked to cutting-edge technologies. For this reason, it is also important that education in Hungary is flexible and responsive to challenges – he said.*

### **MENL**

The "National Laboratory for Renewable Energies" project is implemented under the Széchenyi Plan Plus programme, with two main thematic areas, hydrogen technologies and carbon dioxide recovery.

Dr. Csaba Janáky of the University of Szeged spoke about the details of the research, pointing out that the best way for the MENL to support decarbonization processes is to avoid committing to a specific solution before the appropriate technological background is outlined. He also pointed out that *future green solutions must fit in with existing energy infrastructures and be acceptable to members of society.*

### **MENL members:**

University of Pécs (leader of the consortium)  
 Budapest University of Technology and Economics,  
 University of Debrecen,  
 Centre for Energy Research,  
 University of Miskolc,  
 John von Neumann University,  
 University of Pannonia,  
 University of Szeged,  
 Széchenyi István University,  
 Research Centre for Natural Sciences.

# H, AS IN HYDROGEN

*Hydrogen is a colourless, odourless, non-toxic gas that burns to water in a high-energy release reaction. At the same time, it is also the most promising and greenest solution when it comes to energy production or storage. In this context, we asked Dr. Attila Felinger, Vice Rector for Science, about the research carried out at UP and its role in the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (MENL).*

Éva Harka |  Szabolcs Csontos

## **Besides leading the consortium, what is UP's "share" in MENL?**

The University of Pécs submitted a National Laboratory application in the field of hydrogen technologies, while the University of Szeged applied for a grant in the field of carbon dioxide recycling. The decision was taken to merge the two applications, creating the National Laboratory for Renewable Energies, which is based on both hydrogen and carbon dioxide research. The consortium has ten members, with UP as the leader. We have won a total of 6.3 billion HUF in funding, of which approximately 660 million HUF is allocated specifically for research at the University of Pécs. On the part of UP, three faculties are involved in MENL. The research at the Faculty of Sciences focuses on the electrochemical production of hydrogen. The Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology has already developed a fuel cell and hydrogen technology engineering course, and further research is being carried out on fuel cells. At the Faculty Business and Economics, colleagues are researching the economic aspects of hydrogen technologies and problems related to the circular economy.

## **Why could hydrogen be the energy source of our future?**

Because it is green, meaning that it has no carbon-dioxide emission. In this respect, it has a number

of great potentials, for example as an energy storage or transfer device. The demand for electricity is not steady, so when electricity is generated in a power plant, it is either transmitted to where it is needed or stored until it is used. High-voltage transmission to remote

destinations, hundreds of kilometres away, is energy-intensive and inefficient in the current system. There is a possibility to convert electricity temporarily into hydrogen, store it or, if necessary, transport it to a remote point and produce electricity from this hydrogen again. This could be a much more economical process than the one in use today. We can also see that petrol and diesel cars are replaced with electric vehicles. Charging the batteries of these cars can be time-consuming. One possibility for the future is to run vehicles on hydrogen - a technology that already exists. Hydrogen-powered cars do not emit carbon dioxide, but the hydrogen and oxygen produce water at the end.

## **Could hydrogen even replace natural gas?**

From households to the industry, all our systems are based on natural gas. There are attempts to

mix hydrogen into the natural gas that comes through various pipelines to industrial units or to households, so that we can replace some of it. Today's pipelines are not designed to carry pure hydrogen, nor are today's gas boilers designed to burn hydrogen. A completely



new network of pipelines and machinery would be needed, so as of today only 15-20% of hydrogen can be blended into natural gas. We will probably not be able to eliminate natural gas completely.

**I read that producing hydrogen in large masses is a challenge. Why?**

Hydrogen is fundamentally produced from water, and splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen is an energy-intensive process. On the one hand, this becomes economical if catalysts are used. On the other hand, what we see with any technology is that it becomes cheap when it is widespread, if everyone wants to use it, so unit costs can be reduced.



**What could be the economic significance of the use of hydrogen technologies?**

As soon as these technologies become part of our everyday practice and we move from petrol or electric to hydrogen-powered cars for transportation, and I'm

not talking about just passenger transport, but also public transport, public services and freight transport, carbon emissions will be significantly reduced. It will have a serious impact on both our industrial and natural environment. This will require, however, the mass production of hydrogen to be much cheaper than the energy carriers produced by today's technologies.

**How long may this type of transition take? If I think of the spread of electric and self-driving cars, to me as a layman, it seems a rather slow process...**

It is a slow process, and we are only at the beginning as far as hydrogen is concerned. Speaking of electric cars, however, for a very long time people have been averse to these vehicles because the charging network is not well developed. If someone wants to go a distance of 500 kilometres, let's say they want to go to Budapest and get back to Pécs the same day, they cannot do that with an electric car on a single charge. A driver would obviously feel safer if, say, every current petrol station offered the possibility to quickly recharge the battery of their vehicle.

At the moment, there are no hydrogen filling stations in Hungary that would make a few minutes of refuelling possible. Obviously, the whole system will have to spread, networks of filling stations will have to be set up. This could take several decades, there is no way of knowing exactly. In California, such a network of filling stations is relatively widespread, in Hungary, there is only one available, in Budapest, the nearest filling station is in Vienna. But all new technologies have started slowly and gradually, including electric cars.

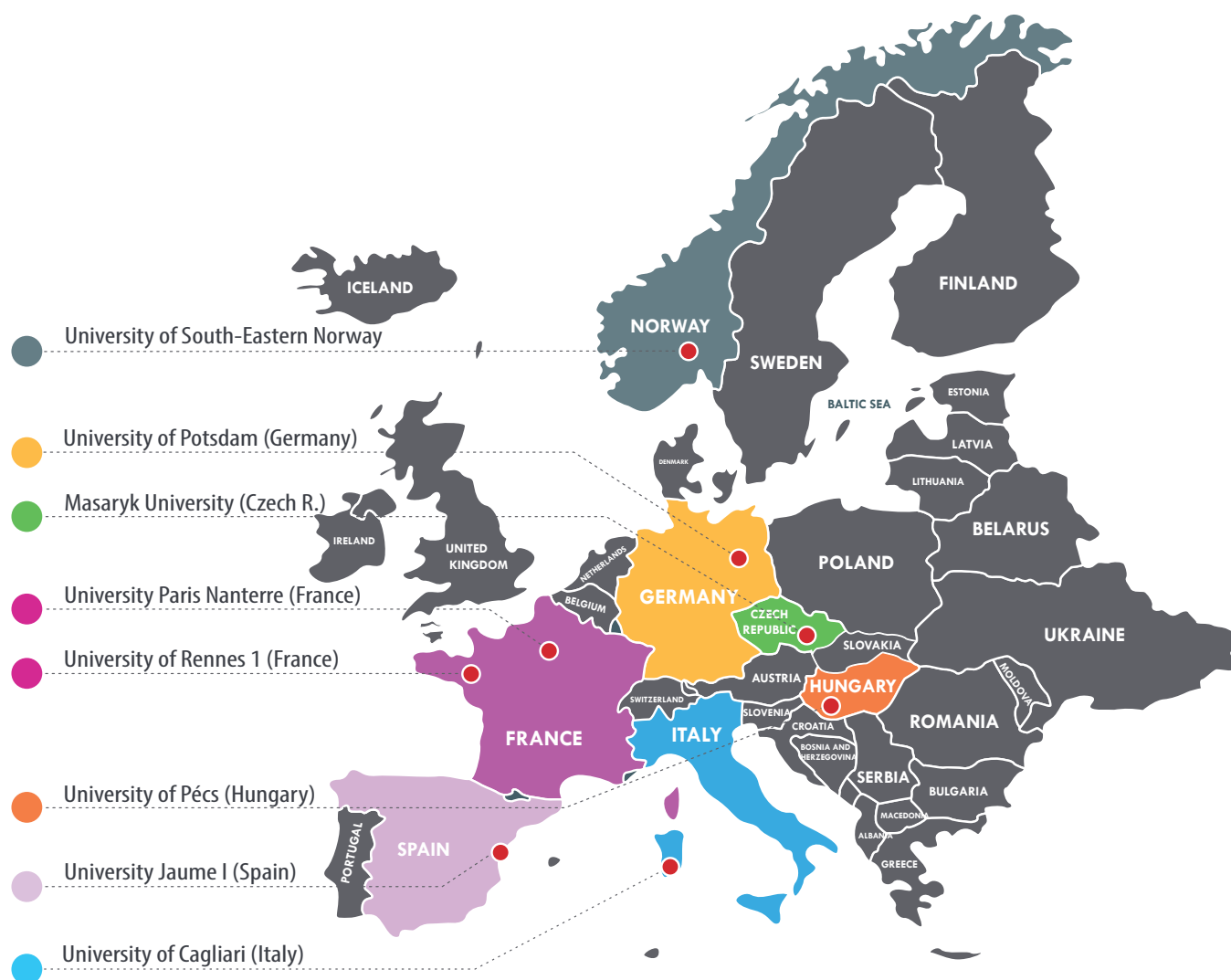
**How does the fact that you are starting to work within the framework of such a national lab catalyse research?**

A particular feature of this National Laboratory is that each of the ten consortium members has done and is doing research in a different area related to hydrogen technology or carbon dioxide. The MENL has a programme steering committee that meets quarterly and progress is discussed on a monthly basis. We are in close contact with our industrial partners. I would also like to emphasize the so-called cooperative doctoral programme, which allows PhD students to participate in joint research between the university and an innovation company as this is also useful for our PhD students in the context of MENL. The cooperation between the ten consortium members and the industrial partners guarantees that MENL will produce good and useful results over the next three years.

# BUILDING AND EXPANDING BRIDGES

## *EDUC University Alliance Receives Renewed European Funding*

*The European Digital UniverCity (EDUC) – the alliance of eight universities led by the University of Potsdam – will receive funding from the European Commission for another four years, the Commission announced on 27 July. EDUC is one of 17 pilot university alliances funded by the EU since 2019. The funding amount for all eight partners is 12.8 million Euros over four years.*



MEMBERS OF THE EDUC ALLIANCE  
/ UnivPécs Graphic /

The University of Potsdam and its seven European partner universities: Paris Nanterre and Rennes 1 (France), Cagliari (Italy), Masaryk (Czech Republic), Pécs (Hungary), Jaume I (Spain) and the University of South-Eastern Norway (Norway) received confirmation of further funding from the EU for the University Alliance. They are thus building on the successes of the pilot phase and deepening their cooperation in the area of innovative mobility scenarios and the internationalization of curricula. Over the next four years, they intend to further develop their joint virtual campus, link research and innovation with teaching using problem-based projects, promote exchange and further training of their scientific and administrative staff, and strengthen networks into society.

The University of Potsdam is very much looking forward to further cooperation with its European university partners. *In ten years' time, students should be able to largely determine the period, location and content of their studies themselves within the framework of our European alliance*, said the University of Potsdam's Vice President for International Affairs and Fundraising, Professor Florian Schweigert. Over the next ten years, the current collaborative activities of alliance members are expected to evolve into coherent structures that fundamentally change the way partners fulfil their individual missions of education, research, innovation and service to society. The goal of the European Digital UniverCity is to develop into a true European University.

We asked Dr. István Tarrósy, Professor, Head of the International Centre of UP and EDUC's professional leader in Pécs, about the details.

#### **How much was the continuation of EDUC expected?**

We were quite confident that we would be successful in our bid to continue! We had several reasons for this: on the one hand, thanks mainly to the work of our colleagues in Potsdam, the preparation phase for the application was handled in a highly professional manner, on the other hand, the Norwegian and Spanish partners who joined our association since its launch have also made a significant contribution to the application, and, on top of that we also had the help of external experts.

The preparatory work has been intense, with at least 20 online meetings per week devoted especially to this case during the last six months. In this sense, I was not surprised, but rather interested in how they evaluated our work so far and our plans for the future. Out of a maximum of 100 points available in the competition, the EDUC association received 91, which is an impressive result indeed. We have been awarded a four-year grant, which can be extended for an additional two years - a period of time

that will have a significant impact on the future of our members and indeed on the rest of the European higher education landscape.

The association has around 200 000 students and 31 000 teachers, researchers, technical and administrative staff. By 2027, the EDUC will be a new kind of transnational university community, built on the priorities of multilingualism, inclusion, interdisciplinarity and digital technologies, and will best prepare its students for the societal challenges of the future.

#### **What has the EU valued most from EDUC activities so far?**

From the detailed assessment documentation, it is obvious how much it meant that the 8 universities of the EDUC alliance represent the European macro-region adequately. Geographical diversity was also a criterion.

What the judges also emphasised is that over the past three years, we have been building a systematic approach to laying the foundations for our long-term goals, including joint degrees, new versions of mobility, joint internships, joint research, and the linking of all these into the ecosystem.

As far as the ecosystem is concerned: we have already been able to show you cooperations that have already been implemented! We have included more than thirty external/associated partners in our application, from companies and NGOs to local cultural institutions and chambers of commerce. This also means that the reach of EDUC and the spirit behind it in these regions includes a much wider circle than just the students and the people working in the association.

#### **What would you personally highlight from your EDUC activities in recent years?**

The working methods that the members apply has become really smooth. Initially, it was more difficult to establish a basis for working together with all our different cultural backgrounds, different national laws, different interpretations. To give you an example: not all EDUC partners interpret university degrees in the same way. Our concept of a diploma does not cover what the French mean by "diplôme" or what we mean by the English word "degree". We had to harmonize our understanding of these concepts, but since then we have worked intensively and successfully together.

#### **The EU seems to be thinking more and more strongly about university alliances. What does this mean for the European Higher Education Area?**

Higher education in the 21st century must also be interpreted on a global scale. There are many European universities that are already competitive on a global level,

while there are also others that, despite being successful in their regions, are not sufficiently competitive. The EU plans to strengthen universities by favouring the structure of associations. This form of cooperation means much more than networks, because it makes systemic building and deeper reforms possible.

By bridging national differences, we can work within EDUC to increase our own competitiveness while increasing that of our allies. In other words, the positives do not only serve the members, but also benefit all European partners. Let me give you a few examples. To employ and recruit a foreign teacher, a common and efficient mechanism can be developed. Or you can share the network of contacts that a partner has already built up for itself - for example, we can share with EDUC members the good relations we have with the Western Balkans, while our French partners can share the external networks they have built up in the Maghreb region.

It is also not a secret ambition of ours to establish a separate legal entity. This does not mean that the universities involved in the alliance will merge, but it could provide a legal framework for cooperation.

**Joint degrees are mentioned several times in the context of EDUC. How will these be implemented and why is EDUC good for students?**

The recognition of EU diplomas within the EU is fairly straightforward. Within EDUC, we want to launch new common, specifically joint diploma programmes. This does not necessarily mean that all eight partners will automatically participate, but the qualification will be under the EDUC umbrella and will be worth more than a degree from one institution. In addition, we are not developing full degree programmes, but joint training programmes with a number of modular elements, leading to a micro-certificate, which will make graduates even more competitive in the labour market. I have been involved in course development myself, and it is no coincidence that there is great interest from all members of the association.

**As far as I know, UP is doing well within EDUC, for example, the highest number of the people taking advantage of the mobility opportunities was from UP. What can we expect for UP in the future?**

In the first three years, UP coordinated one of the twelve work programmes, the one that focused on internationalization. In the next period, we have taken on many more tasks: the University of Pécs will be responsible for three UP-coordinated and three co-coordinated work packages. In the first three years, the budget allocated to UP was €500,000, and for the new tasks we are starting, we will have a total budget of more than €1.2 million. This is



a huge task, but also a huge opportunity! The focus of the work packages concerned also involves finding ways to make it work for everyone, and therefore for us.

**SUMMER SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS OF THE EDUC UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION**

The Law and Technology summer university course was organized for the second time for EDUC students within the framework of the Pécs Summer School programme. The academic programme was provided by the Faculty of Law, while the full organization was carried out by the International Centre.

In addition to students from the German, Italian, Czech and French members of the EDUC university association, Hungarian and international students from UP also participated in the two-week summer course, where they learned about the current issues of data protection law and the legal and ethical challenges of artificial intelligence applications, among others, during the course. Not only the student community, but also the teaching staff was international.

One of the main objectives of the EDUC university association is to provide as many short-cycle courses as possible for the students of the association. Last year, the UP International Centre also organized two EDUC summer university programmes: in addition to the Law and Technology course, the Social Work and Social Ecology blended programme was also held with great success.





## PAST – PRESENT – FUTURE

### The centenary of modern higher education in Pécs

Dr. Tamás Fedeles | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos, University Archives

*The Centenary Celebrations of the University of Pécs have been launched with the motto From the Past to the future on 1 September 2021, at the Ceremonial Senate Meeting. The various programmes covering more than two years, focus on the celebration of the transfer of the Royal Hungarian Elizabeth University, originally founded in Bratislava in 1912, to Pécs. The higher education institution in Bratislava, which had to leave as a result of the Treaty of Trianon following World War I, found a new home at the foothills of Mecsek, where – following the decision of the National Assembly in 1921 – university education has been continuous since the autumn of 1923, albeit within different institutional frameworks. Count Kuno Klebelsberg, Minister of Religion and Public Education opened the first academic year on 14 October 1923 in the present-day dr. Halasy-Nagy József aula, which also sets the closing date for the centenary series of events (14 October 2023).*

In recent months, we have implemented several programme elements in close cooperation with the Faculties, the University Student and Doctoral Student Councils, the University Archives and the University Library, which illustrates the diversity, respect

for tradition and at the same time innovative spirit of the University of Pécs. Some of these events are worth highlighting.

At the premiere of the Janus University Theatre Company's production of *Magammal viszem (I Take It*

with Me, 1 September), the university commemorated the university's move to Pécs, based on its own experiences and with the help of archival sources and studies available in connection with the settlement of the former Royal Hungarian Elizabeth University in Pécs, featuring the props of the community theater.

The harvest celebration of the future centenary Elizabeth wine, organized by the UP Research Institute of Viticulture and Oenology, took place in Pécs at the end of September. At this time, the new, multifunctional event room of the research institute was handed over. At the event, guests harvested grape varieties that were already grown on this picturesque estate 100 years ago as well.

The Partners of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology 50+ Professional Day combined the innovation knowledge competences of different engineering professional fields, the research results of practice-oriented higher education, and the advocacy forum of chamber organizations representing the engineering profession. At the event, which took place at the beginning of October, we also celebrated the half-century anniversary of the founding (1970) of the Pollack Mihály Technical College, the legal predecessor of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, which unfortunately had to be postponed by one year due to the pandemic. One of the highlights of the event was the unveiling of the restored bust sculpture of Mihály Pollack.

The scientific symposium of the UP University Archives titled Higher Education after Trianon (25 November) was also of great interest. Among other things, the lectures delivered within the framework of the national event presented the economic situation of Pécs in the 1920s, the role of the Elizabeth University in cultural diplomacy between the two world wars, and the background of the transfer of the Royal Hungarian Franz Joseph University from Cluj-Napoca to Szeged.

On 11 February 2022, the Women in Science 2022 international conference took place online, which placed special emphasis on presenting women's career paths related to Hungary, especially Pécs, recognized in international scientific life. Organized by the Women in Science – Uneven Playing Field team formed at the Faculty of Sciences, the event focused on STE(A)M, i.e. the potential for the coordination and integration of the arts and technical-scientific thinking, as well as the

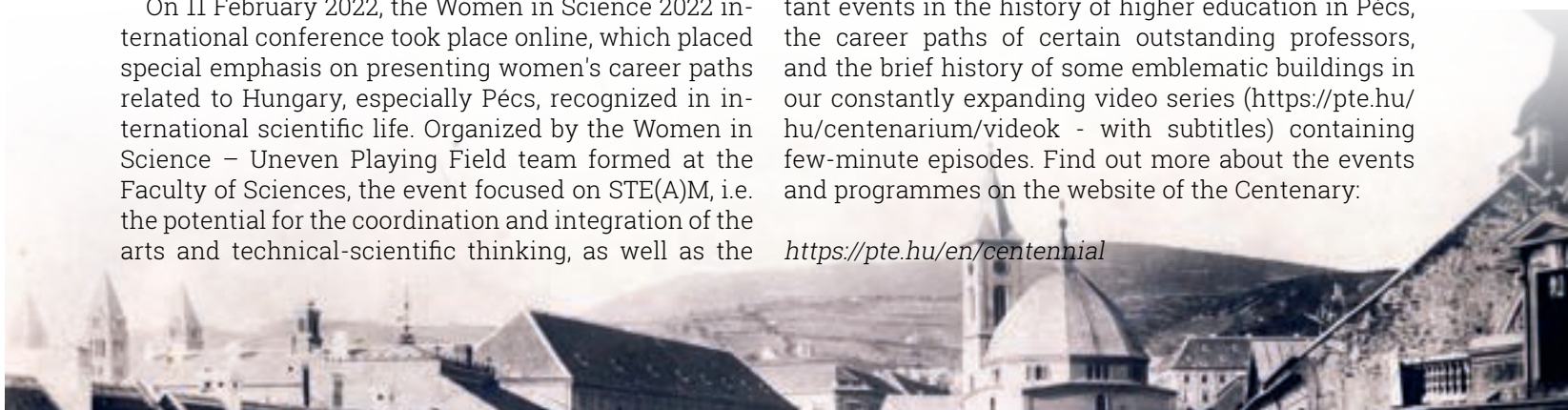
role of women as leaders and middle managers in the world of IT.

One of the highlights of the centenary celebrations took place on 7-8 April at the Faculty of Law. At the National Meeting of Law Student Circles, which Dr. Péter Szendrő, president for life of the National Council of Students of Science honoured with his presence, all institutions of legal education in Hungary were represented. At the professional days organized

with the aim of creating traditions, the student teams of partner institutions competed with their knowledge and creativity in solving various tasks, which was complemented by several community-building elements.

In addition to the special events, if you are interested, you can familiarize yourself with the most important events in the history of higher education in Pécs, the career paths of certain outstanding professors, and the brief history of some emblematic buildings in our constantly expanding video series (<https://pte.hu/hu/centenarium/videok> - with subtitles) containing few-minute episodes. Find out more about the events and programmes on the website of the Centenary:

<https://pte.hu/en/centennial>



# CENTENARY PROGRAMMES

## University Map Application

Presentation: 1 September 2022

## Pécs - Debrecen - Szeged. Kuno Klebelsberg and the Hungarian Higher Education – Temporary exhibition

Opening: 11 October 2022

## National Scientific Students' Associations

Conference and forum

Planned date: October 2022

## Moments from the History of UP in the 20th Century

Virtual exhibition

Public press presentation: 15 October 2022

## XVIII. University Archives Day: The Impact of Trianon on Hungarian Higher Education – Conference

25 November 2022

## Inside View – Traveling exhibition

Testimonials of 23 university citizens about their experiences connected to the University of Pécs

Opening: 10 January 2023

## Renewal of the Permanent Exhibition of University History

Opening ceremony of the exhibition: 17 January 2023

## Memorial Exhibition of Empress Elizabeth

Opening: 17 January 2023

## Bibliography of Historical Records on UP and its Legal Predecessors

Planned release and presentation: February 2023

## "Halls of Science"

Exhibition

Planned date: March 2023

## Empress Elizabeth and the Hungarians

International conference

24-25 May 2023

## Traveling Assembly of the Hungarian Higher Education Archives Association

June 2023



# VIDEO SERIES ABOUT THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Our chances vastly supersede what opportunities the first generation had, when the University moved to Pécs during 1921-22. On this note, I wish a pleasant preparation period for the centenary celebrations to all of you.

**Dr. Attila Miseta, Rector**

The creation of the modern University of Pécs has started due to external pressure. After a hundred years, we are facing changes again, however, this time, we can become the engine of these changes, and I trust that we can come out on top. We are at the doorstep of the biggest opportunity for progress in recent times.

**István Decsi, Chancellor**

I entered the Medical University of Pécs for the first time exactly fifty years ago. Then, I joined a world which determined my whole life. My entire career, and from many aspects my personal life has happened here, and I hope that I will spend many more years here. The University of Pécs is the meaning of my life.

**Dr. József Bódis, President of UQA**

I think that I made the most important connections of my life here, at the university. I was just a child when I came here, but I have grown to be a man at the university, thanks to our extraordinary teachers, and the amazing experiences I have gained here.

**Arnold Koltai, Head of the Student Service Centre**

God says in the Book of Genesis: "Let there be light", so light is there from the very first moment of creation. But that light is also knowledge. It is science. Let there be clarity, let there be logic in the world. Faith and science can only be experienced together. Because faith needs science to lay foundations. But science cannot fulfil its purpose without faith. I am delighted that here, in Pécs we can cooperate, think and serve in unity.

**László Felföldi, Diocesan Bishop**


In my opinion, the University of Pécs is the most important strategic partner of the city. A partner without which I cannot imagine progress and growth in the city.

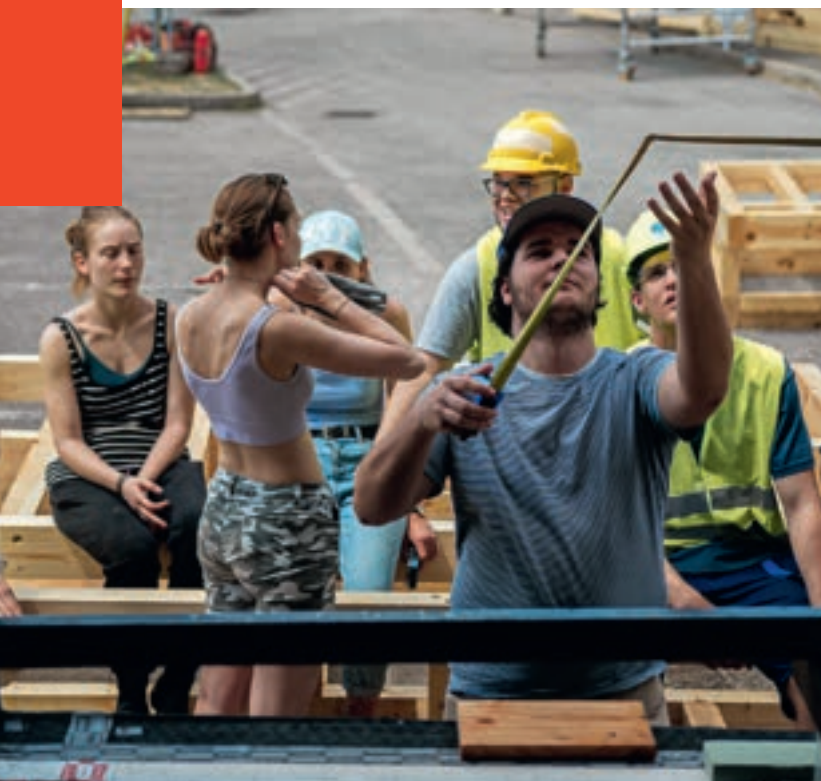
**Attila Péterffy, Mayor of Pécs**

# HUMAN-CENTRED ECO-SUSTAINABLE MODEL HOUSE WITHIN 14 DAYS!

**A** multi-functional residential building with unique solutions, the MAGYAR FÉSZEK+ eco-positive home, has won the 2022 Solar Decathlon's Human-Centred Interior Design Award in Wuppertal. The Lungs of the City Team from the University of Pécs, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology was the only Hungarian participant in the international, building industry innovation competition, announced for university students. The Hungarian team built its model home in just over 14 days based on renewable energy sources to demonstrate sustainability. The project of the Pécs-based team goes beyond the architectural aspect, because this extra-energy house, with zero or negative emission places a strong emphasis on ecological sustainability, environmentally positive architecture and social responsibility.



Tünde Kis |  Szabolcs Csontos



*The Human-Centred Interior Design Award is not just about interior design, but rather about how a building, the environment, people and nature can coexist in a humane way and in a high quality, while also appearing in the interior in a way that represents sustainability and environmental cooperation. In the case of MAGYAR FÉSZEK+, the house is integrated with nature outside, the materials used in the building, the unique furniture, the artworks, provide a complexity of man and nature, which, in terms of their renewability, represent an artistic value that is forward-looking in the long term* said Dr. Tamás Kondor, head of the Lungs of the City Team, and vice-dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology at the University of Pécs. The building was designed to be built on a real plot of land for young students who stay in Pécs after graduating from university and who, in addition to housing, will also set up their own businesses here. The inner core of the house can be transformed into a green environment, which, besides supporting their economic activities, also provides an eco-friendly healthy living space for the residents.

*We have created an eco-sustainable system that is not harmful to the environment in the long term, but rather helpful and 95% recyclable in terms of materials* says Dr. Tamás Kondor.

The primary goal of the building is to be able to re-

duce or minimise the energy demand of the building by using a passive solution in such a way that it can be provided with the least amount of energy consumption. This means that the 3 kW solar panel system does not only supply energy to the 160 square metre building, but also produces additional energy. The interior design also includes several innovations, with a completely unique and energy-efficient lighting system designed by the students. Recycled and natural materials were used when making the furniture. In the field of interior design, a new and innovative type of furniture is also in the making. The team received a lot of professional help from artists involved in the project.

The excellent performance in the competition was made possible by the cooperation of numerous companies, institutions and construction service providers. Participation in the competition was greatly supported by the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, but also by MAKÉSZ, a member organization of the



National Association of Construction Contractors, whose members already helped the team to implement the 2019 Solar Decathlon project by using natural and environmentally friendly technologies, providing materials and technological innovations.

The model house has also been selected as one of the eight buildings that will be an active part of the Solar Living Lab, the demonstration space of the Wuppertal Sustainability Model Park, for three years following the Solar Decathlon. After its return home, it will serve as a research base on the Pécs campus. The team from Pécs will not be at next year's Solar Decathlon, but will certainly take part in the 2025 competition, because it has become clear: Hungary, Pécs and the University of Pécs's Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology do have a place in this prestigious world competition.

# STIMULATING DESIGN AND FUNCTIONALITY

*The Solar Decathlon offers students a unique opportunity to put what they have learned in theory into practice, and see the project come to life. We asked Samantha Foster, who is from South Africa, and just received her diploma in MSc Architecture at the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, University of Pécs about her experiences as a member of the Lungs of the City Team at the Solar Decathlon in Wuppertal, Germany.*

Mariann Tóth |  Szabolcs Csontos

## **What was your motivation to study in Hungary?**

I wanted to study abroad in Europe. The Stipendium Hungaricum programme attracted me to Hungary in particular. I liked studying in Pécs. I come from a big city, so living in a quiet one was a new experience for me. I enjoyed how student-friendly the city is, it allows students to have a sense of independence. I think, there is a good work-life balance in Pécs.

## **You participated in the Solar Decathlon with the Lungs of the City Team. What was it like?**

I had a great time participating in the Solar Decathlon. My favourite part was meeting and working with other students in other fields. It was refreshing to connect with people outside of my degree and still have the same goal in mind.

## **Since when have you been a member of the team?**

I joined the team in 2020, because I appreciated their values on architecture, sustainability and healthy living. I liked that they wanted to develop local solutions on an international level. I had also hoped to gain experience working with others and broaden my perspective in the field of architecture.

## **What was it like to participate in the contest?**

There was a lot of work at times, and sometimes a lot of pressure to meet deadlines. However, it was really rewarding to watch everyone come together as a team and add their skills to help bring the overall project together. What inspired me the most was seeing the project come to life. Because of COVID, the project got delayed, so for a long time, it was just drawings and diagrams on a piece of paper. It was a strange, but great feeling when we started building the project and could finally see all of our hard work come to life.



### How could you contribute to the success?

Alongside the design of the project, we had a lot of work in terms of raising awareness about our project and what we do. We also had various reports to write based on the design and functionality of the project. I contributed my writing and creative skills to manage and create content for our social media pages as well as explain and coherently write reports on every sta-

ge of the project. This way, the organisers and supporters of the competition were able to understand our design process and support our mission of contributing to the prevention of climate change through architectural solutions.

### May I ask you about your plans?

I am going to work in Budapest at a company, as an architect.



# NEW DEANS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS FROM 1 JULY



**Dr. András Trócsányi, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, UP**

*I would like to have a Faculty of Sciences that has adapted more to market conditions, and has a stronger connection with its region, and it pays even more attention to its students. I would like the Faculty of Sciences to perform even better in science, not growing in student numbers, but attracting more international students. I want a faculty that makes its employees proud, a place where they like to work. A series of changes in attitudes are still needed within the faculty, previously we did not have so many challenges at once. For development and change, the circumstances are favourable, and I have confidence in our own colleagues.*



**Dr. Miklós Nyitrai, Dean of the Medical School, UP**

*In the last four years, numerous very sensible, good initiatives have been launched thanks to our colleagues. I decided that I would like to lead the Medical School for another four years, because these initiatives need to be taken forward and it would be good to see them come to fruition. Our calm financial situation is greatly facilitated by international and Hungarian enrolment. I think we are talking about a faculty, which is in good shape, with a lot of tasks or challenges that are worth paying attention to in the next period. Fortunately, we do not just have to survive: we aim to optimally incorporate available resources into our system.*



**Dr. András Takács, Dean of the Faculty of Business and Economics, UP**

*We are proud that we have been able to grow large enough to be internationally renowned and operate in accordance with the highest European quality standards, while at the same time remaining small enough to continue to be in direct contact with students, with manageable group sizes and to provide education based on continuous interaction. We are not in need, and we are not interested in forcing an increase in the number of admitted students, we can rely on our growing applicant base to really recruit the best applicants. We are convinced that our graduates will be able to compete with those of any other accredited European institution.*



# „THIRTY YEARS, A MILESTONE“

*The Faculty of Sciences of UP celebrated its thirty-year anniversary on 20 May in the Vargha Damján Conference Hall.*

Éva Harka | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos



*These thirty years mean a milestone, said Dr. Attila Horváth, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences. To be precise, on 14 May 1994, a resolution was passed approving the Faculty's Rules for Organisation and Operation. Since then, the Faculty of Sciences has gone through periods of struggle and less struggle. But we are evolving and our ability to adapt to change has been unbroken since the beginning. After listing the main milestones in the history of the faculty, he emphasized: The work of the previous deans has paid off: the UP Faculty of Sciences represents quality both in tea-*

*ching and research, he underlined, referring to the fact that the proportion of people with academic degrees is extremely high at the faculty, and their publications are appearing in increasingly prestigious journals. All this is thanks to our systematic and dedicated work* concluded the Dean of the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Pécs. Among future trends, he mentioned the increase in the proportion of foreign language courses. *We are working to maintain and further improve our current achievements* concluded Dr. Attila Horváth.

Dr. József Bódis, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, Chairman of the UP UQ Foundation Board of Trustees, Dr. Attila Miseta, Rector of UP, Attila Péterffy, Mayor of the City of Pécs, and Dr. Róbert Gábor, former Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, also praised the institution.

Awards and distinctions were also presented by the Dean of the Faculty. Gábor Zag was given the "Prize for the Faculty of Sciences, University of Pécs" award. The former head official of the Faculty of Sciences has been intertwined with the faculty, and during his long years there he has worked for the Faculty with dedication, conscientiousness, tirelessness and selflessness. The "Sponsor of the Faculty of Science Award" was given to Soft Flow Ltd. The award was received by Simon Armbruszt, Managing Director. In April 2021, Soft Flow Ltd. and the Faculty of Sciences UP signed a milestone agreement in building professional relations between the two institutions.

The Faculty's Institute of Chemistry and Soft Flow Ltd. cooperate closely in the fields of education, science and research and development connected to the biotechnology sector. The "Student of the Year Award" was given to Balázs Sarkadi, who, in addition to his outstanding academic achievements, is an active member of the academic life of the university, enhancing the reputation of the Faculty through his sporting achievements and also playing a significant community-building role.

As a surprise, at the end of presenting the awards, the faculty staff also thanked Dr. Attila Horváth for his work, as he stepped down as Dean. His successor, Dr. András Trócsányi, was elected by the community of the Faculty of Sciences in May 2022.

# HÁMORI, BORHIDI AND THE BOTANICAL GARDEN

*In honour of two UP academics, botanist Dr. Attila Borhidi and neurobiologist Dr. József Hámori, who passed away in 2021, and on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Botanical Garden, the Faculty of Sciences organised a conference on 27 May.*

Mariann Tóth |  Szabolcs Csontos

In the conference room of Dr. Damján Vargha, many students and colleagues of the two eminent scientists gathered to celebrate the occasion. To mark the seventieth anniversary of the Botanical Garden, the faculty published a jubilee volume and also named collections and squares in the most beautiful parts of the garden after great personalities of the past.

The ceremony was attended by several colleagues, outstanding scientists and students who recalled the work of the recently deceased neurobiologist and academician József Hámori and the activities he did for the university. Attila Borhidi, botanist-academician, was personally greeted by the audience on the occasion of his upcoming 90th birthday, to pay tribute to the dean who founded the faculty and to the professor who fundamentally renewed teaching and scientific activity. For 35 years, he has used his charismatic personality and his network of national and international contacts to ensure that the University of Pécs can continuously renew itself both intellectually and organizationally and fulfil its mission. Thanks to these two people, hundreds of students and dozens of young researchers are fulfilling their mission in teaching and biology, thus enhancing the reputation of the University of Pécs.

After the laudations, Professor Borhidi also delivered a speech: *What has been expressed here today is a word of gratitude and love', said the academic, and then stressed that: in this volume, my friends describe what it has meant to them to have received encouragement, financial help, or even personal relationships and*

*humanity in this profession. What I am saying is that this volume is a great confirmation for me that I have not lived in vain. And for a ninetieth birthday, could not be a greater gift.*

The third to be celebrated was the Botanical Garden, the "green island" where plants live and are displayed, and where, in addition to the well-known species, many curiosities and specialities can also be found. Infrastructural improvements over the last decade have helped to develop the collection of plants and visitors can now enjoy more comfortable conditions to view the collections, which now commemorate outstanding scientists and staff. The book "Green Island in Pécs, God's Peace", published on the occasion of the anniversary and edited by György Mánfai and Professor Emeritus Dr. László Gyula Szabó, presents these memorial sites and their eponyms.



# DIVERSE CAREER PATHS

*A degree from the Faculty of Sciences at UP, may take you virtually anywhere - it was a lovely moment of the faculty's anniversary event, when successful graduates recalled the beginning of their studies, the start of their careers and their current situation.*



Éva Harka | Szabolcs Csontos

*I wanted to work with lasers, which is why I originally applied for this faculty. I remember people looked at me bewildered because of my choice. I graduated as a teacher of in physics and mathematics, which is a serious combination, but you can grow up to do anything," said Dr. Zoltán Olmann, who is currently a researcher at the University of Bern.*

*I originally attended the Faculty of Business and Economics, and when I visited the Faculty of Sciences it was only to play basketball. When I heard that there was such a course for geographers, I was surprised. I always had a special fascination with maps - the first word I wrote down was "atlas". I re-enrolled and stayed – remembered György Varga, who is currently working on Saharan dust and does field research with his former teachers who have become his friends, for example in the Canary Islands.*

*I was studying to become a doctor, but my fascination with science struck me in primary school, when in the seventh grade I burnt the curtains in our flat on the fifth-floor, because I was doing a chemistry experiment. I knew the names of skull bones in Latin by eighth*

*grade. Then I realized that if I wanted to do virology research, I needed to understand all the spectrums of science much better than medicine. From there, I was sent straight to the Faculty of Sciences, where I spent the best six years of my life, said Professor Ferenc Jakab, recalling his studies.*

*Alexandra Tolnay told the audience: When I applied, I did not know what I could do with a degree in mathematics, I was just sure that I would have a wide range of job opportunities. Then she recalled a fond memory: We ate sausages with lecturers whose names I will not reveal, at 5am in the market hall after a night of drinking, and all of us showed up for our first class at 8 a.m. - because one of them was teaching it!*

*For me, PE was not a choice because I had done triathlon as a child. Along with the teaching degree came geography" – said Ádám Farkas, and he added: I keep in touch mostly with whom we focused on studying, the ones I am in daily contact with, have also become fellow teachers.*

*The experience of Anikó Takátsy's was also positive: I knew for sure that I wanted to study here. I wanted to be a teacher from a very young age, and the fact that you can do research with a teaching degree is a great joy for me, something that makes life complete. I thought that at a university of this size, I would have much more opportunity to learn from personal relationships, and I was right.*

## Participants:

Dr. Ferenc Jakab, Head of the National Laboratory of Virology, Dr. György Varga, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Astronomy and Earth Sciences, Dr. Zoltán Olmann, Researcher at the University of Bern, Dr. Anikó Takátsy, Associate Professor, Institute of Biochemistry and Medicinal Chemistry, Medical School, UP, Alexandra Tolnay, Quantitative Model Auditor at Morgan Stanley, Ádám Farkas, Teacher of Geography and Physical Education, Primary School, Dencsháza – Hobol

**Moderator:** Dr. Gábor Pirisi, Associate Professor, Institute of Earth Sciences Department of Social Geography and Urban Studies

# YOUNG PEOPLE ARE OPEN TO THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

*In addition to the 100-year centenary of the university, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences celebrates a double anniversary: the first university training started 40 years ago at the then Faculty of Teacher Training, and 30 years ago, with the separation of the faculty from the Faculty of Sciences both have become independent university faculties. We talked with dr. András Láng, associate professor, Vice Dean of Science and Accreditation at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.*

Robert Balogh |  Szabolcs Csontos

## How do you celebrate this unique anniversary?

The celebration will take place in the academic year 2022/23, from September: there will be two highlights of the series of events: an opening event and a closing event, most likely in April. Meanwhile, various professional programmes at the institutes and departments display the diversity and image of the faculty. Often, we will organize roundtable discussions about the current situation of the disciplines represented by the faculty. We will also hold community events, where we aim to bring the citizens of the faculty closer together.

## Can you mention any featured events?

We will organize the National Conference on Educational Sciences in autumn in Pécs, and in spring, we will host the Pedagogical, Psychological, Andragogy and Library Science sections of the National Conference of Scientific Students' Associations. Up to 250 entries may arrive, which really puts the students and talent management in focus. It is characteristic of the humanities and social sciences is that the knowledge transfer builds strongly on the teacher-student relationship, the mentoring process.

The celebration does not only affect science, the Student Council is our partner in appearing at the city and even national level. The Szenes Club is our iconic venue, the programme is curated by the Student Council of the Faculty. Our opening event is not just about the profession either, it will be a celebration as well with some music and fun at the end.

# THEATRE IS A **UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE**

*For the 11th time, the Janus University Theatre (JESZ) organized an International University Theatre Festival in the summer of 2022. The company of the UP hosted 10 groups from 7 countries.*

Éva Harka | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

The Romanian Teatrul 21 brought a performance titled *Tără(z)boi*. The Bratislava-based Divadlo Lab showed their talents in the piece *Lebensraum*. The Diverzario troupe from Prague presented the play *Worm in Human Heart*. Estonian Tartu Stu-

convey a surprising amount of impressions about COVID, about lockdown, and the vulnerability of mankind.

The company called Vígkarma - a "theatrical laboratory" by their own definition - creates within the framework of the University Theatre of Debrecen.

They came to the Janus Festival with the play *The Universal*, presenting four of David Ives' six one-act comedies *All in timing*, directed by Péter Szurdoki.

Moroccan director Hassan Machnaoui interpreted the world of tolerance and the basic concepts and phenomena associated with it in a truly helpful dramatic play, almost like psychological counselling. In Oteatre's *The other*, the young actors in colorful T-shirts and dark pants merged accordingly into a crowd, and then their differences were revealed. Their actions were interrupted by interpretations and texts. Their message: "Be tolerant!"

*After the lockdowns caused by the COVID pandemic, the teams were very keen to travel and everyone showed where they were at. We were very lucky to welcome good performances. We hope that, taking advantage of the conditions of Pécs and the good-sounding name of our university theater, we will be able to organize a bigger festival in the future – said András Ernő Tóth, head of JESZ.*


dent Theatre's *Beggar's Blessing* was a physical theatre performance based on folk tales. The Janus University Theatre Company also performed two plays: *The Blind King*, *Werther* and *the Wolf*.

One of the special performances of the Janus Festival came from Vilnius, Palépé Studio's *Ach, ui!* piece could be described as physical and movement theatre. In an hour and a half, without words, they were able to



# EXPLORING AFRICA AGAIN AND AGAIN

*Every year, the International Seasons event series of the University of Pécs closes the school year with Africa Days. In May 2022, offering the richest programme so far, 6 days of lectures, exhibitions, concerts, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Pécs African Studies Conference enchanted the enthusiasts of the continent.*

Mariann Tóth |  Szabolcs Csontos

**T**he latter, the international, hybrid scientific conference titled "Power, Governance, and Development in Post-COVID Africa", examined the changes catalyzed by the pandemic and the background of the processes leading to them.

*We organized the conference within the framework of the International Seasons series, where we invite everyone to participate in various events, to share the rich, colorful culture of the more than 110 countries, where our students come from, highlighted Dr. István Tarrósy, head of the International Centre of UP and the Africa Centre, and added: since 2010, the Africa conference had been organized for the seventh time, at which current topics were discussed with the help of expert speakers who joined from all over the world.*

# INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

*Dr. Adrienn Fekete, assistant professor at the Department of Applied Linguistics, Institute of English Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, was the main organizer of Intercultural Encounters in January 2022. We asked her about the unique event.*



Attila Szabó | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

**I** consider myself very lucky, because both Hungarian and international students attend my Intercultural Communication class, so we get to practice and study intercultural communication, which makes learning enjoyable and practical for everyone. This semester, I had Indonesian, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Spanish, and Bosnian students in my class, so the Intercultural Encounters - Interactive Exhibition and Intercultural Event, which was organized based on the course, provided the opportunity to meet these cultures.

The event was inspired by two sources. When I meet new students, I like to get to know them better through "ice-breaking" exercises and thus create a relaxed atmosphere. During the first class, several students introduced themselves as creative, so I wanted to start the course with a creative task. I asked students from different cultures to create a cultural collage of their own country, which they would present in two minutes in the next class. A week later, the Indonesian students came to class with a huge poster that served as an inspiration for the other students. Soon, representatives from each nation had created their own cultural posters, some even more. The pictures were so beautiful that I could not let them gather dust in my office, so I started to organize an exhibition.

Another source of inspiration were the processes I experienced in class. The students showed a great interest in each other's cultures, asked numerous questions, and we often even talked about the cultural processes discussed in class during the break. It is rare, that students do not leave for a break at the end of the lesson, but continue to talk with a sparkle in their eyes. This was a special experience for me too.

◀ Indonesian student in traditional costume

# SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

*The fascinating, unique study programme called International Tourism and Hospitality Academy at Sea (ITHAS) has been created by the enthusiastic, charismatic dr. Nevenka Čavlek, a tenured professor at University of Zagreb, Faculty of Economics and Business. She received the prestigious Global Perspectives Award of the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pécs at the Strategic Partner Summit on May 30-31 in Pécs.*

Mariann Tóth |  Szabolcs Csontos, Regina Rétei

The experiential learning course, which includes an eight-day sea voyage filled by academic lectures, riveting discussions on board, has been organized since 2005 either in Croatia or in other countries, alternating biannually, with a different focus each year. In 2021, two students from the University of Pécs, Faculty of Business and Economics had the chance of a lifetime to join a diverse group of 25 students from other international universities, cultures, countries on a 30-day study tour focusing on sustainability in tourism aboard of a magnificent, 80-meter boat sailing the Persian Gulf from Oman to Dubai with participation at Dubai Expo. I asked professor Čavlek about this amazing project, which creates lasting connections among students, cultures, universities.

## **How did you create the ITHAS study programme?**

I have been working at the Department of Tourism, University of Zagreb since 1993. Before that, I was deputy director of an international tour operating company specialized in Croatia. Ever since, I keep very close ties with the tourism business. This helps me to share everything what I know in theory with my colleagues in practice and also to make my students aware, how important it is to connect theory to practice.

When I started this programme of experiential learning in the field of tourism in 2005, I did it because I knew exactly what students were missing. Whatever



I do in the classroom, it is not enough to pass on the message, what tourism is actually about. The point would be to allow students from different cultures to meet and experience tourism.

Both the first and the second pilot projects were very successful. At that time, I had partners from Finland, from Germany, from Spain and Canada. It was an organizational challenge to control five boats, because you can only be present on one. Professors from other universities helped: they taught the same lecture, but to a different group of students each day, aboard a different ship. Students stayed on one boat, and met the other students on shore, when we docked. We never sailed

during the night. When we arrived at a particular port, we met local tourism experts, we went to see the hotels, tourist boards, museums, we went sightseeing. We heard how interpretation of a culture is done by some tour guides and so on. I was not always looking for the best practice. I was also looking for the worst practice, because students can learn from that as well.

### **Why have you chosen the sea?**

I wanted to incorporate all the senses. Water is connection: the river, the sea, the oceans. You can move without obstacles, easily, although it is kind of a challenge in stormy times. But this is like life in tourism. It is not only nice weather and everything perfect. This is something that the students have to experience at the beginning of their learning. We had some storms on the Adriatic Sea. But I can say, it never bothered us. This is nature and you take it as it is, and you learn from it.

### **Could you tell us more about the 2021 ITHAS?**

The German University of Technology in Muscat, Oman joined ITHAS as well, realizing what it really means to the students, how much they appreciate this kind of

education. We were invited by the Royal Navy of Oman onto the ship *Shabab Oman II* (Youth of Oman). There were only 25 students included, because of the boat capacity, and the journey was much longer: it lasted one month, not 8 days. Everything was absolutely superb! I will never be able to thank enough to my colleague in Oman for arranging the ship and for initiating this kind of trip and also to the Sultanate of Oman, who sponsored the trip and the Royal Navy of Oman, who made it really possible sailing around Persian Gulf for 30 days.

We visited Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, and Dubai, where we stayed for 10 days visited the Expo. According to the students, who participated, in their words it was a real, life-changing experience.

The major academic focus of ITHAS 2021 has been sustainability, we concentrated on the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 that were created by United Nations World Tourism Organization. I am so happy that I was able to include two outstanding students from the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pécs: Regina Rétei and Patrik Varga. The special connections, the networking that was created on the ship is most valuable, and they last a lifetime.



# ITHAS, A LIFE-CHANGING MONTH AT SEA

*Two students of the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Pécs had the opportunity to participate in the unique, experiential learning course International Tourism and Hospitality Academy at Sea (ITHAS) that has been created by dr. Nevenka Čavlek, professor at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Economics and Business. They sailed the Persian Gulf on board of the Shabab Oman II, at the invitation of the Royal Navy of Oman. We asked Regina Rétei and Patrik Zsolt Varga, Economist in Tourism and Catering majors, about their experiences.*

Mariann Tóth |  Regina Rétei

## What was this one month with ITHAS like?

**Regina:** It was one of the best months of my life! I expanded my knowledge of the sustainability of the countries I visited, and through the Dubai Expo I was able to meet the cultures of even more countries. Since we only communicated in English, I was able to develop this as well. It was also very special to experience sailing life, especially as Shabab Oman II belongs to the Royal Navy of Oman. We made lifelong friendships there with the students, the professors, and also the crew of the ship. We actually felt like we were one family.

**Patrik:** It was a life-changing, eye-opening opportunity that I cannot possibly describe in words. I was part of a fantastic cultural journey where everyone, as a floating diplomat, brought their own culture with them to the Persian Gulf and we became almost like a family by the end. We have been to 6 countries, which is fantastic, not only from the cultural side, but also from the perspective of sustainability as an educational part. Adventure, academy, family - if I had to describe it in 3 keywords. For me, the journey showed that life is much more and more colourful than I thought. I have improved many of my skills, like time management, leadership skills, adaptation, and openness to the new.

## Was there a challenge in it?

**Regina:** I would say it has been a challenge to get used to the naval order, because it was unusual to have to go to line-ups every morning, to have our time accurately allocated by the minute, and to actually live that life, to do as much work as sailors. It was also strange that we did not have unlimited internet access and could rarely contact our family and friends.

**Patrik:** There were tiring days as we were 50-50% of the ship's crew and members of the ITHAS academy. It was a challenge for many to get used to the tight schedule and

rules of the more rigorous navy ship. What took a toll on me was that on the ship I got very close to a very nice Canadian girl, (with whom, unfortunately, our lives have since taken a different direction) and it was very difficult to let go when my plane left for home. Perhaps that and leaving the ship and crew as my second family, were the most difficult parts.



# SUPERB BALANCE

*The University of Pécs Wine Estate and the Research Institute of Viticulture and Oenology of the UP are not only famous for their grapevine gene bank, we would like to highlight a few of their recent success stories.*

Éva Harka 📷 Csontos Szabolcs

## COMPETITION

The wines of the Pécs University Wine Estate are becoming increasingly successful in wine competitions. For example, in spring 2022, their wines won three outstanding awards. In the Pécs Wine Region Wine Competition,

## RESEARCH

At the SUMMA event, the results of the scientific work of the Research Institute of Viticulture and Oenology in Pécs and the viticultural and oenological experiments of the 2021 vintage were shared. Yeast experiments are being conducted, but the latest R&D&I projects are in the fields of resistant grape varieties, pruning robots and grape-based gin technology, with market-oriented companies. For example, they are working with Varga Winery to develop a vineyard resistant to the most common diseases in the Balaton Highlands. They also continue their basic research activities - black rot research, pathogen elimination and acclimatization of the Furmint variety. In Hungary, Pécs is the only place where world-class resistance selection breeding is being carried out, with the aim of creating and strengthening a more environmentally conscious and sustainable wine-grape sector. It was the first in Hungary to introduce a digital vineyard registry system.



the Universitas Cuvée 2019 won the gold medal and was selected the best red wine of the wine region, while Summa Merlot 2020, Zenit 2021 and the sweet Cirfandli 2017 also received gold medal qualifications. The Universitas Cuvée 2019 won the red category in the 2022 Pécs City Wine of Pécs competition and also took the grand prize.

## EDUCATION

Full house, more than 200 students, the wines of the university - the first Wine Culture course at UP was very popular. In addition to the educational activities, the interest in the BSc Grape and Wine Engineer course has almost doubled.

## ATMOSPHERE

At the beginning of summer, a commemorative cross was erected at Szentmiklóshegy. The cross commemorates the former chaplaincy estate, which was the foundation of the research institute. The lit metal cross is 6 metres high and faces the city of Pécs.

Speaking of atmosphere, the University of Pécs Wine Estate has also attracted the attention of international experts. For example, ambassadors from Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru had come here to learn more about institute and the St. Vincent Day traditions.

# DIAMOND AWARD FOR THE PÉCS SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMME

*5 years, 30 summer schools, 850 participants from 70 countries – the "Pécs Summer School" programme of the International Centre at the University of Pécs recently won the Marketing Diamond Award at the 2021 Marketing Diamond Awards competition, which was organized by the Hungarian Marketing Association. The award was given in recognition of the high level of brand building implemented by the Pécs Summer School programme. The award was received by dr. Gyöngyi Pozsgai, head of the Study Abroad and Summer University Office of the International Centre, on 3 March in Budapest.*

Éva Harka |  Szabolcs Csontos

The evaluation of the applicants was carried out by a professional jury of renowned experts in the field of marketing in Hungary, including scientists, educators and practitioners who recognised the professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness of the branding activities carried out by the Pécs Summer School programme.

The Pécs Summer School programme was established by the International Centre in 2016 to implement "Summer Trimesters" and increase the number of international summer schools in line with the objectives of the internationalization programme at the University of Pécs.



# DEMOLA PTE – THE PROGRAMME THAT VALUES STUDENTS' CREATIVE MINDS



*Demola is an innovation platform that connects businesses and students. The concept was created in Finland, but the platform and the Demola Community has developed into an international network involving more than 60 universities from 16 countries around the world. University of Pécs joined this platform in 2019.*

*In the online period of last spring, Demola PTE, in cooperation with Green University Programme of UP launched a challenge aiming to support the strategic work of the GU Program. The project team including five students from University of Pécs, successfully worked together and created several innovative ideas for GU Program. Due to the Covid-19 situation, the entire challenge had to be put in the online space.*

*The project team of GreenIdea challenge was very diverse regarding the cultural and scientific background.*

*Selima Usenkanova's (left) home country is Kyrgyzstan and here in Pécs she is studying Tourism and Catering at the Faculty of Business and Economics. Carolyne Wanjiku came from Kenya and studied nursing at the Faculty of Health Sciences in Pécs, now she has been spending her professional practice time in Poland.*

Júlia Zemplényi-Bartha | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

**What motivated you to apply for the GreenIdea challenge, did you have any prior expectations?**

**Selima:** Since I began studying at the university, I started hearing more about current climate situation. During many classes, we talk about what effect economic activities have on the environment. I was really affected by those discoveries and thought that I cannot afford NOT to care about this issue.

And here it was, the perfect project for my new interest: Green University. Of course, climate change is a world-wide issue and I know I cannot change the world in a day, but I can influence my community bit by bit. "Think globally – act locally."

**Carolyne:** I was drawn to the idea of working in a team to produce practical ways to positively impact the earth. I wanted to work with like-minded individuals and gain innovative ideas and insights. Before joining I had expected to mostly work on research-based assignments, but I was happy that the project demanded for a lot of practical work and activities.

**How did you feel, could you become a cooperative team soon? Did you experience any difficulty working in an online team? How could you work together, what was your strategy?**

**Selima:** Although we managed to work via online platforms, it was sad not to see each other face-to-face. After all, real human communication cannot be replaced. It makes your work personal, and you can discover so much more about the people you're working with. We managed to work productively by separating our duties and I came up with a good solution.

**Carolyne:** I had positive feelings for my team and the work we were going to do. Each person on the team brought a fresh energy to our work and everyone was ready to contribute in their own unique ways. I was immediately curious and looking forward to what every member had to offer. Working online with the team was a bit challenging as considering the pandemic situation. We made our online video meetings as productive as possible. We divided our tasks according to our different skills and passions and kept a constant communication channel open so that we could all inform each other on our work. We utilised messaging apps like Messenger.

**What is your most defining experience with the project, be it professional, collaborative, technical or even personal? Do you think you have learned some practical, professional skills that you can use later in your work?**

**Carolyne:** My most defining experience was when I had to go out and do video interviews and surveys for the project. For video interviews, I quickly had to develop some skills in videography, video editing and interviewing. I enjoyed gathering raw data and seeing the work that goes into compiling it and arranging it to make it valuable information. Another valuable moment was meeting our coordinator and most of the team for a hangout. We created an amazing experience.



**What do you think is the hardest part of the online (team)work?**

**Carolyne:** Online working did present a challenge on the part of relaying and properly understanding information. Some bits of information are hard to understand when not said in person. Words can carry feelings of concern or urgency which are not easily detected unless they are being communicated face-to-face. So as much as messaging apps provided fast communication, a lot of the meaning of the words and thoughts behind the words may have been lost.

# FEELING CONNECTED TO NATURE LINKED TO LOWER RISK OF SNAKE AND SPIDER PHOBIAS

*A study of over a thousand people in Hungary has found for the first time that people who feel more connected to nature are less likely to be affected by snake and spider fears or phobias. The research is published in British Ecological Society journal, People and Nature.*

Éva Harka | Szabolcs Csontos

In the study, researchers from universities in Hungary, Czech Republic and Portugal used clinically established questionnaires to assess participants' fear of snakes and spiders and their connectedness to nature. They found that people who scored highly in their self-perceived connection to nature – particularly a longing to be close to nature and engagement to protect it – were less likely to score highly in measures of snake and spider fear. The researchers say that because of this association, a connection to nature could potentially be a protective factor against snake and spider phobias, two of the most prevalent animal phobias.

**Dr. Jakub Polák** at Charles University, Czech Republic, and co-author of the study said: *Analysis of our data showed one clear picture: the more you like nature and feel a part of it, the less you are at risk of developing a snake or spider phobia, an anxiety disorders which can significantly lower your quality of life.*

**Dr. Coelho** at the University of Porto, Portugal, and co-author of the study, stressed that the association found in this study can go both ways: *A connection to nature may cause people to experience less fear of snakes and spiders. However, it is also possible that people with lower fear of snakes and spiders are consequently more interested in nature and feel a stronger connection with the natural environment.*

The researchers also collected demographic data from the participants and found

older age and living in less urbanised environments were also associated with reduced fear of snakes and spiders.

The study findings add to the growing evidence of the positive effects from spending time in nature and feeling connected to it, such as improved health, enhanced mood, and reduced stress.

**Dr. András Norbert Zsidó**, at the Institute of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Pécs, Hungary, and co-author of the study said: *Connectedness to nature, can have a wide range of positive effects. In our study we find that it may prevent the development of animal phobias or could facilitate coping with such fear if they already exist. It has also been shown that being connected to nature carries health benefits and can result in more knowledge and a more positive attitude towards animals, along with greater environmental responsibility.*

Fear of snakes and spiders are thought to stem from threats in our evolutionary history. While these fears can protect us, having a phobia – an extreme or irrational fear – can cause significant distress and interfere with a person's day-to-day life as they try to avoid all confrontation with the phobic stimulus.



# “I MADE GOOD FRIENDS” - A GERMAN MEDICAL STUDENT PLAYS AMERICAN FOOTBALL IN PÉCS

*The Medical School in Pécs is famous for its vibrant student life, which extends beyond the walls of the campus: many future doctors and dentists indulge in some kind of hobby or sport in the Baranya county seat. Lukas Geisler, who came from Germany, is one of them: while studying medicine, he joined the Pécs Legioners, an American football team from Mecsekalja, where he found a great community and language barriers were no obstacle.*

Viktor Harta |  Lukas Geisler

**T**he 23-year-old medical student came from Saxony to the prestigious Medical School in Pécs. According to him, he chose to study medicine because he saw it as a career that would give him the chance to fulfil his professional potential and make the most of his talents. After high school, he trained as a nurse and then went on to study at the University of Pécs Medical School. So far, he has passed every hurdle.

*I really enjoy my studies in Pécs. I love the city, the pleasant climate, the buzz of the community of young people from all over the world. It is nice to meet people from Norway, Iran, for example, and to get to know how they see the world, says Lukas Geisler.*

*But sometimes this is a little difficult, because we Germans tend to stay inside our own bubble. This was one of the reasons why I decided to join the Pécs Legioners American football team. I came across their advertisement quite by chance, I saw that they were recruiting. I had never played American football before, but I decided to give it a try.*

*I joined the Pécs Legioners in October 2019, continues the medical student, It was a bit strange at first that I was the only German in the team for a long time, but I never felt uncomfortable for a moment. Everyone was very nice and supportive. Most people spoke English, only a few spoke German. But one guy, Ákos, spoke fluent German and helped me a lot, for example with filling in documents.*

*A year and a half after joining the team, I can say that I have made friends in the Pécs Legioners, I have become friends with people who speak less English. The first season has brought the community together and I feel that a strong bond has been formed between*



*the team members. Everyone is joking around, having fun, and enjoying ourselves is more important than the result itself. Of course, that does not mean we are not ambitious, we all hate to lose, he added. He also revealed that they are currently waiting for new members to join the Pécs Legioners.*



# BECAUSE **THAT'S HOW WE LIVE**

*I asked József Hári, head of the UP Sports Office, about programmes, plans and things to do.*

Éva Harka | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

## **What programmes are you preparing for the autumn 2022?**

The autumn term will start with the traditional Run for Cancer Research charity run on Saturday 10 September. Once again, the proceeds will be donated to the EURAK-VILO paediatric oncology foundation.

The Dárdai Pál Futsal Tournament enjoys great popularity and attracted more than thirty teams this spring.

That means 300-400 students playing futsal every night for two months in the sports hall! We will keep this programme for the next academic year.

In the 2022/2023 academic year, we will organize a sports evening for a different faculty every month. They will tell us what sports they want to play, and we will find the right opportunity and put together a game for them.

This year, for the first time, we are also trying to orga-



nize a UP fishing tournament, which I think is a niche event. We may try to extend this to a family day, with cooking, team and individual competitions.

I had a long cherished plan to have a darts tournament on campus. On the one hand, this sport has a connection to Pécs and even to UP, and on the other hand, we would like to commemorate a young sportsman who did a lot for darts in Pécs, but who recently fell victim to the coronavirus pandemic. Of course, the Night of Pub Sports cannot be left out either: we will organise it for the faculties separately and probably also for the staff.

At the end of 2023, we would like to be tested again at the Dubrovnik Memorial Tournament in women's volleyball and basketball. This event was originally aimed at athletes from universities in the former Yugoslav republics, but we in Pécs were able to join almost from the start, and we are working on getting athletes from universities in Miskolc and Budapest to participate.

#### **And what can be expected in spring 2023?**

In 2023, we will have a double jubilee: on the one hand, it will be 100 years since the university moved to Pécs from Bratislava and on the other hand, PEAC (University of Pécs Athletic Club) will celebrate its 100th anniversary. As a member of the PEAC board and as the head of its three sections, I have to focus on this as well. The UP Sports Office will cooperate with PEAC and we are also thinking about having some joint events. For example, we are planning an inter-Visegrad Four competition in four to five sports at the end of the spring semester 2023. We want to have a memorable multi-day tournament, involving several sports. Our futsal team will start its ninth season in the Hungarian second division.

They struggled during the pandemic, with many people giving up sport because they had nowhere to train, and the sports halls were closed. But for the double anniversary, we want to surprise ourselves by winning the championship. This game is very close to my heart and it would be nice to create something beautiful for the centenary.

It is going to be exciting as always, but we have a slogan that says: this is how we live. We must act accordingly.

#### **Will there be programmes specifically for international students?**

All our programmes are open to foreign students, too! When we organize a tournament, there is always an international student among the team members, or there is a full squad, mixed or national. For example, in our football or futsal tournaments, we have teams from six or seven nations, from Spain, to Portugal, to Vietnam.



Very popular among them is the dragon boat regatta, where we also had a foreign team in the spring.

Foreign students are increasingly demanding the opportunity to play sport - and this highlights a long-standing shortcoming: there should be much more free capacity on university sports grounds. I think it would be worthwhile for the university's management to embrace the expansion of sports facilities so that both Hungarian and international students have the opportunity, space and time to do sports.

The evidence is that if sport is taken seriously at universities, it requires investment in sports at university level.

Several universities - for example in Győr, Miskolc or Debrecen - have done this. But there are other higher education institutions - and unfortunately Pécs is one of them - where this kind of development has stopped for some reason. I am convinced that it is the generation of university students who still have the opportunity to do sports in an organized way, so that they could be role models of a healthy lifestyle after graduation.



# CYCLING IS RELAXING!



*Inspired by the success of MoonBike 2020 and 2021, the University of Pécs has announced the MoonBike challenge in 2022 as well. The goal is to break last year's records by cycling (on bicycle or stationary bike) the Earth-Moon distance in two months, a total of 384,400 km, and above all to promote healthy lifestyles and environmental awareness over the duration of the challenge. After the summer season, the MoonBike challenge will continue! We would like to encourage you to participate! For further details, follow the [pte.hu/moonbike](https://pte.hu/moonbike) website and the [ptemoonbike](https://facebook.com/ptemoonbike) FB page!*



Éva Harka | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

**Dr. Szidalisz Teleki is the head of the Department of Personality and Health Psychology of the UP Institute of Psychology, one of the weekly winners of the MoonBike challenge. I asked her about sports and MoonBike.**

*I make sure that sports are always part of my life: I am engaged in health psychology, so I feel that it is my duty to take care of my health. On the stationary bike, I typically read textbooks while riding my bike or listen to podcasts related to my work. But towards the end of the semester, I wanted to get back into sports more - and that*

*is when I saw the MoonBike challenge. I also knew about last year's campaign, but now I felt more involved. I also try to complete all the weekly challenges and I am happy to participate in such a wonderful programme that brings together the whole family of UP.*

*I typically ride my bike in the evening or in the morning, doing some warm-up exercises briefly beforehand - I see that as a dividing line that signals to my body and soul that now is the time for sports. I have been considering for a long time whether it would be nice to listen to music on my bike, but I found that I cherish the silence more that is broken only by the chirping of birds, which is perfectly relaxing. I usually stretch after cycling, which has its physiological background, but it also closes the training for that day, both physically and mentally.*

## How should one start doing sports?

*That depends a lot on their personality and previous similar experiences.*

*Some people need a social, stimulating environment, where they motivate each other. For others, however, it is best to do sports alone, at their own pace, adapted to their own daily routine. It is also important to precisely determine what our goals are with the given form of movement and when it should occur, because the basis for the behaviours associated with a healthy lifestyle and its long-term maintenance is precisely to have conscious plans, a kind of "if ... then..." - schemes: e.g. if it is Monday, then I do sports at seven in the evening. Then that is going to be there in our thoughts all day, and we will be more likely to accomplish what we have planned.*

# SPARKLING GOLDEN, SILVER INTERNATIONAL SPORTS RESULTS

*One world championship gold medal, a total of five silver medals, two bronze medals, a fourth place, three fifth and two sixth places, and a tenth place. These results were achieved by UP athletes in three weeks at two major international sports events in summer.*

## EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES GAMES, LODZ (POLAND)

### Table Tennis

Bronze medal – team: Bence Bognár, Sebestyén Kovács, Dominik Mihalovity, Dávid Molnár

Silver medal – double: Molnár–Kovács duo

### Judo

Bronze medal: Fatime Beringer – 48 kg category

Silver medal: Brigitta Tímea Varga – 57-63 kg category

Badminton

Silver medal – single: Daniella Csilla Gonda

### Chess

In both groups, the University of Pécs came in at the 10th place in the final ranking.

## CLUB CREW WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, SARASOTA (USA)

### Dragon Boat

University category, men-women mixed, 200 meters: gold medal

University category, men-women mixed, 500 meters: silver medal

University category, men-women mixed, 2000 meters: silver medal

Premier women, 200 meters: 4th place

Premier open, 200 meters: 5th place



Premier women, 500 meters: 5th place

Premier women, 2000 meters: 6th place

Premier open, 500 meters: 6th place.

Further info:



# „A LOGICAL AND LEARNABLE LANGUAGE“

*If we count the two online Hungarian Language and Culture Summer Universities, this is the 23rd, if not, then only the 21st, we have organized at UP – said Dr. Katalin Pelcz, Head of the Hungarian Programme of the International Studies Centre, Medical School, University of Pécs. We talked to some of the participants of the summer university and asked them why they are studying Hungarian.*

Robert Balogh | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

**Stein**, a South Slavic teacher of Belgian origin, who is currently living in Norway and usually deals with literature with a special interest in Central European literature, discovered many interesting connections between South Slavic and Hungarian literature, and that is the reason why she started to study Hungarian.

**Viktor**, a Ukrainian from Transcarpathia, who is of Ukrainian and Hungarian descent, wants to move to Hungary, so he and his wife study Hungarian together, although in different groups. They are attending the UP Summer University for the fourth time.

**Helena** comes from Poland, she has a degree in Hungarian and wants to brush up her knowledge.

**Paul**, a translator employed by the EU, is originally from the UK but living in Brussels. He also translates from Hungarian, and is here both to improve his knowledge and because of the beauty of the city.

**Johanna** is from Poland, a returning guest at the Summer University, and wants to better understand Hungarian literature.

**Martina** studies Hungarian and German in Slovenia and wants to improve her vocabulary.

**Robert** is an American who had a Hungarian girlfriend ten years ago, so he studied the language seriously then. Now he is back at university and wants to use the language in his historical research.

**Jarek** lives in Poland and started learning Hungarian because a friend encouraged him to do so a few years ago. He liked the logic of the Hungarian language because it is so different from other European languages.

**Josef** is Austrian but lives in the USA and wants to improve his knowledge because he is interested in Hungarian history and literature.

## How do you organize the summer university?

**Dr. Katalin Pelcz:** Preparation for a summer university starts when the one from the previous year is finished. The first step is to analyze the report cards of our students, on the basis of which, in September, we draw our conclusions and start preparing next year's programme. The draft programme must also be accompanied by a call for applications, so that prospective students can apply for scholarship places at the Tempus Foundation. In addition to the scholarship, we also have self-financed students. This year, we have 65 students from 26 countries.

## Were there more participants before the pandemic?

Yes, usually a hundred. This year we also had fewer scholarship places and fewer applicants; the rate is always roughly around 50-50%.

## What was the online summer university like?

That is a completely different world. It was interesting that one student would sit in front of a computer in Japan and another in Canada. If students are willing to be your partner, they can learn a lot, you can even make friends, but you still have to sit in front of the computer for 6-8 hours a day. Spending time in Pécs gives much more to both student and teacher. Although students spend six hours in the classroom, there is no lack of excursions, dancing together, thematic walks, arts and crafts, but there is also rhythm club, film club...

## What does rhythm club mean?

People value the language proficiency of those who have good pronunciation. The constant development of pro-

nunciation is also emphasised in lessons, and several afternoons are devoted to polishing pronunciation with music and poetry.

**What is a film club like?**

One theme holds the films together, which we place into context and then discuss. This year, Lilla Kolos led the film club, with a selection of contemporary Hungarian films. This year, for example, students will watch the film Preparations to be Together for an Unknown Period of Time.

**What groups can be created from the students of the Summer University? They come from 26 countries, with different levels of knowledge.**

We'll use a placement test to find the right group for everyone. Placement is done on the basis of the European Framework of Reference for Languages, followed by the MagyarOK course books.

**Do you have people returning?**

Absolutely. We have some lovely stories. My favourite is a Belgian student who was with us for the first time at our very first Summer University, then took a 20-year break and came back to study with us as a father, one of the researchers in the region. And there are some who return to bring a colleague with them the following year.

**Is Hungarian a truly difficult language?**

The stereotype that Hungarian is so difficult that no one can learn it makes our work difficult. I have heard people say, *Why are you learning Hungarian, it is so hard that it makes your hair fall out!*

This is false, Hungarian can be learned just like any other language, you just need to remember and combine more things at the beginning. At the end, learning every language takes roughly the same amount of effort, Hungarian is a challenge at the beginning while English at the intermediate level. Hungarian is not a language to get away with, you have to put the work in at the beginning.

**By exposing your students to contemporary Hungarian culture, do you make it easier for them to find their way around and use the language?**

Our work is greatly influenced by the image and prestige that Hungarian culture brings. Current politics also have an impact on how many people apply. We also teach a lot about everyday Hungarian culture, what it means to be late, for example. How to behave when you are invited for a coffee... Beyond the language class, our students also take experiences with them, from wine tastings through hiking to visiting museums... If we go to a wine tasting, we prepare the excursion. We prepare the information on various levels, and we are also concerned with possible conversations and linguistic behaviour. These materials are given to the students on a worksheet. Cultural knowledge also includes, for example, that I will show you the whole culture of the spritzer (a traditional Hungarian drink of wine with soda water), what a "long step" or a "vice janitor" means. If we go dragon boating, they will get the typical instructions beforehand, by the time we get down to Orfű, they will have learned it. The lesson follows the methodology of model-based teaching, and we also use the tools of experiential teaching.



# „MUSIC HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF MY LIFE”

*Bella Gara, a Pharmacist with a Golden Throat*

*Bella Gara has just finished a successful academic year: she graduated from the Faculty of Pharmacy, her thesis was on people's habits regarding shopping in pharmacies and using decorative cosmetics, and has already started working at the Szent István Pharmacy in Nagyatád. She has also won this year's Voice of UP award. We asked her about the latter.*

Luca Adrián | 📷 Szabolcs Csontos

From a young age, Bella learned to play several musical instruments; first the violin, then the piano, but eventually, what really captivated her was the guitar. At the age of 12 or 14, she threw herself into singing, and her first major test was the Balaton Voice competition in 2013, where she ended third. After that she performed several times, with live music, too. Three years ago, she started to deal with singing more seriously, taking singing lessons from the opera singer and vocal master, Márta Bukszár. In 2020 she won first place in the Golden Violin and this year in the Voice of UP singing competitions. For her, music is a relaxing way to break up boring moments. *Even when I take a break from my studies, I sing. For me, it's like walking in fresh air on a sunny afternoon, or having a cup of coffee; it makes my day.* said Bella Gara.

She also said that it was a great pleasure for her to be the only pharmacy student to win in her final year. Rumour has it, that this singing competition is also a competition between faculties, so this way she was even able to enhance the reputation of her own faculty. *It is a great pride for me to hold this title* she said.

After reaching first place, it is expected that she will receive more university invitations; an example of this was this year's Semmelweis Day celebration organised by the UP Clinical Centre, where she sang a song from the musical Padlás for the celebrating health workers.

*I used to and still do consider music as a hobby, since my profession is pharmacy, but singing is a much more integral part of my life now than it was 5-6 or 10 years ago. My big dream is to write my own song one day, perhaps in collaboration with another musician.* We are looking forward to that, too!



# INSPIRING ENTHUSIASM

*Dr. Daniel Sender, Associate Professor of Violin at the University of Virginia (UVA), is an internationally renowned violinist who has been teaching performance classes at UVA for ten years. He is also the concertmaster of the Charlottesville Opera and the Charlottesville Symphony. After spending a year as a Fulbright student in Budapest, he returned to Hungary on a second Fulbright and was teaching at the Liszt Academy and also at the Faculty of Music and Visual Arts of the University of Pécs. His fascination with Hungarian folk and art music is expressed in his works and reflected in his students as well.*

Mariann Tóth |  Szabolcs Csontos



### What is your role as a concertmaster?

Before orchestras had professional conductors, it was the concertmaster, or in some cases the keyboard player, who traditionally led the orchestra. The modern role of the concertmaster is partly symbolic, yet very technical and important as well. It is my job to lead the strings and interpret the conductor's musical ideas into practical ways of performing the music. In the Charlottesville Symphony, I have a half performance, half teaching role. The symphony is filled with professional principals like

myself, but there are also some students and community members as well; it is a hybrid orchestra. I get to do a lot of teaching in that capacity as concertmaster.

### How did you originally connect Hungarian music?

Some fifteen years ago, I was a prize winner in a concerto competition for which I performed Bartók's Violin Concerto No. 2. During the time I was preparing for the competition, studying this piece thoroughly, I noticed more and more references to folk music in the concerto. I had also enjoyed studying Bartók's sonatas, Rhapsodies, and the Romanian Folk Dances, and I became

intensely interested in his music. The more I read, the more I appreciated that I did not truly understand the folk idiom or the deep connection between the Hungarian language and Hungarian music.

### How did you become so interested in Hungarian music?

When I was a doctoral student, I chose to prepare a dissertation on the intersection of Hungarian folk and art music, focusing on composers like Bartók, Kodály, and Dohnányi. I was captivated by the rich, full use of the folk idiom in their works. I was compelled to explore more. The Fulbright scholarship provided an opportunity to take a deeper look into the music and culture of Hungary in 2010. Since that time, I have fallen in love with Hungary. I love the country, the music, the people, and especially the food! I have made frequent trips back, both as a visitor, and as a professional.



### Did you have culture shock when you first came to Hungary?

Parts of it were certainly shocking. I had spent a short time living in Europe before as a student, in Vienna, so I knew a little bit about the culture, but living in Budapest for the year was different. I was in Budapest with my wife, who is a pianist, and we were both students at the Liszt Academy. The classical music scene felt very familiar and comfortable, but the culture shock for me came more in folk music. I was observing teachers at the Hungarian Folk Music School in Óbuda, learning from András János, a charming man and wonderful violinist. I would go every week and observe him teaching for a few hours. Not once did I see a piece of paper music, no music stands. Everything was just coming from his mind and his experience and being taught to students, who absorbed it that way, which I had to admire and appreciate.

That style of teaching is very traditional. Teaching by rote, listening and imitating, was very foreign for me and I would try to play along, but my experience of classical training was clashing against this kind of folk training. That was a big shock for me, the way that folk music was still being taught here and absorbed and performed, the whole culture was very unusual for me. At the same time, it is wonderful and natural, like the way we learn a language. Initially, we imitate our parents and the people around us. It is so natural. And yet, in today's classical music world, we always have our notes in front of us. I think, we have lost some of that skill. However, I was eventually able to listen and imitate. I still remember some of the tunes that he had taught when I was there.

### Do you also write musical pieces?

Motivated by the model set forth by composers such as Bartók and Kodály, I have spent time researching in the archives of the Institute for Musicology in Budapest, and have listened to hours upon hours of old ethnographic recordings. Inspired by the richness and unique qualities of their folk tradition, I have been writing pieces for violin and piano based on Roma folk tunes. The music of the Hungarian Roma is beautiful and creative, and incorporates elements of percussive rhythm that I find fascinating. I have been writing a series of pieces for violin and piano based on Roma folk sources as a way to raise awareness and honour their musical tradition. The series thus far consists of three multi-movement works for violin and piano: *Roma Folk Dances*, *Scenes from Csenyete*, and *Three Souvenirs*.

I played two of my pieces in Pécs in March and have been playing them in the States as well. It is charming to hear people's reaction to the music, especially those who have never heard that kind of music before, and I

also have been playing the actual folk recordings as part of the performance as well. I cut together a little medley of the tunes, and before I perform my piece, I play the folk recordings for the audience so they can hear the voices of the villagers and the folk musicians. They can hear the music and soak in the atmosphere before I play the piece. This way, the audience can make that direct connection between the source and what that has become. I think it is important to hear not just the Western classical version of it, but to hear the actual source. It makes a deeper connection for the audience, and they always love it. Audiences have been appreciative of this approach and have become very interested in the folk music of Hungary, which is so beautiful.

**Am I right in assuming that your enthusiasm inspires others as well?**

I feel like it is my duty to share this folk-inspired music, because I have spent so much time in Hungary and I love it. I want to share that beauty with my students and with the community here in the States. You would be delighted to know that I have a student who recently gave a beautiful recital and it was an all-Hungarian program. She played the Dohnányi Violin Sonata, the Kodály Duo for violin and cello and Bartók's Second Sonata. She heard me talking about Hungarian culture and the folk inspirations quite often! This is also proof that this fondness for Hungarian music and culture is starting to radiate out, and it is starting to impact the UVA community as well.

**Could you tell me more about your connection to Pécs?**

I visited Pécs years ago, and I was absolutely charmed by it. Charlottesville and Pécs both have UNESCO World Heritage sites, thriving musical culture, and historic universities. An official Memorandum of Understanding was signed, which formally pairs our universities. We started a concert exchange program in 2018 and have sustained a beautiful partnership. I am most proud of a recent exchange, where four students from the University of Virginia travelled with three UVA faculty to the University of Pécs in March 2022. We gave a concert at the end of the week and the students got to work with alongside Hungarian peers through the week. They were coached by both American and Hungarian professors and collaborated in a beautiful performance. They formed meaningful human-to-human connections with their Hungarian colleagues, which was amazing to see.

This partnership between our universities is still in the growing phase, and I hope and to expand the program to involve other divisions. In Pécs, I really appreciated the history and influence of Zsolnay. I also was impressed by the student culture, that the students seemed to really

enjoy spending time with one another. There is a sense of community at the Faculty of Music and Visual Arts, which you do not often see elsewhere, it is something absolutely special.

**Is there something you miss from Hungary?**

Töltött káposzta is a favourite, it is so good! I love pörkölt, and the soups: legényfogyó leves, fish soup, I am a big fan! I especially miss the pastries. I miss the riverside walks in Budapest, walking down Király utca. in Pécs, or sitting in Széchenyi square having a coffee and enjoying watching people walk by. Those kind of experiences are what I miss the most.

**Do you have a message that you would like to share?**

I would encourage people to recognize the value of cultural exchange and to support it in any way they can. It also cannot be overstated just how important it is for people to come out to the events that celebrate cross-cultural understanding, such as our concerts and programs, especially today when the world is being fractured and threatened with division. We should confront violence with beauty, and continue to bind our people together through beautiful art and lasting connections.




# SOME KINDNESS FOR THE START OF THE YEAR AND BEYOND


*The start of the semester is a celebration for everyone, not only for freshmen, seniors, teachers and researchers, but also for the city.*

**AUTUMN 2022** We would like to offer discounts to all our Readers. These are classic coupons, i.e. you need to present them when you purchase something. Please pay attention to the use by date of the discounts.

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# COMMUNITY FILMING ON SMARTPHONE, IN A MINUTE

*The two film challenges, Shoot for Earth! and Baranya Filmmarathon, both associated with the Faculty of Cultural Science, Education and Regional Development at the University of Pécs (FCSERD, UP) are green, local and international at the same time. Both campaigns were open to one-minute films, with only 24 hours to shoot, and though the theme was predetermined, the organizers revealed the compulsory elements only at the beginning of the competition. It was possible to enter the competition with films made using a mobile phone. Both calls were a huge success: lots of fresh ideas and new perspectives emerged.*

Éva Harka |  Tamás Geng

## SHOOT FOR EARTH!

The aim of the "Shoot the Earth" international film competition is to use the influencing ability of film to raise awareness about the need to change consumer habits. The competition attracted entries from 16 countries on 5 continents. *This year's entries were truly exceptional! I watch many films, but I am still surprised that first-time filmmakers are often better than established directors. Maybe it's because they have neither been corrupted by the film industry nor money,*" said David Foldes.

The Hungarian competition was won by the *Lightning Pictures* team with their film *Gaia*. The first place, and the Jiri Menzel Memorial Prize, went to *Hallo One Production*. The film was directed by Kevin Lucero Less from Chicago, who made his film, *Stop*, with a mobile phone. The winners have won the opportunity to attend film events in Cannes.

## BARANYA FILMMARATHON

*We cooperate with colleagues in Hollywood, Los Angeles and New York, and thus we can extend this "treasure hunt" in Baranya to a global level. It was a particular pleasure that we were able to attract people to this event, and that they were able to shed light on values that we just pass by or do not even know about.* emphasized Dr. Zsolt Nemeskéri.

*The winner was the film "The Gates of Baranya" (Csilla Horváth and István Hollósi-Simon, crew leader), which was shot with a digital camera. The two-man crew also won half a million HUF in cash.*

## TIPS FOR THE NEXT COMPETITION

According to Gábor Kindl, the mastermind behind the 24-hour filmmaking competition, this is definitely somet-

hing to keep an eye on for the 2023 marathon: *if the first two or three seconds of your film do not grab the attention of the viewers, they will not watch it any more. In the past films used to have a span: somewhere in the last third, the main message emerged. Today we need at least two climaxes, and one of them has to be at the very beginning of the film!*

Our picture is an excerpt from the film *Mecsek* (Katalin Geng-Karasz, József Geng, Józsefné Geng, Melitta Erdősiné Martényi and Tamás Geng, crew leader), which won 3rd place at the Baranya Filmmarathon.



# THE NEWEST ICONIC PLACE IN PÉCS

A new market hall opened in Pécs in early July. *This building speaks for itself*, said Dr. Tamás Kondor, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology, introducing the building at its official opening. *With the pure simplicity of the order of basilica architecture it creates a link between below and above, placing those who serve food in their rightful, sacred space.* He also mentioned that the designers are connected to UP, which is a particular pride for the university. What is more, the University of Pécs Wine Estate has a dedicated vending space in the building! The sausage/fried dough sections are located on the east side of the building, in case anyone happens to wander by after a party one morning.



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