

Communicating Europe: Hungary Manual

*Information and contacts
on the Hungarian debate on EU enlargement*

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ABOUT THIS MANUAL

Hungary will take over the EU presidency for six months on 1 January 2011. This will make it one of the most important players with regard to the EU enlargement process in the coming year. One of the four focus areas of the Hungarian presidency will be “EU enlargement and global engagement”.

But who shapes the debate on the future of enlargement in Hungary? This manual is intended to answer the question by presenting more than 120 key people in close to 90 relevant institutions.

It starts with a description of the media landscape in Hungary, from the leading print media to radio and television. The subsequent chapter provides information about think tanks, research institutions and other relevant interest groups. The final chapter gives an overview of the relevant political institutions, the current government, parliament and the leading parties.

We hope this manual will be of help to those who want to engage with Hungarian opinion and decision makers on the issue of EU enlargement.

Budapest and Berlin, December 2010

A. MEDIA

Hungary's media landscape is diverse and reflects a wide variety of viewpoints. In its 2010 *Nations in Transit* report, Freedom House, the international civil liberties watchdog organisation, describes the freedom of media in Hungary as "mostly free of blatant pressure from political or economic interests." However, it criticises "political interference (as being) not uncommon, although it is practiced in less direct and obvious ways than in the late 1990s."

Ownership of Hungary's media is dominated by multinational companies, though an increasing number of media outlets are Hungarian-owned. Media outlets in Hungarian ownership mostly show a left- or right-leaning orientation, reflecting the split that cuts through Hungarian political life, while those in international ownership tend to be rather apolitical or neutral in outlook. In addition to privately owned media, Hungary also has a public broadcasting sector that includes seven radio stations and two television stations.

TV has, without doubt, the biggest influence on public opinion. Print media is dominated by tabloids, although quality newspapers (all with a circulation below 100,000) maintain considerable influence on public opinion. In recent years, the importance of online news portals, notably Origo and Index, has increased significantly.

The existence of sizeable Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries helps explain the Hungarian media's and the Hungarian public's interest in the Balkans and, to a lesser extent, Ukraine. Many Hungarian stringers or foreign correspondents in these countries belong to the respective Hungarian minority. A number of Hungarian media outlets also run regular programmes on the life of the Hungarian minorities. Public interest in Balkan and Eastern Partnership countries which do not have Hungarian minorities is significantly less pronounced.



Map: Sebök László

In June 2010 the Fidesz government unveiled a draft package of new media laws. The package, which contains new legislation on media regulation and supervision, was presented as an attempt to respond to technological developments in the media sector and the emergence of new forms of communication services.

The package is far-reaching and complex. It regulates a wide range of issues including the establishment of a new media authority, market share by media companies, the protection of minors, the ratio of Hungarian versus non-Hungarian musical content, the registration of *all* media content providers, as well as fines for non-compliance. Critics fear that certain features of the package will stifle the freedom of the media by imposing a culture of self-censorship. In particular, the following aspects of the package have been strongly criticised:

- The far-reaching powers of the media authority
- The severe fines and sanctions the authority can impose on media outlets deemed to be non-compliant
- Unclear formulations regarding the nature of what constitutes a breach of law by media companies; it is feared that such lack of clarity could give rise to arbitrary (politically motivated) interpretations, which, combined with the harsh fines, could lead to self-censorship

The package was sharply criticised by the opposition and by media representatives, including the National Association of Hungarian Journalists (Magyar Újságírók Országos Szövetsége, MÚOSZ).



An expert [analysis commissioned by the OSCE](#) was also highly critical of the package. According to the report, the package goes “in its sweep and reach beyond almost anything attempted in democratic countries and beyond the limits of what is accepted in the international debate as an appropriate and justified approach to regulating new communication services.” The “stricter regulation, more pervasive controls and limitations on freedom of expression” introduced by the package, said the OSCE, are “often in disregard or violation of the needs of a democratic system of social communication and of the letter and spirit of international standards.”



The liberal weekly Magyar Narancs with a blank front page

In spite of the criticism, the government moved ahead with its plans to reshape the media landscape in Hungary. On 2 November 2010 Parliament adopted a law establishing a new media authority with “unprecedented powers in content regulation” ([OSCE Representative on Media Freedom, Regular Report to the Permanent Council, 16 December 2010](#)). By mid-November the Fidesz government appointed members to the new media

authority (for a period of nine years) and named new heads for all public service media outlets. To protest such steps, and the new media laws as such, on 1 December 2010 a number of Hungarian newspapers and weeklies appeared with blank front pages. On 20 December Parliament adopted the second part of the media package regulating the powers of the media authority.

1. Print media

1.1. National dailies

Similarly to the United Kingdom or Germany, *tabloid media* dominate among the print press. The quality newspaper with the highest circulation, *Népszabadság*, has a distribution of only about 100,000 copies.

Circulation of Hungarian national dailies

National dailies (circulation above 25,000)	
Metropol	278,307
Blikk	265,199

Népszabadság	99,446
Nemzeti Sport	95,111
Magyar Nemzet	64,209
Népszava	31,742
Magyar Hírlap	29,769

Sources: *Matesz* (Magyar Terjesztés-Ellenőrző Szövetség/Hungarian Distribution-Monitoring Association), daily average of printed papers; fourth quarter 2009, (<http://www.matesz.hu/data/>). Results for *Napi Gazdaság* are from the newspaper's website (www.napi.hu/static/pdf/NG_olvasok.ppt) as they were not listed by *Matesz* for the fourth quarter of 2009.

► **Metropol** is the Hungarian daily with the largest distribution. It is part of the Metro International group and is a free distribution paper that wholly finances itself through advertisements. Its format is that of a tabloid and it has no discernible political affiliation. Foreign policy news is almost exclusively based on agency reports.



Contact: *Metropol*, Tüzér utca 39-41, 1134 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 431-6400, Email: szerk@metropol.hu, Website: <http://www.metropol.hu>.



► The daily with the second highest circulation is **Blikk**, owned by the Swiss Ringier media group. It is a classic tabloid daily with no perceivable political affiliation. Blikk has very little foreign news, though it occasionally offers good investigative work on domestic issues.

Contact: *Blikk*, Szugló u. 81-85, 1141 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 460-2400, Email: szerkesztoseg@blikk.hu, Website: <http://www.blikk.hu/>.

► The origins of **Népszabadság** date back to Szabad Nép (Free People), the daily of the Hungarian Communist Party founded in 1942. In November 1956, the name of the paper was changed to Népszabadság (literally People's Freedom). Until the post-communist transition, Népszabadság was the central daily of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt – MSZMP).



In 1990, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), the successor of the MSZMP, transferred the paper's ownership to the Free Media Foundation (Szabad Sajtó Alapítvány). The current majority shareholder (67.7%) of Népszabadság is the Swiss media giant, Ringier, with the Szabad Sajtó Alapítvány still holding approx. 26% of shares. The Szabad Sajtó Alapítvány is believed to be closely linked to the MSZP.

Indeed, the profile of Népszabadság remains left-leaning, with conservative observers noting clear sympathies for the MSZP. Nevertheless, as even conservative critics concede, Népszabadság offers high quality political journalism. In its commentaries, Népszabadság is usually strongly supportive of the Western Balkan countries' EU aspirations, though somewhat sceptical about Turkey's EU accession. It would appear that Népszabadság is less Hungarian-centric than most other Hungarian media outlets when it comes to covering the Balkans and Ukraine (meaning that its interest in the region is less dominated by issues of the Hungarian minorities in these countries).

The foreign news editor is Edit Inotai (inotai@nepszabadsag.hu). The Balkans, Turkey, the Caucasus and Ukraine are partly covered by in-house journalists with expertise in the region and partly by permanent correspondents and stringers associated with Népszabadság.



Zoltán Tibori Szabó

The journalists covering the Western Balkans include Gábor Miklós (miklosg@nepszabadsag.hu), a long-time Népszabadság journalist with significant experience in the Balkans. Other journalists regularly covering the region include Márton Gergely (gergelym@nepszabadsag.hu), Eszter Zalán (zalane@nepszabadsag.hu), who frequently visited Kosovo, and István Tanács (tanacsi@nepszabadsag.hu) from the Southern Hungarian town of Szeged, who regularly covers events from the Serbian region of Vojvodina. Miklós Blahó (blahom@nepszabadsag.hu) is the Népszabadság's Brussels (and EU) correspondent.

Moldova, together with Romania is covered by the Cluj (Kolozsvár)-based stringer Zoltán Tibori Szabó (tibori@xnet.ro). Tibori Szabó teaches Journalism at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj (Romania).

Gergely Nyilas (nyilasg@nepszabadsag.hu) is the Moscow correspondent of Népszabadság, focusing on Russia but also dealing with Ukraine. He occasionally writes about the Caucasus. Other (Budapest-based) journalists who write about Ukraine are András Dési (design@nepszabadsag.hu) and Zsolt Kacsor (kacsorz@nepszabadsag.hu).

Contact: Népszabadság, 1960 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 436 4444, F: +36 (1) 436 4604, Email: szerkesztoseg@nepszabadsag.hu, Website: www.nol.hu.

► *Magyar Nemzet* was founded in 1938 as a conservative patriotic daily. In communist times, the daily survived but had to subordinate itself to the requirements of the one-party system. Within these severe restrictions, however, Magyar Nemzet's image was that of a critical paper – within the one-party context.

Following the collapse of communism, Magyar Nemzet was privatised. Its current shareholder is the Nemzet Lap-és Könyvkiadó Kft., owned entirely by the editor-owner of Magyar Nemzet, Gábor Liszkay. Magyar Nemzet's profile is clearly conservative and patriotic. After what was seen by some as a drop in quality, the newspaper is once again considered a high-quality political daily. Magyar Nemzet jointly co-owns the conservative radio station Lánchíd Rádió with the conservative television station, Hír TV.

Magyar Nemzet describes itself as a civic daily (*bürgerliche Tageszeitung*) and is thus conservative and patriotic in its outlook. With regard to its positions, Magyar Nemzet supports further EU expansion – especially of Balkan states – but not at all costs. Magyar Nemzet occasionally expresses doubts as to whether the EU is capable of accepting any new member states at the current stage. In Magyar Nemzet's view, the Balkans and Ukraine are of key foreign political importance for Hungary, even if the country has failed to state a coherent strategy in this respect under the MSZP. In addition, Magyar Nemzet is crucially interested in the region inasmuch as there are still sizeable Hungarian minorities living there.

Magyar Nemzet's foreign news editor is Gábor Stier (stier.gabor@mno.hu), a former Moscow correspondent who also writes about Ukraine and the Caucasus. Ukraine – especially issues of the Hungarian minority there – is also covered by Magyar Nemzet's stringer in Uzhgorod (Ungvár), Szekely Gergely (erdei@mail.ru).

Balkan and especially Serbian news is covered by Magyar Nemzet's Serbia stringer, Imre Sebestyén. Sebestyén is the founder and Editor in Chief of the Novi Sad (Serbia)-based Hungarian news site, Vajdaság Ma (<http://www.vajdasagma.info>). Sebestyén has been writing for Magyar Nemzet since the outbreak of the Yugoslav wars.



Imre Sebestyén

Other Magyar Nemzet journalists writing about the Balkans include István Pataky (patakyi@mno.hu) and Roland Balogh (baloghr@mno.hu). Magyar Nemzet also has a stringer in Brussels, István Lovas (lovasistvan@skynet.be) who writes about EU-related matters.

Contact: *Magyar Nemzet*, Üllői út 102, 1089 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 4762-131, F: +36 (1) 215-3197, Email: szerkesztoseg@nepszabadsag.hu, Website: <http://www.mno.hu>.

NÉPSZAVA

SZOCIÁLDEMOKRATA NAPILAP ALAPÍTVÁ 1873-BAN

► *Népszava* was founded in 1873 and was originally a social-democratic newspaper. In the communist period it was the daily of the labour unions. Following the collapse of communism, *Népszava* was privatised and ownership has changed a number of times. Since 2005, its owner has been

László Kapolyi, a communist functionary turned entrepreneur.

Kapolyi is owner of a significant business empire and president of the Hungarian Social-Democratic Party (MSZDP) – a sister party of the significantly larger Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP).

Regarding its political position, *Népszava* is to the left of *Népszabadság*. Its focus is more strongly domestic. Foreign policy news is mostly assembled from dispatches by the Hungarian news agency, MTI. *Népszava*'s editor is Péter Németh (nemethp@nepszava.hu). The editor of the foreign policy section is Tamás Rónay (ronayt@nepszava.hu).

Contact: *Népszava*, Könyves Kálmán krt. 76, 1087 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 477 90 00, Email: nepszava@nepszava.hu, Website: <http://www.nepszava.hu>.

► Two Hungarian dailies have a strong focus on the economy: *Napi Gazdaság* and *Világgazdaság*. Both are highly relevant and important in the Hungarian context as their readers belong to the business and political elite and are thus mentioned here, though their daily circulation is below 30,000.

Contact: *Napi Gazdaság*, Csata u.32, 1135 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 450 9600, F: +36 (1) 450 9601, Email: napionline@napi.hu, Website: <http://www.napi.hu>.

Contact: *Világgazdaság*, Városmajor u. 12-14, 1539 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 489-1195, F: +36 (1) 489-1189. Email: vgonline@vg.hu. Website: <http://www.vilaggazdasag.hu>.

1.2. Regional dailies

With regard to circulation, some regional dailies outperform national political dailies (e.g. the Észak-Keleti Napló printed 135,788 copies per day in the fourth quarter of 2009, while *Népszabadság*, the national political daily with the largest distribution remained below 100,000). Given their profile as regional newspapers, local news takes the front seat. Foreign news is usually restricted to articles from the Hungarian news agency, MTI, although some, e.g. Délvilág (the South-eastern section of Délmagyarország-Délvilág), occasionally print their own articles on Serbia. This slightly greater interest in the Western Balkans is likely connected to the region's geographic proximity.

Table: Circulation of Hungarian regional dailies

Regional dailies (circulation above 30,000)	
Észak-Keleti Napló (a daily from North-Eastern Hungary, near the borders with Slovakia and Ukraine)	135,783
Kisalföld (a daily from the North-Western tip of Hungary, close to the borders with Austria and Slovakia)	73,981
Vas Népe (a daily from Western Hungary from Vas County)	53,623
Zalai Hírlap (a daily from Western Hungary from Zala County)	52,536
Délmagyarország-Délvilág (a daily from the Southern region of Hungary, along the borders with Romania and Serbia)	49,992
Fejér Megyei Hírlap (a daily from Central Hungary from Fejér County)	42,749
Új Dunántúli Napló (focuses on the Transdanubian region – on the west bank of the Danube)	41,632

Source: Matesz (Magyar Terjesztés-Ellenőrző Szövetség/Hungarian Distribution-Monitoring Association), daily average of printed papers; fourth quarter 2009, (<http://www.matesz.hu/data/>).

1.3. Weeklies

There are a number of weekly magazines in Hungary. The weeklies with the highest distribution have very little foreign political content.

Table: Circulation of Hungarian weeklies

Important weeklies (circulation above 30,000)	
Helyi Téma	825,279
Szabad Föld	115,326
HVG	93,775
168 Óra	36,371
Heti Válasz	32,217

Source: Matesz (Magyar Terjesztés-Ellenőrző Szövetség/Hungarian Distribution-Monitoring Association), daily average of printed papers; fourth quarter 2009, (<http://www.matesz.hu/data/>).

► The weekly with the largest circulation (more than 800,000 copies printed in the fourth quarter of 2009) is *Helyi Téma*, a free weekly tabloid that finances itself through advertisements. Its political stance is conservative. On occasion, it publishes solid investigative journalism (in tabloid format) and, due to its large circulation, has a significant impact on public opinion. However, its focus is almost exclusively domestic with hardly any foreign news items published. Local news is very prominent with local supplements covering the district and municipality level. Helyi Téma's owner is the Théma Lap és Könyvkiadó Kft.



Contact: *Helyi Téma*, Jászberényi út 55., 1106 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 814-4755, Fax: 814-4756, Email: szerkesztoseg@helyitema.hu, Website: <http://www.helyitema.hu>.



► *Szabad Föld* was founded in 1945 by the then Communist party and is the weekly with the second largest circulation in Hungary. Its focus is rural Hungary with domestic issues and agriculture being prominent among the weekly's topics. Due to its large readership, Szabad Föld's ownership has been strongly contested between the political left and right. The current owner of the weekly is the Geoholding media group, which can be linked to Ákos Erdős, a Hungarian businessman with suspected ties to the socialist MSZP.

Foreign news is relatively limited in Szabad Föld, with the exception of news related to the EU.

The editor of Szabad Föld is László Horváth (horvath.laszlo@geomedia.hu).

Contact: *Szabad Föld*, 1960 Budapest, Lajos u. 48-66, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 489-8800, Website: <http://www.szabadfold.hu/>.

► *HVG* was founded in 1979, i.e. still in the communist period. In the early years of transition (the late 1980s), HVG played an important critical role urging for liberal pro-democracy reforms. Accordingly, the new, post-transition statute (early 1990s) defines the weekly as a liberal paper focusing on the economy and society. HVG is not linked to any party but is considered by some (mainly conservatives) as leaning slightly towards the left. HVG's majority owner is the German WAZ group (75%); editors and staff hold the remaining 25%.



In many respects, HVG is Hungary's most important weekly with a significant influence on public opinion. Contrary to the other Hungarian weeklies, HVG has a relatively strong foreign policy orientation. Unlike most Hungarian media outlets that usually focus on the Hungarian minorities in neighbouring countries, HVG's coverage of the Hungarian diaspora appears to be less pronounced.

HVG has correspondents in four European capitals: Vienna, Berlin, Brussels and Moscow. Non-permanent correspondents for HVG are located in Transylvania (Romania), Bratislava (Slovakia), Lisbon, London and Tokyo. It is usually András Németh (hvg.hu@hvg.hu), HVG's Moscow correspondent, who writes about the Western Balkans and the CIS. Németh has also published articles in the academic journal *Az Elemző* focusing on Central- and Eastern Europe.

Contact: *HVG*, Montevideo u. 14, 1037 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 436-2001, F: +36 (1) 436-2014, Email: hvg.hu@hvg.hu, Website: <http://hvg.hu>.



► **168 Óra** was founded in 1989 – the year of the transition. However, its history goes back several years earlier. During the communist period, 168 Óra was a weekly radio programme, which, within the limits of the one-party state, was critical about domestic political issues and had an oppositional flair. The weekly originally published the contributions aired on the radio programme. The radio programme no longer exists and 168 Óra is a purely print publication. 168 Óra defines itself as a critical civic-intellectual weekly.

Contact: 168 Óra, Bécsi út 3-5, 1023 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 335-1481, +36 (1) 335-1482, Fax: +36 (1) 335-1480, Email: szerk@168ora.hu, Website: <http://www.168ora.hu>.

► **Heti Válasz** was founded in 2001 as a first attempt to establish a conservative political weekly. The weekly's founding goes back to a government-funded policy (of the then ruling Fidesz) to establish a “balance of power” in the Hungarian media. (As a result of the Communist Party's control of the media and appointments of Party loyalists to key positions, throughout the 1990s most key media outlets were (formally or informally) linked to the MSZP.)



Since its establishment in 2001, Heti Válasz has gone through a number of ownership changes. Its current owner is a joint venture formed by a Hungarian media entrepreneur, Tamás Fellegi, and a Danish venture capital firm, DEFAP. In spite of the ownership changes, the conservative political affiliation of Heti Válasz remained unchanged. Heti Válasz has strong rightist sympathies and clear links to Fidesz. Chief Editor Gábor Borokai, is the former press spokesperson for Fidesz leader Viktor Orbán, and its majority owner Tamás Fellegi (51%) has past links to Fidesz.

Heti Válasz had conducted important investigative journalistic work (e.g. in uncovering corruption) and its main focus appears to be domestic. The tag line displayed on the website (<http://hetivalasz.hu/>) confirms this mostly domestic orientation: the only foreign tags are the “economic crisis” and the “European Union”; these tags attract far fewer hits than domestic topics.

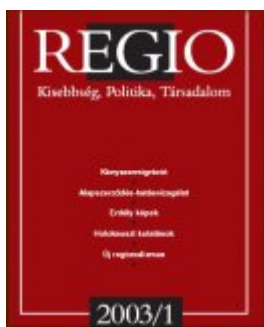
The journalist most frequently writing about the Western Balkans and Ukraine is Péter G. Fehér (vilag_online@hetivalasz.hu). While the foreign policy section carries no special sub-section on the EU, the section on business runs a sub-section called “Európai MÉRCE” (European Measure) containing EU-related business news.

Contact: *Heti Válasz*, Horvát u. 14-24, 1027 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 461-1400, F: +36 (1) 461-1460, Email: informacio@hetivalasz.hu, Website: <http://hetivalasz.hu>.

1.4. Monthlies and journals

The journal that most explicitly deals with Southeast and Eastern Europe is *Regio*. Another journal focusing on the region, *Az Elemző* (the Analyst, Central and Eastern European Review) has recently been discontinued. At present there appear to be no concrete plans to resurrect the journal. *European Integration Studies* concentrates mostly on legal, political and economic aspects of the EU, but has no explicit focus on the region (i.e. the Balkans, Turkey and countries of the Eastern Partnership) in question.

All other serious analytical journals, periodicals and quarterlies have a non-regional academic approach, although they frequently print articles on topics related to the EU or the region.



► *Regio – Kisebbség, Politika, Társadalom (Regio – Minorities, Politics, Society)* is a sociological/social scientific quarterly focusing on minority issues in the Central- and Southeast European region. *Regio* is a publication of the Research Institute of Ethnic and National Minorities (<http://www.mtaki.hu/english/>). Several papers published in the journal deal with topics directly related to Hungary or Hungarian minorities; however, a large number of articles are about issues with no direct Hungarian relevance, such as articles on Serbia's relation with Kosovo (e.g. in Issue No. 2/2008), or the image of the EU in the press of Eastern European and Balkan countries (Issue No. 4/2007).

The quarterly is at present only available in (paper) print and is published in both Hungarian and English. The publishers are now looking for ways to place the journal on the internet. *Regio*'s Chief Editor is Nándor Bárdi (bardinandor@gmail.com).

Contact: MTA ENKI *Regio Folyóirat*, Országház u. 30, 1014 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 224-6796, Email: bardinandor@gmail.com.

► *The European Integration Studies* is a semi-annual publication of the University of Miskolc. The University also hosts the European Studies Centre, a multi-disciplinary research institute that focuses on “theoretical and practical issues of the European integration ... primarily in relation with themes of legal harmonization, economic and political integration, as well as the history and operation of the different institutions of the EU.”



Contact: University of Miskolc, Centre of European Studies, Miskolc-Egyetemváros, 3515 Miskolc, Hungary; T: +36 (46) 565 036, F: +36 (46) 365 174, Email: rekagnes@gold.uni-miskolc.hu, Website: <http://hvg.hu>.



► *Budapest Analysis* – is a non-profit, bi-weekly e-newsletter that offers political and economic analysis. The primary focus of the newsletter is Hungary, but it also provides analysis on Central and Eastern Europe. The newsletter appears in both English and Hungarian. Regarding its political affiliation, *Budapest Analysis* describes itself as being at the “moderate centre-right of the European political palette, which aims to protect and entrench the pillars of human- and minority rights, political pluralism, the democratic constitutional state, social market economy, as well as the protection of national heritages – into the European system of cooperation” (http://www.budapestanalyses.hu/docs/En/About_Us/).

Many on the right of the Hungarian political spectrum believe that English language political analysis on Hungary is dominated by left leaning sources. *Budapest Analysis* thus appears to be a conscious attempt to break a perceived leftist monopoly on information and present an alternative view on political developments.

Budapest Analysis' editor in chief was, until recently, Iván Bába (info@budapestanalyses.hu). With the electoral victory of Fidesz, Bába was appointed Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and had to temporarily suspend the publication of *Budapest Analysis*. There are, however, plans to resume the publication of *Budapest Analysis* with a new editor.

Contact: the website provides no contact details other than: Email: info@budapestanalyses.hu Website: <http://www.budapestanalyses.hu>.

► *Külügyi Szemle/Foreign Policy Review* is the quarterly journal of the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, MKI (for more on the institute see below). *Külügyi Szemle* has a bi-annual English language edition, the *Foreign Policy Review*. Its format is that of an academic journal. Its contributors are mostly Hungarians, members of the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs or other academics.



The journal regularly prints articles on the Balkans, Ukraine and the EU. Most articles are online and can be downloaded. The most recent issue of *Külügyi Szemle* (2010/3) was dedicated to Spain and its relationship with the EU. *Külügyi Szemle*'s Editor in Chief is Tamás Magyarics (t.magyarics@hiia.hu).

Contact: *Külügyi Szemle*, Bérc utca 13-15, 1016 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 279 5702, F: +36 (1) 279 5701, Email: t.magyarics@hiia.hu, Website: <http://www.kulugyiintezet.hu/index.php?menu=21>



► *Politikatudományi Szemle (Review of Political Science)* is an academic journal published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, MTA). It occasionally carries contributions on the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Caucasus, the EU and European integration.

Politikatudományi Szemle is a refereed journal. The articles are in Hungarian with short English language abstracts. The journal's Editor in Chief is Ervin Csizmadia (csizmadia@mtapti.hu).

Contact: *Politikatudományi Szemle*, Országház u. 30, 1014 Budapest, Hungary, Phone: +36 (1) 2246722, Fax: +36 (1) 2246725, Email: posze@mtapti.hu, Website: <http://www.poltudszemle.hu/>.

► *South-East Europe – International Relations Quarterly* is an academic journal published by the Department of International Relations at the Corvinus University in Budapest and the Faculty for Economics, Finance and Administration of the Singidunum University in Belgrade.



The journal was launched in March 2010. Most articles are available in Hungarian as well as in a number of other languages (usually English, but also occasionally in German, Croatian, Romanian and French). The first issue of the quarterly was dedicated to Integration Efforts in South-East Europe (<http://dke.diplomacia.hu/page/vol.asp?l=ENG>). The autumn edition (2010/3) of the journal (<http://dke.diplomacia.hu/page/vol.asp?strVol=GIXBRT>) deals with the “The Nature of the Economic Crisis”. Published articles (e.g. “Croatian and Macedonian economy in the 2007 economic and financial crisis and after” by Viktória Endrődi-Kovács or “The Romanian economy may be on the slope?” by Gábor Miklós) explore the impact of the financial crisis on South-East Europe. It has to be noted that not all articles that appear in *South-East Europe* actually focus on the region, e.g. Balázs Vaszkun's paper (same volume) deals with “Crises and employment in Japan: maintaining stable employment in a crisis context”. *South-East Europe*'s Editor in Chief is Csaba Surányi (dke@diplomacia.hu).

Contact: *South-East Europe – International Relations Quarterly*, Corvinus University, Social Science Faculty, Közraktár utca 4-6, 1093 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 482-4272. Email: dke@diplomacia.hu, Website (English): <http://dke.diplomacia.hu/page/welcome.asp>, Website (Hungarian): <http://dke.diplomacia.hu/page/welcome.asp?l=HUN>.

1.5. Foreign correspondents

Three of the main international news agencies have offices and correspondents in Budapest:

- ▶ Reuters Magyarország Kft., Rákóczi út 1-3, 1088 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 327 4600.
- ▶ Agence France Press, Bajcsy-Zsilinszky út.12, 1051 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 356 8416.
- ▶ Bloomberg, Kálmán Imre utca. 1, 1054 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 475-1180.

1.6. Magyar Távirati Iroda (MTI)



▶ The *Hungarian press agency, MTI*, has significantly reduced the number of its offices since the beginning of the 1990s. Currently it has only two correspondents in the Balkans (in Belgrade and Bucharest) and no representatives in either Ukraine or the Caucasus.

MTI's Bucharest correspondent is Ferenc Garzó (garzof@mti.hu), focusing on Romania and Moldova. Its new Belgrade correspondent is András Márton (martona@mti.hu). The Belgrade correspondent mainly focuses on Serbian news, but also occasionally covers events in other Western Balkan countries. These latter countries are mostly dealt with by Tivadar Keller (kellert@mti.hu) who is stationed in Budapest but has spent several years as an MTI correspondent in the former Yugoslavia.

The person responsible for Ukraine is Katalin Öze (ozek@mti.hu). She frequently travels to Ukraine but is not permanently stationed there. MTI's Moscow correspondent, Júlia Horváth (horvathj@mti.hu), occasionally writes about Ukraine. (She covered the winter 2008-2009 Russian-Ukrainian gas dispute.) MTI has no correspondent or dedicated staff dealing with the Caucasus.

Contact: Magyar Távirati Iroda, MTI, 1016 Budapest Pf.3., Tel.: +36 (1) 441-9000, Fax: +36 (1) 318-8297, Email: mti@mti.hu, Website: <http://hirugynokseg.hu>.

1.7. Online news sources

Online news sites are increasingly important in providing up-to-date, current information. In this function, i.e. in providing current news, online news sources increasingly overshadow the main Hungarian news agency, MTI. The two leading online news sites in Hungary are Index and Origo.

[origo] ▶ *Origo* (www.origo.hu) was founded in 1997 and belongs to the Magyar Telekom Group. The majority of its users come from the 25-45-year-old age group. Origo is the most popular news portal in Hungary. On an average day Origo can have more than 700,000 visitors (for example, on 9 December 2010, Origo had 764,778 visitors, see: <http://www.webaudit.hu>). Origo has a permanent staff of twelve journalists working on domestic political issues, among them András Pethő, who won the Soma Prize for investigative journalism in 2009. Origo has no stringers, correspondents or journalists specialising in foreign policy issues. International news on Origo is provided by the Hungarian news agency, MTI (see [above](#)).

Origo is generally viewed as neutral in tone and objective, without attachment to a political party or political stance, thus trying to appeal to a large audience, irrespective of the values and political position of its readers. Origo's Editor in Chief is Balázs Weyer (Weyer.Balazs@origo.hu).

Contact: Origo Zrt., Pf. 137., 1364 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 371-3802, Fax: +36 (1) 371-3805, Email: you can write to Origo by clicking the following [link](#).; Website: <http://www.origo.hu>.

► **Index** (<http://index.hu/>) is Origo's main competitor. It belongs to Central European Media & Publishing (CEMP), a Hungarian owned media group focusing on the electronic media market. CEMP is majority owned by Kristóf Nobilis, one of Hungary's wealthiest businessmen. According to Webaudit, Index had 682,503 visitors on 9 December 2010. Index's Editor in Chief is Péter Új. The politics section of Index has a staff of twelve journalists.



Contact: *Index*, Flórián Udvar, Flórián tér 1., 1033 Budapest, Hungary, Tel.+36 (1) 555-7000, Fax: +36 (1) 349-0393, Email: olvir@mail.index.hu, Website: <http://index.hu>.

2. Radio

Hungarians spend an average of more than 225 minutes per day listening to radio (October 2009, see <http://adattar.ortt.hu/radionavigator/200910>). This puts radio close to television (250+ minutes per day, see <http://adattar.ortt.hu/agb/nezettseg/200910>) as the second most important source of information.



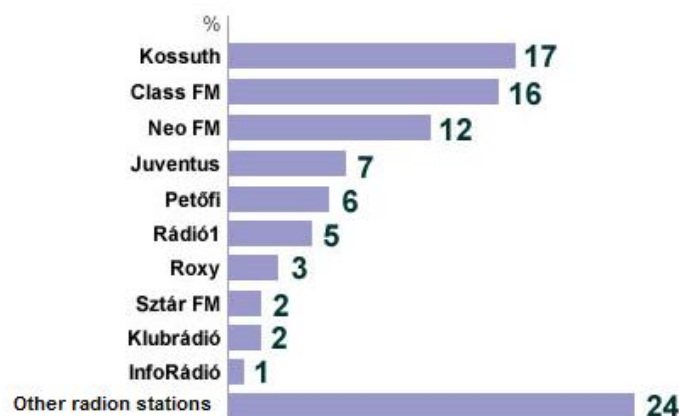
Magyar Rádió

The Hungarian radio market is divided into two segments: **public broadcasting** represented by *Magyar Rádió* (MR), which runs seven radio programmes (MR1 to MR7); and a large number of **commercial broadcasters**.

This commercial broadcasting sector underwent significant changes towards the end of 2009 when the radio frequency licences for the two most popular commercial radio stations, *Danubius Rádió* and *Sláger Rádió*, were not renewed. (Their frequencies were taken over by two other commercial stations, Class FM and Neo FM.) After significant upheavals following the loss of these two popular radio stations, the radio landscape is now in a phase of gradual consolidation.

Another interesting development has recently taken place. Until autumn 2009 the listenership of commercial radio stations far outweighed that of public broadcasters. However, according to the most recent survey data, in January-February 2010 Magyar Rádió's news channel *MR1-Kossuth Rádió* became Hungary's most popular radio station.

Figure 1: Reach of Hungarian radio stations in percent of population, January 2010
(source: Szonda Ipsos, see: <http://adattar.ortt.hu/agb/nezettseg/200910>)





is György Kerényi (kozerdekuadat@radio.hu), a veteran of radio broadcasting and a founding member of the first post-transition, independent, non-profit Hungarian radio station, *Tilos Rádió* (<http://tilos.hu/>).

The February 2010 survey of GfK Hungária-Ipsos showed Kossuth Rádió to be the radio with the widest listenership in Hungary. Every day more than 2 million Hungarians tune into its newscasts. Previous surveys (2009) by Szonda-Ipsos showed Kossuth Rádió to have a significantly lower audience. It is not clear whether the recent jump in popularity is the result of a new (January 2010) system for measuring the listenership of radio stations - or whether it is a temporary hike related to the elections in April 2010. MR1's *180 perc* ("180 minutes") is the most listened early morning newscast; its midday *Déli Krónika* ("Noon Chronicle") is the most widely listened newscast overall, with more than 500,000 daily listeners.



György Kerényi

Kossuth Rádió has three programmes dealing with foreign news:

- *Határok nélkül* (Without borders) is a 30 minute long early evening newscast. It focuses explicitly on issues of the Hungarian minority in neighbouring countries – this means there is a regular focus on news from the Balkans. *Határok nélkül* works with a large number of foreign correspondents/stringers based in Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania and Serbia (<http://www.mr1-kossuth.hu/musoraink/hatarok-nelkul.html>).
- *Világóra* (World Clock) is a 30 minute long daily foreign newscast, which provides high-quality analysis and background news from all over the world (<http://www.mr1-kossuth.hu/musoraink/vilagora.html>). Occasionally it also carries analyses on the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.
- *Harminc perc alatt a Föld körül* (In 30 minutes around the globe) – a 30 minute long weekly foreign news programme with a lighter touch (every Sunday from 12:22-13:00hrs, <http://www.mr1-kossuth.hu/musoraink/harminc-perc-alatt-a-fold-korul.html>). Occasionally there is also news from the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

Contact: *Kossuth Rádió*, Bródy Sándor u. 5-7., 1088 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 328-7000, F: +36 (1) 328-7332; Email: info@radio.hu, Website: <http://www.mr1-kossuth.hu/>.



2010 between 5.5% (MR2-Petőfi) and 15.6% (Class FM).

► *Juventus, MR2-Petőfi, Class FM and Neo FM* are the radio stations with the four next highest listenership ratings. Class FM and Neo FM are newly established stations, having received their licences in November 2009. With the exception of MR2-Petőfi (which is part of the public broadcaster Magyar Rádió) these radio stations are all commercial stations. Their ratings ranged in January



Juventus, MR2 Petőfi, Class FM and Neo FM carry only short (5 minute) newscasts every hour and concentrate on music. In addition, MR2-Petőfi also carries news items and interviews on musical, film and other cultural developments.



With regard to their political affiliations, Class FM is considered to be slightly right-wing. It belongs to Advenio Zrt., which in turn belongs to the same conservative Hungarian media group that comprises Magyar Nemzet, Hír TV and Lánchíd Rádió. In contrast, Neo FM is slightly left-wing. Its owner is the Hungarian FM1 Konzorcium (or FM1 Zrt.), composed of companies that are said to be close to socialist MSZP.

Because of these stations' significant reach, politicians are happy to appear on air. However, due to the relatively low political content, their impact on public opinion remains low. Foreign news coverage usually remains very limited.



focuses on a factual presentation of information.

► **Inforádió** is Hungary's first commercial news channel. It broadcasts news every 15 minutes. Its reach is around 1% of the total population, though probably significantly higher among older age groups. Inforádió has no known or perceivable party sympathies and

Contact: *Inforádió*, Polgár u. 8-10, 1033 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 483 2950, F: +36 (1) 483 2952; Email: info@inforadio.hu, Website: <http://www.inforadio.hu/>.

► **Lánchíd Rádió** is part of the Magyar Nemzet – Hír TV – Class FM conservative media consortium. Its listenership is below 1%. The station's focus appears to be mostly domestic.



Contact: *Lánchíd Rádió*, Üllői út 102., 1089 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 8148-730, F: +36-1-8148-754, Email: info@lanchidradio.hu, Website: <http://www.lanchidradio.hu>.

3. Television

Television is without doubt the most important mass medium in Hungary with the highest impact on public opinion. Hungarians watch television more than 250 minutes per day (see: <http://adattar.ortt.hu/agb/nezettseg/200910>). Like radio, the Hungarian television market can be subdivided into public and commercial broadcasting. The public broadcaster Magyar Televízió (MTV) runs two channels, *m1* and *m2*.

There are three terrestrial TV channels (M1, RTL Klub and TV2) and more than 30 satellite and cable channels. The three terrestrial channels have by far the highest ratings (approx. 52% of monthly audience share) with the remaining (more than 30) satellite channels sharing the remaining approx. 48% of viewer time.

Table: Market share of major TV channels

TV channel	Monthly audience share (Oct 2009)
RTL Klub	24%
TV2	18%
M1	8%
Viasat3	4.4%
Film+	3.2%
M2	2.2%
Duna TV	1.9%



► **RTL Klub**, part of the RTL media group – Europe’s largest TV, Radio and production company – is the TV station with the greatest reach. Some consider RTL Klub as being slightly right-wing. There is, however, little evidence for this. The programme appears to be almost entirely apolitical entertainment; RTL Klub’s political news content is accordingly rather limited. It broadcasts regular news programmes in the morning, at noon and in the evening (*Reggeli Híradó*, *Déli Híradó*, *Esti Híradó*). The news programme’s Chief Editor is Renáta Gémes (rtlhirek@rtlklub.hu).

RTL Klub’s *Európai Idő* programme (European Time) broadcast every Thursday between 23:00 and midnight. The programme presents EU funded projects in Hungary, explains their background and features discussions with people involved in each project. The programme is supported by the Hungarian National Development Fund (<http://www.nfu.hu/>), the European Social Fund, the European Regional Development -Fund and the Cohesion fund.

Contact: *RTL Klub*, Nagytétényi út 29., 1222 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 382-8282, F: +36 (1) 382-8289, Email: rtlklub.hu@rtlklub.hu, Website: <http://www.rtlklub.hu>.

► **TV2** is a commercial station belonging to the *German ProSiebenSat.1 Media* group. It is Hungary’s second most-watched TV-station. TV2’s news content is somewhat limited. *Tények* (‘Facts’) is TV2’s 30 minute-long morning and evening news programme. *Tények*’s main presenter is Bence György. Its foreign news presenters and correspondents are Péter Pachmann and Csaba Azurák. *Tények*’s editor and foreign correspondent, Katalin Zöldhegyi, received an award (the *Nívódíj*) for her coverage of the US and Russian presidential elections in 2008. Zöldhegyi’s TV team was attacked in February 2008 in Belgrade when reporting on Kosovo’s independence.



Katalin Zöldhegyi

Frizbi Hajdú Péterrel is a TV2 talk show, which occasionally features interviews with politicians (though this is rather the exception than the rule). In the last several weeks the programme did not feature any discussion related to the Balkans.

Contact: *TV2*, Róna u. 174, 1145 Budapest, Hungary; +36 (1) 467 64 00, F: +36 (1) 467 66 05, Email: kozonsegszolgalat@tv2.hu, Website: <http://tv2.hu>.

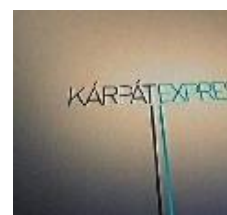


► **M1 (*Magyar Televízió 1*)** is the first terrestrial channel of the Hungarian public broadcaster Magyar Televízió. M1 offers sophisticated TV programming with significant time dedicated to news. Generally the station is considered as neutral and objective.

M1 has an extensive network of foreign correspondents and stringers and often also uses the network of Magyar Rádió’s correspondents. M1 has a permanent correspondent in Brussels, Vígh Zoltán (kozonsegszolgalat@mtv.hu).

M1 has four regular programmes that deal with foreign affairs, which feature news and reports relating to EU integration, the Balkans, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. These are:

- *Kárpátexpress* (Carpathian Express) provides news, reports, background and history from Hungary’s neighbours in the Carpathian Basin. The contributions are often, but not always, about Hungarians in these countries. Typical topics include Easter traditions in a Hungarian village in Ukraine (5 April 2010); the situation of medical doctors in Romania (1 April 2010); recent reports on non-Hungarian issues include a story on the new (and still empty) graveyard in the village of Zlatica (Vojvodina),



broadcast on 8 April 2010, or another, broadcast on 1 April 2010, about the Serbian apology for the Srebrenica massacre. *Kárpátexpressz* is broadcast every day on weekdays at 5:23 and 12:30. The programme's Editor in Chief is István Hegedűs (karpatepressz@mtv.hu).

- *Panoráma* is a weekly foreign news magazine broadcast on Sundays from 17:05-17:35. *Panoráma* broadcasts feature background news and analysis of foreign affairs. In a number of cases *Panoráma*'s programme focused on the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Caucasus. A background report aired on 28 February 2010 compared the image of Hungary, Greece and Georgia in the international media; a 22 March 2009 feature investigated NATO's role in the Balkans. *Panoráma*'s Chief Editor is János Molnár (panorama@mtv.hu).
- *Ma Reggel* (This morning) is the morning newscast of M1, beginning at 5:50 and lasting until 9:00. The programme brings news and long interviews with studio guests – almost entirely on domestic political issues.
- *Az Este* (The Evening) is M1's 30-40 minute-long evening newscast. *Az Este* is broadcast on weekdays only and brings detailed and quality foreign news relying on MTV's network of foreign permanent and temporary correspondents and stringers. *Az Este*'s Editor in Chief is Csaba Horváth.

Contact: *MTV M1*, Kunigunda útja 64., 1037 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 353 32 00, Email: kozonsegszolgalat@mtv.hu, Website: <http://www.hirado.hu>.



► *Viasat3* (belonging to the Swedish Modern Times Group Broadcasting AB) and *Film+* (belonging to the Hungarian IKO Media Group) are almost completely apolitical entertainment channels broadcasting films and sports events.



► *M2 (Magyar Televízió 2)* is the second channel of the public broadcaster Magyar Televízió which can only be received by satellite or by digital terrestrial broadcasting. M2 broadcasts the same news and political programmes as M1, i.e. *Kárpátexpressz*, *Panoráma*, *Ma Reggel* and *Az Este*.

Contact: *MTV M2*, Kunigunda útja 64., 1037 Budapest, Hungary; T: +36 (1) 353 32 00, Email: kozonsegszolgalat@mtv.hu, Website: <http://www.hirado.hu>.

► *Duna TV* was founded in 1992 and is part of the Hungarian public broadcast media. Its mission is to provide Hungarian language television programming for Hungarians living outside Hungary. It can be received via satellite and in Hungary via cable (all cable television providers include Duna TV in their selection of television programmes). In 1999 Duna TV was awarded the UNESCO Prix Camera price as the “world's best cultural television station”.



In accordance with its mission to provide Hungarian language programming to the Hungarian diaspora, Duna TV has studios in Slovakia (Bratislava/Pozsony), Serbia (Subotica/Szabadka), Romania (Târgu Mureş/Marosvásárhely, Odorheiu Secuiesc/Székelyudvarhely) and Ukraine (Uzhgorod/Ungvár). Its central studio is in Budapest.

Contact: *Duna Televízió*, Mészáros utca 48, 1016 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 489 1200, Email: info@dunatv.hu, Website: <http://www.dunatv.hu/>.

B. CIVIL SOCIETY, ACADEMIA AND INTEREST GROUPS

1. Think tanks and research institutes

The number of Hungarian research institutes, think tanks and civil society groups dealing with the Balkans, Turkey and the countries of the Eastern Partnership is rather limited. Within this relatively small field, most think tanks and research organisations focus on the Balkans (Centre for Balkan Studies, Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan Studies Centre); in contrast, interest in Ukraine is limited and there are no research bodies or university departments explicitly dealing with Eastern Partnership countries further removed from Hungary (i.e. Moldova and Caucasian countries).

Noteworthy exceptions are the Hungarian Institute of International Affairs (HIIA or MKI in Hungarian), a government research institute, and the International Centre for Democratic Transition (ICDT) a non-profit think tank. ICDT is particularly interesting from the perspective of this manual, because it not only deals with Balkans, but also with the countries of the Eastern Partnership.

Three research institutes/think tanks specialise in EU integration studies and advocacy (Hungarian Europe Society, HES and the Europainstitut). Their interest in the Balkans, Turkey or countries of the Eastern Partnership is, however, limited.

1.1. Think tanks, institutes and associations



► *Magyar Külügyi Kutató Intézet, MKI/Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, HIIA* is a research institute funded by the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its task is to support the formulation of Hungarian foreign policy with advice that is grounded in academic theory. The advice and support provided by the institute to the Ministry includes all aspects of foreign policy, i.e. diplomacy, EU and Euro-Atlantic integration, the economy, security

policy, cultural policy, etc. It realises its task by engaging in academic research, education, training and awareness raising/dissemination of information. This definition of tasks puts the MKI in somewhere between purely academic research (as practices by e.g. universities) and pragmatic foreign policy practice.

Currently MKI is engaged in a project supporting the preparations for Hungary's EU presidency (<http://www.hiia.hu/index.php?menu=41&proj=euelnokseg>). Important analyses in this regard include evaluations of the French and Slovene presidencies as well as research on Ukraine's course following the 2010 elections and two analyses on the Eastern Partnership. (Unfortunately the reports are only available in Hungarian.)

Key research areas include: EU, NATO and Trans-Atlantic relations, minority issues, as well as cooperation within the framework of the Visegrad countries. MKI also does research on issues having to do with the US, EU, Central Europe, the Balkans, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and China.



Zoltán Gálik

MKI researchers dealing with EU, NATO and Trans-Atlantic issues include Zoltán Gálik (z.galik@hiia.hu) and Csaba Törő (cs.toro@hiia.hu). Hamberger Judit (j.hamberger@hiia.hu) specialises on the Visegrad Countries and Visegrad Cooperation while Zoltán Kántor (z.kantor@hiia.hu) focuses on minority issues and Romania. The Western Balkans and Slovenia are covered by Imre Szilágyi (i.szilagyi@hiia.hu).



Imre Szilágyi

MKI has library and publishes to the *Külügyi Szemle/Foreign Policy Review*, a quarterly journal (more on the journal you find in the media section).

Contact: *Magyar Külügyi Kutató Intézet*, Bérc u. 13-15, 1016 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 279-5700, Fax: +36 (1) 279-5701 Email: titkarsag@hii.hu, Website: <http://www.hii.hu/index.php?nyelv=en>.



► *The International Centre for Democratic Transition (ICDT)* is a non-profit think tank and advocacy organisation based in Budapest. ICDT promotes democratic transition abroad by transferring knowledge and experience from countries that have experienced democratisation.

The main regional focus of ICDT is the Western Balkans and the countries of the Eastern Partnership, though some projects deal with countries and regions further removed from Central Europe, such as Afghanistan or the Maghreb.

ICDT works in three thematic fields: sustainable democratic development, security policy (in this field there is cooperation with [CEID](#)) and regional cooperation. Within the framework regional cooperation, there is significant emphasis on facilitating the exchange of information and experience between on Western Balkan, the GUAM countries (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) and the Visegrad countries.

ICDT promotes these goals by organising conferences, seminars and by conducting research. Recent events focusing on the region include a training seminar on [Preparing Leaders and Experts of the Western Balkans for New Challenges in International Security](#) (Belgrade, November 2010) and a conference on [EU Integration of the Western Balkans and the Hungarian EU Presidency](#) (held in Budapest on 11 November 2010). Relevant publications include a [Report on minorities](#) in South-, Central-, and Eastern Europe.

The founder and head of ICDT is István Gyarmati (kulpolstrat@icdt.hu). Gyarmati is a political scientist by training and has a distinguished career in think tanks working in the field of security and democratisation. He is member of the advisory council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a political advisor to the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), and member of the board of trustees of CEID, a security sector think tank that regularly cooperates with ICDT. Gyarmati previously headed an OSCE election monitoring mission to Moldova (2004) and was vice-president of the EastWest Institute in New York. ICDT staff familiar with the Western Balkans and countries of the Eastern Partnership include, among others, Dániel Bartha (d.bartha@icdt.hu), responsible for projects and project development; Gábor Pálincás (g.palincas@icdt.hu), managing ICDT's Kosovo project, and Katerina Ivanova (k.ivanova@icdt.hu).



István Gyarmati

Contact: *International Centre for Democratic Transition (ICDT)*, Árvácska utca 12., 1022 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 438-0820, Fax: +36 (1) 438-0821, Email: info@icdt.hu, Website: <http://www.icdt.hu>.



► *The Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy (CEID)/Euro-atlanti Integrációért és Demokráciáért Alapítvány (EAID)* is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental and non-partisan institution based in Budapest. CEID was founded in 2001 and “seeks to promote security, stability, democracy and integration in the Euro-Atlantic institutions.” There is a significant overlap in terms of personnel and research interests between CEID and ICDT (see above); both organisations are also located in the same building. One example of a joint

project is the recent ICDT/CEID conference on the “[EU Integration of the Western Balkans and the Hungarian EU Presidency](#)” held in November 2010 in Budapest.

Contact: *Centre for Euro-Atlantic Integration and Democracy*, Árvácska utca 12., 1022 Budapest, Hungary, Tel:+36 (1) 438 08 20, Fax:+36 (1) 438 08 21, Email: info@ceid.hu, d.bartha@ceid.hu, Website: <http://www.ceid.hu/>.



► The *Hungarian Europe Society (HES)/Magyarországi Európa Társaság (MET)* is a non-governmental and non-partisan think tank and advocacy organisation. The Hungarian Europe Society intends to foster a “dialogue on the future of liberal

democracies.” The EU, Hungary’s membership in it, as well as “promoting the idea of a united Europe” are central to the Society’s stated interests. The Hungarian Europe Society promotes these ideas by organising conferences and events, conducting research, networking and facilitating contacts between Hungarian and European think tanks, publishing an online periodical and running information campaigns directed at the Hungarian public.



István Hegedűs

The Hungarian Europe Society’s chairman and founder is István Hegedűs (ihgedus@t-online.hu), a long-time civil society activist. A sociologist by training, Hegedűs was a member of the group of roundtable representatives negotiating Hungary’s democratic transition with the then still socialist government. Between 1990 and 1994 he was a Fidesz deputy in the first democratically elected Hungarian parliament after the fall of communism. (Hegedűs later left Fidesz.) Hegedűs is also a member of [Team Europe](#) of the EC’s [Hungarian Representation Office](#). Team Europe members are independent experts who can provide information and give presentations on various aspects of the EU’s activities and policies.

Contact: *Hungarian European Society*, Gerlóczy utca 11, 1052 Budapest, Hungary, Email: info@europatarsasag.hu, Website: <http://www.europatarsasag.hu>.



► *Political Capital Policy Research & Consulting Institute* (Political Capital, PC) is a private sector company offering advice and risk assessment on political and macroeconomic issues in

Central and South-Eastern Europe as well as in the Middle East. Political Capital’s head office is in Budapest with sub-offices in Sofia (Bulgaria) and Podgorica (Montenegro) (as well as in Dubai).

Political Capital describes itself as neutral in terms of party affiliation, though the Hungarian right generally views it as having been close to the left (MSZP and the now insignificant Liberal Democrats, the SZDSZ). In the Hungarian media Political Capital is often labelled as a think tank, though the term “consultancy” appears more accurate.

Contact: *Political Capital Headquarters*, Fény u. 16, 1024 Budapest, Hungary, Tel/Fax: +36 (1) 242 2913, Email: information@politicalcapital.hu, Website: www.politicalcapital.hu.

EUROPA INSTITUT BUDAPEST

► *Europainstitut Budapest* is a private (non-governmental) research institute dedicated to the “academic exploration of problems related to European Unity”. The Europainstitut was founded in 1990. Research conducted by the institute includes a wide array of topics such as the economic, sociological, linguistic, etc. aspects of integration. Together with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences’ [Research Centre for Social Studies](#) and Institute of



Ferenc Glatz

History, the Europainstitut founded the [Centre for Balkan Studies](#) (see below).

In spite of the Europainstitut's emphasis on EU integration issues, only one recent event was directly linked to the Western Balkans: a 6 July 2010 conference on the Hungarian National Council in the Vojvodina (http://www.europainstitut.hu/?page=hir_100706_1), co-organised with the [Centre for Balkan Studies](#).

The Europainstitut's director is Ferenc Glatz (magdolna@tti.hu, faroeva@tti.hu), a former Minister of Culture (1989–1990), former President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1996–2002) and Director of the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The deputy director of the Europainstitut is Attila Pók (apok@tti.hu). Both are active in the Centre for Balkan Studies (see [below](#)).

Contact: *Europainstitut Budapest*, Rákóczi út 5, 1088 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 381 23 47, 224 67 72 Fax: +36 (1) 381 23 48 Email: info@europainstitut.hu, Website: <http://www.europainstitut.hu>.

1.2. Universities and academic research

Three departments or research platforms focus explicitly on the countries of the Western Balkans, Turkey and the Eastern Partnership: the Centre for Balkan Studies in Budapest, the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan Studies Centre in Pécs (South-West Hungary) and the Department of Ukrainian Philology at the Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. In addition, there are a number of individual academics and researchers who work on issues related to the region at different universities and different faculties.

► **Centre for Balkan Studies / Balkán-tanulmányok Központ** is a joint research and analysis platform created by the Institute of History, the Research Centre for Social Studies (both at the Hungarian Academic of Sciences) and the Europainstitut Budapest (see above). The centre's goals include supporting the Balkans' ties to East Central Europe as well as to the European Union and "to help Hungary and Hungarian researchers and entrepreneurs to take part in this process." The centre sees itself as a "virtual research institute" that offers a platform for researchers and entrepreneurs with interest in the region while also offering advice to "the political sphere regarding Hungary's mediating role (between the Balkans and the EU)."

The Centre for Balkan Studies organises conferences and publishes analyses. In 2010 it organised two larger events on the Hungarian National Council in the Vojvodina (6 July 2010) and on Slovenia, the Western Balkans and the EU (20 May 2010). One of the centre's main programmes monitors developments in the Western Balkans and investigates the region's strategic importance for Hungary.

The president of the Centre for Balkan Studies is Ferenc Glatz (magdolna@tti.hu, faroeva@tti.hu), a historian, former president of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (1996–2002) and director of Europainstitut Budapest. The main research staff – seconded from the founding institutes, the Academy of Sciences and the Europainstitut – include Attila Pók (apok@tti.hu), Andrea G. Antal (antal@mtatk.hu) and Beáta Kiltz (info@europainstitut.hu).



Attila Pók

Contact: *Centre for Balkan Studies*, Pf. 9, 1250 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 224 67 55 (at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) and Tel: +36 (1) 381 23 47 (at the Europainstitut), Email: magdolna@tti.hu, faroeva@tti.hu, Website: www.balkancenter.hu.



► The Institute of Geography in the Faculty of Sciences of the University of Pécs (PTE TTK Földrajzi Intézet) houses the ***Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan Studies Center***. The Centre's focus is on the geography of the region. At present there is one Balkans-related project running at the Centre: "Balkan Studies: Hungary's South-Western corridor" (<http://balkancenter.ttk.pte.hu/index.php?id=89>). The Centre is headed by Dr. Norbert Pap (pnorbert@gamma.ttk.pte.hu).

The Eastern Mediterranean and Balkan Studies Centre also publishes an online journal, the Balkan Brochures (*Balkán Füzetek*, <http://balkancenter.ttk.pte.hu/index.php?id=204>). The editor is Péter Reményi (remko@gamma.ttk.pte.hu). The most recent volume of the series (*Balkán Füzetek*, No. 9, 2010) was dedicated to Albania and contained historical, anthropological, sociological and geographic articles.

The centre also publishes a second online journal, the Mediterranean and Balkan Forum (*Mediterrán és Balkán Fórum*, <http://balkancenter.ttk.pte.hu/index.php?id=194>). The editor of the forum is Zsuzsa Császár (cszsuzsa@gamma.ttk.pte.hu). Both online journals accept articles in Hungarian as well as in English, though the majority of the articles are in Hungarian.

Contact: PTE TTK Földrajzi Intézet, Ifjúság útja 6, 7624 Pécs, Hungary, Tel: +36 (72) 503-600 Fax: +36 (72) 501-531, Email: momesz@gamma.ttk.pte.hu, Website: <http://balkancenter.ttk.pte.hu>.

► ***Department of Ukrainian Philology / Ukrán Filológiai Tanszék*** was established in 2003 and is located at the Faculty of Arts of the Eötvös Lóránd University (<http://www.elte.hu/en>) in Budapest. The history of the department goes back to 1999, when then President of the Ukraine Leonid Kuchma proposed the establishment of an independent department in Hungary focusing on Ukrainian studies. The department has four members including its Head, András Zoltán (zoltand@ludens.elte.hu).

Contact: Ukrán Filológiai Tanszék, ELTE, Múzeum krt. 4/D., 1088 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 411 67 00/5383, Fax: +36 (1) 485 52 10, Email: zoltand@ludens.elte.hu, Website: <http://szlavintezet.elte.hu/ukran/index.shtml>.

2. Political foundations

In 2003 the Hungarian Parliament adopted a law permitting the establishment of foundations by political parties. The foundations are entitled to budgetary funds for their activities. Most parties represented in the parliament have taken advantage of this possibility and established their own foundations – the last to do so was the oppositional LMP (see [below](#)), a green party established in 2009.



► ***Polgári Magyarországért Alapítvány*** (Foundation for a Civic Hungary) is the foundation of the ruling **Fidesz**. It was established in November 2003, just five months after the adoption of the law on political foundations. The foundation defines its goals as the promotion of a patriotic mindset and firm moral values grounded in Christian ethics. It strives to achieve its goals through the provision of public information, the organisation of conferences, research and the provision of grants. The foundation also supports the education of talented youth among Hungarians living outside Hungary.

Contact: Polgári Magyarországért Alapítvány, Lendvay u 28, 1062 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 391-4880, Fax: +36 (1) 391-4889, Email: alapitvany@szpma.hu, Website: <http://szpma.hu/>.

► **Táncsics Alapítvány / Táncsics Foundation** was also established in 2003 and is the political foundation of the MSZP, the Hungarian socialists. The Táncsics Foundations promotes social democracy and social democratic values by disseminating public information and further developing social democratic thought. The foundation also concretely supports the MSZP by participating in the development of the party's programmes.



Contact: *Táncsics Mihály Alapítvány*, Jókai utca 6, 1066 Budapest, Hungary, Tel.: +36 (1) 354-5474, Fax: +36 (1) 354-5479, Email: info@tancsicsalapitvany.hu.

3. Economic interest groups



► **National Association of Entrepreneurs and Employers / Vállalkozók és Munkáltatók Országos Szövetsége, VOSZ** was founded already in 1988, one year before Hungary's democratic transition, as an independent association representing the interests of Hungarian employers and businesses. The association's agenda focuses mostly on domestic economic policy issues such as the reduction of taxes and administrative burdens for small and medium size enterprises or decisive steps against the shadow economy. VOSZ also cautions against an overly rapid adoption of the Euro.

Contact: *VOSZ*, Mázsza tér 2-6, 1107 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 414-2181, 414-2182, Fax: +36 (1) 414-2180 Email: center@vosz.hu, Website: www.vosz.hu.

4. Foreign organisations

► The Budapest office of the **Open Society Institute (OSI)** provides administrative support to OSI's regional offices and houses a number of OSI initiatives, most importantly the Human Rights and Governance Grants Program, the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, the Think Tank Fund, and Roma Initiatives.



The Human Rights and Governance Grants Program (HRGGP) is described as the “principal grantmaking body of the Open Society Institute focusing on human rights, accountability, and rule of law promotion in Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia.” In order to achieve these goals, on the one hand HRGGP directly supports NGOs “that seek to hold governments accountable through first-hand monitoring and documentation, public interest strategic litigation, and domestic and international advocacy.” On the other hand, HRGGP also actively identifies projects, trains and develops the NGOs it has financially supported, and develops contacts with other donor organisations. The Head of HRGGP is Yervand Shirinyan (shirinyan@osi.hu).

The Think Tank Fund supports independent policy centres “that strengthen democratic processes in their countries by identifying and analyzing policy options, monitoring policy processes, consulting with the government and advocating their recommendations. Such policy centres also involve stakeholders outside of government circles in policy debates, and make their findings widely available to the public.” The Think Tank Fund, headed by Goran Buldioski (gbuldioski@osi.hu), focuses on Central and Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus, and the former Soviet Union (excluding Russia and Central Asian Republics).

The Roma Initiatives program “works to increase the ability of Roma to participate in public life, advocate for systemic change in policies affecting Roma.” Roma Initiatives also supports a monitoring project (Decade Watch) in which Roma activists hold governments participating in the “Decade of Roma Inclusion” accountable for implementing policies to end discrimination and the

marginalization of the Roma. The Decade of Roma Inclusion (www.romadecade.org/home) is a commitment by twelve European governments to improve the social and economic status of the Roma. Lastly, Roma Initiatives also provides project and institutional support grants to Roma civic organisations. Roma Initiatives is headed by Bernard Rorke (brorke@osi.hu).

OSI Budapest is located in the building of the Central European University, also founded by George Soros.

Contact: *Open Society Institute – Budapest*, Október 6 út. 12, 1051 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 (1) 882-3100, Fax: +36 (1) 882-3101, Website: <http://www.soros.org/about/locations/budapest>.



► **Center for European Enlargement Studies (CENS)** is an academic research centre located at the Central European University in Budapest. According to its mission statement, it “is dedicated to making recent and upcoming enlargements work by contributing to the debate on the future of the EU and by exploring

the results and lessons of previous EU enlargements.” CENS conducts research and publishes its findings, organises conferences and disseminates its findings through public lectures. Its ongoing projects include:

- [Climate Frontiers – National climate policies and EU climate action in Central and Eastern Europe](#),
- [Mapping out Possibilities of V4 Countries in Strengthening the Civil Society Sectors of Serbia and Georgia](#)
- [Preparing for the EU Council Presidencies of the Visegrad Countries](#)

The director of CENS is Péter Balázs (cens@ceu.hu). Balázs was a State Secretary for Industry and Trade (1992-1993) and a State Secretary for European Integration (2002-2003). He was Ambassador of Hungary in Denmark, Germany and at the EU in Brussels and was Foreign Minister of Hungary from 2009 to 2010. Balázs heads CENS since its establishment in 2005.



Péter Balázs

Contact: *Center for European Enlargement Studies*, Nádor u. 9, 1051 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +36 1 327-3000, Fax: +36 1 328-3444, Email: cens@ceu.hu, Website: <http://cens.ceu.hu>.

5. Diplomatic missions

5.1. Embassies of the Western Balkan countries and Turkey

Embassy of Albania, Ambassador Florian Nova

Andrássy út 132; 2/3, Budapest 1062, Hungary, T +36 (1) 336-1098, E embassy.budapest@mfa.gov.al

Embassy of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Nikola Dukic

Verségly Ferenc utca 4., 1026 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 212-0106, 212-0107, F +36 (1) 212-0109, E bihambud@yahoo.com

Embassy of the Republic of Croatia, Ambassador Ivan Bandic

Munkácsy Mihály utca 15, 1063 Budapest, Hungary, T + 36 (1) 354 1315, F + 36 (1) 354 1319, E croemb.bp@mvpei.hr

Embassy of Kosovo, Ambassador Shkendije Geci Sherifi,

Szabadság tér 7., 1054 Budapest, Hungary, T + 36 (1) 688-7872, F +36 (1) 688-7875, E embassy.hungary@ks-gov.net

Embassy of the Republic of Macedonia, Ambassador Darko Angelov

Balgvár utca 9., 1022 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 336-0510, 336-0511, 315-1921, F +36 (1) 315-1921, E budapest@mfa.gov.mk

Embassy of Montenegro, Ambassador Dr. Vanja Brailo

Arany Janos u. 15/I., 1051 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 373-0300, 373-0301, F +36 (1) 269-4775, E ambasada@cg.t-online.hu

Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, Ambassador Dejan Sahovic

Dózsa György út 92/b, 1068 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 322-9838, 342-8512, 322-1436, 322-1437, 342-0566, F +36 (1) 322-1438, 352-8846, E budapest@amb.srbije.net, W budapest.mfa.gov.yu

Embassy of Turkey, Ambassador Hasan Kemal Gür

Andrássy út 123., 1062 Budapest, Hungary, T + 36 (1) 344-5025, 344-5026, 344-5027, 344-5028, 344-5029, F +36 (1) 344-5143, E turkemb.budapest@mfa.gov.tr, W www.budapest.be.mfa.gov.tr

*5.2. Embassies of the Countries of Eastern Central-Europe and the Caucasus***Embassy of Armenia**, Ambassador Dr. Ashot Hovakimian

Hadikgasse 28., 1140 Vienna, Austria, T +36 (1) 522-7479, F +36 (1) 522-7481, E armenia@armembassy.at

Embassy of Azerbaijan, Ambassador Vilayat Guliyev

Eötvös utca 14., 1067 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 374-6070, 374-6071, F +36 (1) 302-3535, E budapest@azembassy.hu, W www.azembassy.hu

Embassy of Belarus, Ambassador Alena Kupchyna

Agárdi út 3/b., 1126 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 214-0553, F +36 (1) 214-0554, E hungary@belembassy.org, W <http://www.hungary.belembassy.org/>

Embassy of Georgia, Ambassador Zviad Chumburidze

Virányos út 6/B., 1125 Budapest, Hungary, T+36 (1) 202-3390, F +36 (1) 214-3299, E budapest.emb@mfa.gov.ge, W www.hungary.mfa.gov.ge

Embassy of Moldova, Ambassador Alexandru Codreanu

Ady Endre utca 16, 1024 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 336-3450, F +36 (1) 209-1195, E budapesta@mfa.md, W <http://www.moldovaembassy.hu/>

Embassy of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Alexander Tolkach

1062 Budapest, Bajza u. 35. T +36 (1) 332-47-48, 302-5230, 269-0823, 269-0152, F +36 (1) 353-4164, E rusemb@euroweb.hu, W <http://www.hungary.mid.ru/>

Embassy of Ukraine, Ambassador Yurii Mushka

Istenhegyi út 84/B, 1125 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 422-4120, F +36 (1) 220-9873, E emb_hu@mfa.gov.ua; uakovetseg@t-online.hu, W <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/hungary/>

*5.3. Embassies of the countries holding the current and upcoming EU presidencies**Polish Presidency (July-December 2011):***Embassy of Poland**, Head of Mission: N/A

Városligeti fasor 16., 1068 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 413-8200, F +36 (1) 351-1722, E budapest.amb.sekretariat@msz.gov.pl, W <http://www.lengyelorszag.hu/>

Danish Presidency (January-June 2012):

Embassy of Denmark, Ambassador Mads Sandau-Jensen

Határőr út 37., 1122 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 487-90-00, F +36 (1) 487-90-45,
E budamb@um.dk, W <http://www.ambbudapest.um.dk/da>

Cypriot (July-December 2012):

Embassy of Cyprus, Ambassador Vassos Chamberlen

Dorottya u. 3. III. 2-3., 1051 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 266-1330, 266-6045, F +36 (1) 266-0538, E cypembhu@axelero.hu

Irish Presidency (January-June 2013):

Embassy of Ireland, Ambassador John Deady

Szabadság tér 7. - Bank Center Granite Tower, 7th floor, 1054 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 301-4960, F +36 (1) 302-9599, E budapestembassy@dfa.ie, W <http://www.embassyofireland.hu/>

Lithuanian Presidency (July-December 2013)

Embassy of Lithuania, Ambassador Renatas Juska

Hóvirág út 44., 1121 Budapest, Hungary, T +36 (1) 224-79-10, F +36 (1) 202-39-95,
E amb.hu@urm.lt, W <http://hu.mfa.lt>

6. Books on Hungary

There is no abundance of international publications on Hungary in general and on Hungarian history and politics in particular.

Two relatively recent publications offer an overview over Hungarian history. One is by Paul Lendvai, a Vienna-based journalist and writer of Hungarian origin; the other by Bryan Cartledge, a former British diplomat and academic.

- Paul Lendvai, *The Hungarians: A Thousand Years of Victory in Defeat*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2003.
- Bryan Cartledge, *The Will to Survive. A History of Hungary*, London: Timewell Press Ltd, 2006.

Another book by Brian Cartledge recounts the events and circumstances that led to the signing of the Treaty of Trianon, a defining moment in the country's modern history. The treaty was a peace agreement signed at the end of World War I in 1920 between the victorious Allies and Hungary. It dramatically altered Hungary's pre-war borders, with the country losing 72% of its territory. Its legacy is still very much alive in the Hungarian psyche and resurfaces again and again in the political debate in Hungary (and in the political debates of neighbouring states).

- Bryan Cartledge, *Mihály Károlyi and István Bethlen – Hungary, Makers of the Modern World Series*, London: Haus Publishing, 2010.

Ignác Romsics is a professor of history at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest and member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. His book provides an in-depth account of the transition years in Hungary, the demise of communism and the establishment of multi-party democracy:

- Ignác Romsics, *From Dictatorship to Democracy: The Birth of the Third Hungarian Republic, 1988-2001*, East European Monograph, New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

Andreas Oplatka, a Zürich-based journalist of Hungarian origin, gives a readable and exciting account of the decision to open Hungary's borders and to allow hundreds of East Germans citizens to enter Austria. The opening of the borders was a crucial event, paving the way for the collapse of socialist bloc and the peaceful revolutions of 1989:

- Andreas Oplatka, *Der erste Riss in der Mauer. September 1989 – Ungarn öffnet die Grenze*, Wien: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 2009.

Aside from Hungarian language publications, the only sources on contemporary Hungarian politics are academic articles. Here is a brief (non-comprehensive) selection of some recent publications in English and German:

- Maximilian Spinner, *The National Question in Contemporary Hungarian Politics*, München und Ravensburg: Grin Verlag, 2007 (2002).
- Greskovits, B., "The First Shall Be the Last? Hungary's Road to EMU", in: Dyson, K. (Ed), *Enlarging the Euro area: external empowerment and domestic transformation in East Central Europe*, p. 178-196, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Emilia Palonen, "Political Polarisation and Populism in Contemporary Hungary", in: *Parliamentary Affairs*, Vol.62, No.2, p. 318-334, 2009.
- In 2006-2007 Eurozine published an interesting debate between Thomas von Ahn, a researcher at the Centre for Hungarian Studies in the Finno-Ugric/Uralic Institute at the University of Hamburg and György Schöpflin, a Fidesz-EPP MEP, on populism in Hungary. Thomas von Ahn represents a highly critical view of Fidesz and accuses the party of populism, while Schöpflin defends Fidesz' positions.
 - Thomas von Ahn, Demokratie oder Straße? Fragile Stabilität in Ungarn, *Eurozine*, 2006, <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2006-11-21-vonahn-de.html>.
 - George Schöpflin, Democracy, Populism and the Political Crisis in Hungary, A reply to Thomas von Ahn, *Eurozine*, 2007, <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2007-05-07-schopflin-en.html>.
 - Thomas von Ahn, On the aims of discourse, A response to György Schöpflin, *Eurozine*, 2007, <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2007-06-12-vonahn-en.html>.

C. POLITICS

Hungary's political system closely resembles the German model, with a strong prime minister (similar to the German Chancellor) and a mostly symbolic presidency.

1. The President

The President of Hungary is elected by the parliament for a five-year term. The rights and duties of the president include proposing the prime minister-designate to a vote in parliament, as well as appointing the cabinet, based on the prime minister's nomination. The president also plays a crucial role in the legislative process. All acts adopted by the parliament require his signature; the president can sign them into law, send them back for further debate, or refer them to the constitutional court (if considered to contradict the tenets of the constitution).

The current president of Hungary, Pál Schmitt, entered office on 6 August 2010. He is a former member of the Olympic epee fencing team (in 1968 and 1972) and a two time world champion (1970 and 1971). In the 1990s Schmitt was Ambassador to Spain (1993-1997) and to Switzerland (1999-2002). Supported by Fidesz and the MDF, Magyar Demokrata Fórum (the Hungarian Democratic Forum, one of the main parties of the 1989 transition), Schmitt ran for mayor of Budapest but lost out to the incumbent. Schmitt joined Fidesz in 2003 and was elected the same year as one of the party's vice-presidents. In 2004 and again in 2009 Schmitt won a seat in the European Parliament. Unlike his predecessor, László Sólyom, who clearly interpreted his office as being above party politics and tried to maintain a neutral stance, Schmitt has shown himself as a rather more partisan president, representing the interests of his party.



Pál Schmitt

Contact: President of the Republic of Hungary, Sándor-palota, Szent György tér 1, 1014 Budapest, 1536 Budapest, Hungary, Tel: +38 (1) 224 5000, Email: ugyfelkapu@keh.hu, Website: <http://www.keh.hu>

2. The Prime Minister



Viktor Orbán

The head of the executive in Hungary is the Prime Minister, elected by the parliament upon a formal proposal by the President of the Republic of Hungary. The office of prime minister in Hungary is powerful. Constitutional and administrative changes since 1989 generally tended to further strengthen the post, e.g. by eliminating the possibility of a no-confidence vote for individual ministers and strengthening the cabinet in relation to the administration.

The prime minister proposes the nomination and dismissal of ministers (the actual nomination and dismissal by the president is a mere formality). The prime minister can only be dismissed by a constructive vote of no confidence by two-thirds of the parliament. György Schöpflin and other mostly conservative observers and political scientists see this feature of the Hungarian system as resulting in the prime minister's lack of accountability towards the electorate (<http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2007-05-07-schopflin-en.html>). These opinions were voiced following the so-called "lying speech" of Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, in which Gyurcsány admitted having systematically lied about the state of the economy in the course of the 2006 election campaign. Gyurcsány's speech was leaked to the media in October 2006, triggering violent protests and leading to a long-term decline in popularity of the then ruling socialist party, MSZP. The opposition saw Gyurcsány's statements as constituting a breach of trust so large that it should warrant impeachment. However, widespread popular dissatisfaction and the efforts of the opposition to call for new elections or force Gyurcsány to resign proved to be in vain.

This debate is highly relevant at present. The new Fidesz government announced its intention to change the constitution. Reducing the very high threshold required to remove a prime minister is one of the issues under examination. It remains to be seen whether the party will follow through on its promise.

The current incumbent prime minister, Viktor Orbán, from the centre-right Fidesz, is Hungary's 8th post-transition prime minister. Orbán was elected prime minister on 29 May 2010, his party having secured 52.73% of the popular vote and a two-thirds majority in parliament (263 seats out of a total of 386).

Orbán's political career began in the turbulent years of the late 1980s with the foundation of the opposition youth movement Fidesz (Alliance of Young Democrats) in 1988. Early on, Fidesz transformed itself into a political party and Orbán entered Hungary's first elected parliament of the post-communist era in 1990. From 1998 to 2002 Orbán was prime minister, heading a coalition government formed by Fidesz and the Independent Smallholders Party. (The Smallholders Party has since all but ceased to exist; in the 2010 elections it gained no more than 0.003% of the vote.) Fidesz narrowly lost the 2002 elections to the socialist MSZP and went into opposition for the coming eight years.

Orbán is a very strong leader who manages his party without any significant internal opposition. He is so strongly associated with Fidesz and his personality is so dominant that he managed to remain party leader and prime ministerial candidate even after two electoral defeats, in 2002 and 2006. Orbán polarises opinions. In conservative circles he is viewed as a politician of extraordinary ability and high moral standing. The Hungarian left and – often – the international media see in him an irresponsible national populist and an autocrat.

Recently fears are being voiced that Orbán could use his party's two-thirds majority to undermine democratic institutions and establish autocratic rule. Not surprisingly, the most radical warnings come from the opposition MSZP. A commentary by economist Tamás Bauer in the *Népszabadság*, a daily close to the MSZP, accused Fidesz of systematically undermining democratic checks and balances, likening Hungary under Orbán to a one-party state. In a September 2010 speech, Attila Mesterházy, the President of the MSZP, accused Orbán of an "attack against democracy", citing the new [draft media law](#), the alleged attempt by Fidesz to use democratic institutions as weapons against the opposition, and Fidesz' appointment of loyal "party soldiers" to important government positions.

Recently, even more neutral observers have expressed fears that measures by Fidesz are degrading the quality of democracy in Hungary and limit democratic competition. In June 2010 the opposition LMP launched a "9 days for democracy" campaign accusing Fidesz of erecting administrative hurdles that make it more difficult for small parties to compete in local elections. The British *Guardian* joined the ranks of Fidesz' critics in late November 2010, stating that it was conceivable "that before too long Hungary will look more like Russia's 'guided democracy' than like any pluralist western democracy with its checks and balances." The article then asked: "Might it not be time then for Brussels and for other EU members to make some noise about the profoundly illiberal direction Hungary is taking?" (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/nov/23/hungary-europe-democracy-rule-of-law>)

Orbán rarely gives statements on Hungary's position on the EU integration of the Western Balkans, Turkey and the countries of the Eastern Partnership. This is the prerogative of Foreign Minister János Martonyi. However, during his visit to Belgrade on 26 November 2010 Orbán expressed support for Croatia's and Serbia's EU integration, stating that Hungary "will do everything in its power to conclude Croatia's access negotiations and to keep the way of EU integration open to Serbia." He added that Serbia and Hungary "share a joint future, irrespective of the fact that Serbia is not an EU member."

The prime minister's office is headed by State Secretary **Mihály Varga** (mihaly.varga@parlament.hu), himself a founding member of Fidesz and a close confidant of Orbán. Varga is also one of the vice presidents of Fidesz.

The Press and Administrative Office of the Prime Minister is headed by **Péter Szijjártó** (peter.szijjarto@parlament.hu). The International Secretariat of the Prime Minister forms part of the Press and Administrative Office and is headed by **Zsuzsanna Rahói**.

Contact: *Közigazgatási és Igazságügyi Minisztérium*, Kossuth Lajos tér 4., 1055 Budapest, Hungary, Tel.: +36 (1) 795-1000 Fax: +36 (1) 795-0002; you can also write to the Prime Minister: Orbán Viktor, 1357 Budapest, Pf. 6., Email: orbanviktor@orbanviktor.hu, Website: http://www.miniszterelnok.hu/in_english_news.

3. Government

The current centre-right government was elected in April 2010 (the two rounds of the elections took place on 11 and 25 April 2010).

3.1. Ministers



Sándor Fazekas
Ministry of Rural
Development



Tamás Fellegi
Ministry of National
Development



Csaba Hende
Ministry of Defence



János Martonyi
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



György Matolcsy
Ministry of National
Economy



Tibor Navracsics
Ministry of Public
Administration and Justice



Sándor Pintér
Ministry of Internal Affairs



Mikós Réthelyi
Ministry of National
Resources



Zsolt Semjén
Minister without portfolio/
Office of the Prime Minister

Find below a list of all ministries with respective contact details (except for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which will be treated separately in a subsequent section):

Ministry of Rural Development

Minister Sándor Fazekas
Kossuth Lajos tér 11.
1055 Budapest
Telefon: 06-1-301-4000
Fax: 06-1-302-0408
Email: info@vm.gov.hu
Website: <http://www.vm.gov.hu/>

Ministry of National Development

Minister Tamás Fellegi
Akadémia utca 3.
1054 Budapest
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3.2. The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs

Foreign Minister János Martonyi is a lawyer by profession. In addition to his education in Hungary, he also studied international trade law in the City of London College in the UK (1968) and international public and private law at the Academy of International Law in The Hague (1970). (In the heyday of communism in the 1960s and 1970s such possibilities to study in the West were rare, but not unheard of.) Until 1979 Martonyi worked at the MASPED-MAFRACHT, a Hungarian logistics and freight-forwarding company.



János Martonyi

Martonyi's political-diplomatic career began in 1979 when he became Secretary of Commerce at the Hungarian Trade Council in Brussels. From 1984 until 1989 Martonyi worked for the Ministry of Foreign Trade in mid-managerial positions. In the first five years of the transition Martonyi worked as state secretary in the Ministry of International Economic Relations and later at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Under the socialist Horn-Government (1994-1998) Martonyi left the ministry and worked as a lawyer and member of the board of Baker & McKenzie, an international law firm.

From 1998 and 2002 Martonyi was Foreign Minister in the first Fidesz Government. Martonyi's term in office coincided with Hungary's EU accession negotiations. Following Fidesz' the electoral defeat, Martonyi moved back to the private sector, working as a partner in Martonyi es Kajtar Baker and McKenzie Attorneys at Law. In 2003 he joined Fidesz. He was appointed as foreign minister again in May 2010 in the second Orbán Government.

Martonyi is generally highly regarded – he is probably one of the few Fidesz politicians who enjoy respect on both the right and left side of the Hungarian political spectrum. He is known as a professional diplomat and a principled supporter of the European project and Euro-Atlantic integration, with connections in European capitals and Washington. In 2007 a newspaper article by Péter Kende accused Martonyi of having been an informer for the Hungarian secret service between 1970 and the mid-1980s. Martonyi initiated civil proceedings against the journalist. In June 2008 a court ruled in favour of Martonyi, stating that the allegations implying that he was an agent could not be proven.



Martonyi and Bagis in Budapest (source: Magyar Hírlap)

In recent statements (October 2010), Martonyi gave explicit support to the EU integration of the Western Balkans – specifically, to Croatia’s EU integration and the opening of negotiations with Serbia. During a recent visit of Egemen Bagis, the Turkish Minister for EU Affairs, Martonyi reiterated Hungary’s support for Turkey’s EU integration.

Martonyi speaks fluent French, German and English.

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Within the Foreign Ministry **Enikő Győri** is the State Secretary Responsible for EU Affairs. Győri studied International Relations and participated in a course on EU integration for public servants organised by the École National d’Administration (ENA). Throughout her career she concentrated on EU affairs. Between 1992 and 1999 she was adviser on EU affairs of the Hungarian National Assembly. From 1999 until 2003, during the term of the first Fidesz government, she was the Hungarian Ambassador to Italy. Győri is backed up by Bálint Ódor, Deputy State Secretary for EU Affairs.



Enikő Győri

Responsibility for the Western Balkans and the countries of the Eastern Partnership lies with Deputy State Secretary, **Péter Sztáray**, a career diplomat. Key stages of his career include work at the Atlantic Liaison Office of Hungary in Brussels (1996-2000) and at the Hungarian representation to NATO. Between 2000 and 2002 Sztáray worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Budapest until returning to Hungary’s permanent representation to NATO (2003-2007). From 2007 onwards Sztáray occupied senior posts in the Department of Security Policy and Non-Proliferation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Budapest. In 2010 he was appointed Deputy State Secretary Responsible for Security Policy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Péter Sztáray

An entire Department (*osztály*) is dedicated to the Western Balkans, showing the region’s importance for Hungary. The Western Balkans Department includes Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo and Turkey. Interestingly, Croatia is part of the Central Europe Department and not of the Western Balkans Department. The Western Balkans Department is headed by **János Huszár**. Huszár worked at the Hungarian Embassy in Belgrade (1995-1999), served as Consul in Subotica/Szabadka (2001-2005), a multi-ethnic town in Northern Serbia with a sizeable Hungarian population, and as Ambassador in Slovenia (2006-2010).

To coordinate Hungary’s work in COWEB (the EC’s Working Party on the Western Balkans Region) and COELA (Working Party on Enlargement and Countries Negotiating Accession to the Union), the Western Balkans Department cooperates with three further bodies within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: the Joint Foreign and Security Policy Department (*Közös Kül- és Biztonságpolitikai Forosztály*), the Joint Foreign and Security Policy Office of Hungary’s Permanent Representation to the EU, as well as the office of the State Secretary Responsible for EU Affairs.

The countries of the Eastern Partnership are covered by the Eastern Europe and Central Asia Department. The department itself is subdivided into two sections: Eastern Europe, and Russia and Southern CIS.

The change from the leftist-liberal MSZP/SZDSZ coalition to the centre-right Fidesz government has led to profound changes in Hungary’s internal politics. In contrast, Hungary’s foreign policy is characterised mostly by continuity.

Hungary supports the integration of the Western Balkans into the EU and NATO in line with a merit-based approach. Hungary sees its role in the region as assisting these countries through

capacity-building and knowledge transfer. Hungary also favours full membership for Turkey (providing it meets the criteria).

3.3. *The Hungarian EU Presidency (2011)*

The government has set up a special [EU presidency website](#) providing information in Hungarian, English, French and German. The [priorities of the presidency](#) are also available on the website. It consists of four pillars:

Growth and employment for preserving the European Social Model; under this heading Hungary intends to focus on the implementation of the [Europe 2020 Strategy](#), paying particular attention to job creation and the development of sustainable competitiveness; on supporting small and medium enterprises; on family policy; child poverty; and the integration of Roma.

A stronger Europe; key issues under this heading include a review of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), discussions on a common energy policy and a debate on preserving water resources. The programme also foresees the adoption of the European Danube Region Strategy.

A citizen-friendly Union is the third focus area of the Hungarian Presidency. Key activities in this field include support for the enlargement of the Schengen area to Romania and Bulgaria, as well as the implementation of the [Stockholm Programme](#). The Stockholm Programme provides a “framework for EU police and customs cooperation, rescue services, criminal and civil law cooperation, asylum, migration and visa policy for the period 2010–2014.” The programme was developed and adopted during the Swedish EU Presidency (July–December 2009). During its presidency Hungary also intends to draw attention to “cultural diversity as a European value”.

The fourth focus area of the Hungarian Presidency is dedicated to **enlargement and neighbourhood policy**. Concrete objectives in this field include concluding accession negotiations with Croatia and providing a European perspective for the Western Balkans. Hungary also intends to concentrate on the “Eastern dimension of the neighbourhood policy”. It will host the second Eastern Partnership Summit in May 2011.

4. Parliament and the main parties

Hungary has a unicameral parliamentary system. Out of the 386 members of parliament, 176 representatives are elected in single-member electoral districts. The remaining 210 representatives are elected from 20 territorial party lists (sending a maximum of 152 representatives to Parliament) and from national party lists (sending a minimum of 58 representatives to Parliament). Each territorial list corresponds to one of the 19 Hungarian counties plus the capital, Budapest. The number of representatives each county (plus Budapest) sends to Parliament is proportional to its population. The contingent of seats reserved for each county is distributed according to the number of votes for local party lists. The 58 seats of the national party lists are decided by so-called fragment votes (*töredék szavazatok*) – votes that have been cast for a party in the first round of the election, but have not resulted in a parliamentary seat.

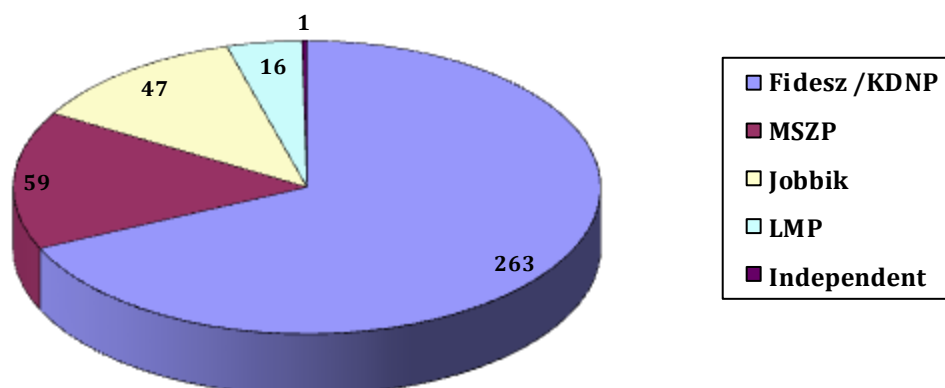


The election takes place over two rounds; a second round takes place in districts where a candidate failed to win an outright majority (over 50% of votes) or where participation was below 50%. The Hungarian electoral system is often described as one of the most complicated in the world (a fact also noted on the Hungarian parliament’s website).

4.1. Current composition in the Parliament

The current distribution of seats in the Parliament:

Distribution of Seats in the Hungarian Parliament



Source: “A Magyar Köztársaság Országgyűlése” (The National Assembly of the Hungarian Republic) on the Parliament’s Website: http://www.parlament.hu/cgi-bin/insurl?pairhelp/ogy_magyar.htm.

The two-thirds majority that the Fidesz-KDNP coalition enjoys in parliament (263 out of 386 seats) gives it the power to change the constitution. Soon after coming to power, the government announced plans to review the constitution and appointed a commission to prepare a proposal for drafting a new text. In the meantime, Fidesz has tabled a number of parliamentary proposals to change the constitution.

Most recently, parliament approved a bill to reduce the jurisdiction of the constitutional court by removing its jurisdiction over those issues that cannot be decided by referendum (see below). The bill was submitted after the constitutional court rejected a Fidesz-backed law allowing for the retroactive taxation (at 98%) of severance payments. The bill’s goal was to recover severance payments that members and supporters of the outgoing MSZP-SZDSZ government were alleged to have negotiated for themselves prior to the April 2010 elections, which they were set to lose. As questions of taxation and the government budget are exempt from being put to a referendum, the bill – by removing these issues from the jurisdiction of the constitutional court – paved the way for the retro-active tax.

The tax law enjoyed wide popular support. However, the government’s decision to curtail the competence of the constitutional court in reaction to the court’s rejection of the bill triggered the first (and so far only) wave of conservative criticism against the Fidesz government.

4.2. Fidesz



Fidesz was founded in 1988 by a group of 37 students from the Bibo István Szakkollégium (István Bibó College). At the time, Fidesz was a liberal, radical democratic youth movement, in which membership was limited to those under 35 years of age (this was changed in 1993). Even its name, *Fiatalkorú Demokraták Szövetsége* (Alliance of Young Democrats) emphasised the party’s youthful character. Fidesz participated in the oppositional roundtable (*ellenzéki kerekasztal*) that negotiated the transition to democracy with the communist government in 1989. It entered parliament in the first free elections in 1990. In 1992 Fidesz was admitted to the Liberal International.

However, in 1993 Fidesz shifted its position from liberal, radical-democratic to centre-right, and conservative (prompting some 200 members to leave the party). A name change in 1995 to *Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Párt* (Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Party) underlined the shift. In the 1998 elections Fidesz achieved spectacular success. A small opposition party that had gained 8.95% and 7.02% of votes (in the 1st round) in the first two free elections, it now secured 38.8% of the vote (in the 2nd round), enabling it to build a coalition government with the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) and the Independent Small-Holders Party (*Független Magyar Kisgazda Párt*). (Note that the Hungarian electoral system discourages voting for parties or candidates who stand no chance of winning in an electoral district in the 2nd round. Accordingly, Fidesz' result in the 2nd round of 1990 and 1994 elections was merely 1.85% and 0.69% respectively; its result in the 1st round of the 1998 elections was 28.18%). Viktor Orbán became the new prime minister. In 2000 Fidesz left the Liberal International and joined the European People's Party, thus consolidating the party's shift from liberalism to conservatism.



The early days (1989)

In spite of the country's solid economic record, Fidesz narrowly lost the 2002 elections with 49.97% of the vote (in the 2nd round) to a coalition of the socialist MSZP and the liberal SZDSZ (Fidesz' liberal "elder brother" in the years of the transition in the late 1980s). The election campaign on both sides (left and right) had been brutal and greatly divisive. It marked the onset of a highly polarised political scene that has characterised Hungary ever since. For eight years Fidesz moved into opposition. Shortly after the lost elections, in 2003, Fidesz once again changed its name – to Fidesz Civic Union (*Fidesz Polgári Szövetség*). The name change consolidated Fidesz' status as the main centre-right party. Simultaneous changes in the party's constitution further centralised its leadership structure.

Fidesz once again narrowly lost the 2006 elections to the MSZP/SZDSZ coalition.

For several years after the transition from communism to democracy, Fidesz' leadership continued to be dominated by a small group of former student activists who founded the party. In recent years, however, the structure has changed; newcomers appear to have been admitted into the inner circle, while many founding members now hold lower ranking posts or have left the party. Founding members who still hold important positions include Orbán, László Kövér, the current Speaker of the National Assembly, and Mihály Varga, the Head of the Prime Minister's Office. Prominent members of the party (who are not among the founders) include Tibor Navracsics, the Minister of Public Administration and Justice, János Martonyi, the Foreign Minister, and Lajos Kósa, the popular mayor of the Eastern Hungarian town of Debrecen.

Fidesz laid down its foreign policy goals in a 2008 strategy paper, "[Consistent Foreign Relations: Hungary's Strategy of Foreign Relations](#)" (the document is only available in Hungarian on the internet). In its positions and statements Fidesz supports the EU accession of Western Balkan countries and the (eventual) full membership of Turkey.

While in opposition Fidesz established a system of specialised cabinets for coordinating the party's work in parliamentary commissions. The foreign policy cabinet was headed by Zsolt Németh (Nemeth.Zsolt@mkogy.hu), himself a founding member of Fidesz and now Parliamentary State Secretary in the Ministry Foreign Affairs. (A parliamentary state secretary ensures coordination and communication between the respective ministry and the parliamentary factions.)



Zsolt Németh

Fidesz has been often criticised for being populist, overly nationalist and, until recently, for not distancing itself clearly from the xenophobic, anti-Semitic and anti-Roma positions of the far-right (Jobbik, MIÉP).

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Since 2006 Fidesz cooperates in an electoral alliance with the *Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt, KDNP* (Christian Democratic People's Party). KDNP now has 36 representatives in the parliament. Its president, Zsolt Semjén, is a minister without portfolio in the current Orbán government and one of two Deputy Prime Ministers (the other is Tibor Navracsics, Minister of Public Administration and Justice).

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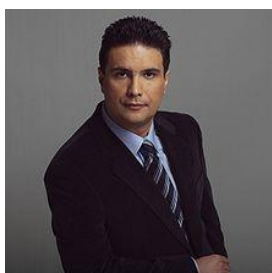
4.3. MSZP

Magyar Szocialista Párt, MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party) is the successor of the communist-era Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party). The party changed its name and embraced parliamentary democracy in 1989 and joined the ranks of the European Socialist Party. Since 1990 it was in government three times, from 1994-1998 and from 2002-2010. The MSZP is widely blamed for ruining the Hungarian economy and for widespread corruption. The tipping point in its fortunes came in the autumn of 2006, when a speech by then-Prime Minister Ferenc



Gyurcsány was leaked to the press: at a closed party meeting Gyurcsány admitted to have systematically lied about the state of the economy in order to win the 2006 elections.

The speech was obviously intended to garner the support of the MSZP party leadership for far-reaching austerity measures. Its publication led to protests and widespread popular anger against the MSZP-SZDSZ government. Despite calls by the opposition for early elections, the MSZP-SZDSZ government managed to remain in power until the end of its term in 2010. Its popularity ratings plummeted, however, and have not recovered since. The MSZP's predicament was worsened by a number of high-profile corruption cases which came to light in late 2009 and early 2010. In the 2010 elections MSZP gained merely 19.3% in the first and 28.32% in the second round of the elections (compared to 43.21% and 46.63% of the first and second rounds of the 2006 elections). MSZP now holds only 15.28% of seats in parliament, putting it just ahead of the far-right Jobbik with 12.18% of seats.



Attila Mesterházy

Concerning the Western Balkans, there are no fundamental differences between the MSZP and Fidesz: both parties support a merit-based approach and the eventual accession of the countries of the Western Balkans into the EU.

The MSZP is still reeling from its massive defeat and trying to re-define its position. There are continuing rumours about a possible break-up of the party.

Since July 2010 the president of MSZP is Attila Mesterházy. The 36-year-old Mesterházy studied international relations and was the party's prime ministerial candidate in the April 2010 elections.

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4.4. Jobbik



Jobbik (pronounced “yobbick”) is a radical rightist party that emerged from the radical rightwing student association *Jobboldali Ifjúsági Közösség* (Radical Rightwing Student Community). The party’s name is a play on words: “jobbik” can mean both “the better one” but also “the one further to the right” (*jobb=right*, but also *better*). The student association transformed itself into a political party in 2003, renaming itself as *Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom* (The Movement for a Better Hungary).



Gábor Vona

The failure of the far-right and national conservative MIÉP (*Magyar Élet és Igazság Párt – Hungarian Life and Truth Party*) in the 2002 elections – it won only 4.37% and failed to enter parliament – opened up political space for a new party on the far-right. Jobbik filled this gap. In the first round of the 2006 elections a Jobbik-MIÉP electoral alliance gained only 2.2% of the vote and did not enter parliament. However, in the 2010 parliamentary elections Jobbik achieved spectacular success, winning 16.67% of votes in the first and 12.26% in the second round, granting the party 47 seats in parliament (12.18%), and making it the third-largest in parliament. The party’s president and leader of the parliamentary faction is Gábor Vona. Vona was also the president of Magyar Gárda until the organisation was banned in 2009 (for more on Magyar Gárda see below).

Jobbik defines itself in its founding declaration from February 2006 (http://jobbik.hu/rovatok/egyeb/alapito_nyilatkozat) as a values-based, conservative, national-Christian party which is radical regarding the choice of its methods. In the early 2000s Jobbik tended to oppose Hungary’s EU accession and can thus be viewed as a euro-sceptic. A further key feature of



The Hungarian Guard (*Magyar Gárda*)

Jobbik’s programme is to “finalise the [post-communist] transition and to establish a society that is more just than the current one.” From the perspective of Jobbik, the transition to “real” democracy in Hungary has yet to take place. Instead, the party claims, a narrow communist-led elite has maintained control under the new system: MSZP and, to a lesser degree, Fidesz, are all part of this corrupt establishment. In its rhetoric and political stances the party frequently refers to issues like “gypsy crime” (*cigánybűnözés*) and exploitation by multi-national corporations. Jobbik is openly irredentist, refusing to exclude the possibility of modifying Hungary’s current borders.

Even though Jobbik tends to deny it, the party is anti-Semitic and anti-Roma. In 2007 Jobbik supported the establishment of a paramilitary organisation, the Magyar Gárda (Hungarian Guard). The paramilitary organisation and attire of the Gárda has received widespread negative coverage in and outside Hungary as it conjures up memories of World War II Hungarian fascists (e.g.

[Bloomberg](#) or [The Economist](#)). In 2009 Magyar Gárda was dissolved by a court ruling. In spite of the ban on the movement, the links between Jobbik and Magyar Gárda continue to be close.

The party does not principally oppose the EU accession of the Western Balkan countries, but attempts to link Serbia's accession to autonomy status for Vojvodina or, at the very least, for the local Hungarian minority. Jobbik also supports Kosovo's independence and sees in it a possible model for solving the "Hungarian issue". Jobbik's position regarding Turkey and its accession is not entirely clear. Some representatives of Jobbik reject Turkey's EU membership, while others view Turkey with a lot of sympathy and emphasise its joint (ethnic) roots with Hungary.

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4.5. LMP



András Schiffer

Lehet más a politika (literally: Politics can be different) is the Hungarian equivalent of a green party. The party describes itself as supporting ecological and radical democratic policies. Its central concerns include the quality and representativeness of democracy, social justice, environmental protection and ecological sustainability. LMP, according to its programme, intends to overcome the severe left-right polarisation that has characterised Hungarian politics and society for at least the last decade ("Our co-citizens on the right are not 'Nazis', our co-citizens on the left are not 'communists'").



LMP was founded in February 2009, in time to participate in the June 2009 elections to the European Parliament, in which the party won 2.6% of the vote. On 18 October 2009 the European Green Party granted observer status to LMP. In the April 2010 parliamentary elections LMP reached 7.48% of the vote, granting it 16 seats in parliament.

LMP has no president. It is led by a 13-member committee. The head of LMP's parliamentary group is András Schiffer.

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