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ESS Times Hungary

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DOMESTIC NEWS

New Scientific Investments in Central Europe

Decisions have not yet been made regarding several scientific large investments of great significance to the EU. In the interest of maintaining a competitive advantage Europe must act soon: there is no time to waste if the old world hopes to regain its former advantage in R&D and particularly in the science of materials. There is a good chance that Hungary and Central Europe can host new bastions of this science.

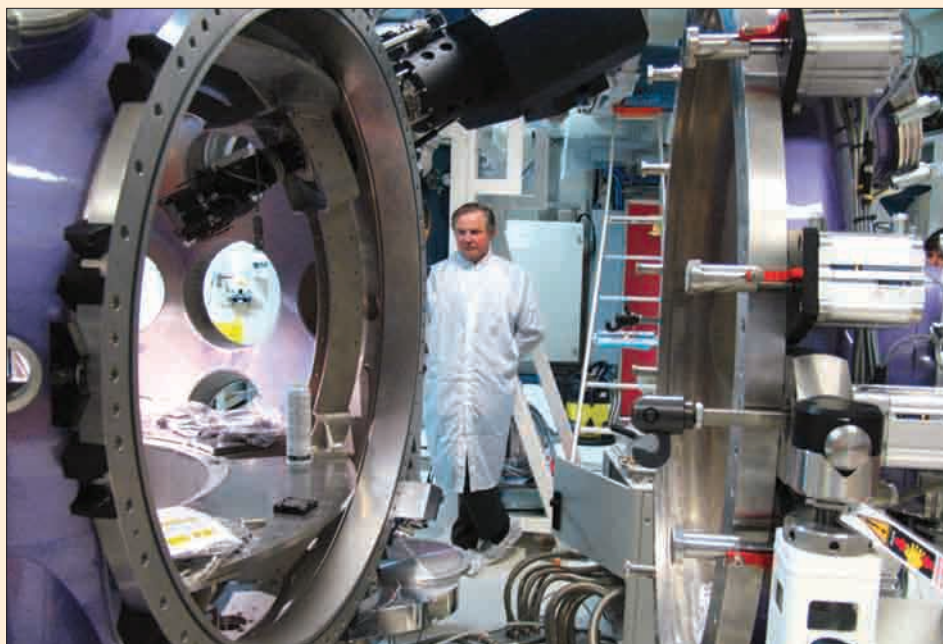


Photo: www.extreme-light-infrastructure.eu

Of the such hoped-for investments the ESS, an inestimably significant neutron source, is close to being decided upon. The concept has been developed and the research plans are complete. This large investment, once built, can begin to produce scientific results with practical applications right away. Debrecen is applying for the project, and its chances are good. It's only competitor is Lund in Sweden, given that Bilbao has withdrawn and support-

ed the Scandinavian site. Building this one-billion Euro installation in Hungary would directly benefit the country and its neighbors economically, and in the long term it would produce scientific-technological advantages by attracting and keeping the best scientists in the field.

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EDITORIAL

For any competition, sport offers some useful parallels: The game is not over before the last whistle. Until then, it is premature to take a lead for the victory.



A competition in which the rules change during play, sometimes without the knowledge of the players, is unfair. The competition for hosting ESS, one of the large investments in European scientific infrastructure, is a very important one and the government of Hungary is committed to follow the sporting advice: fair play and full dedication until a formal, binding decision comes into existence. As of today, this can possible take some more time.

The point is: it is Hungary's prime interest that a large European scientific investment to be placed in Hungary. This is in Europe's best interest as well, because we are very well prepared, we actually offer the best scientific return on the investment. With the right partners we are capable of achieving results for advancing Europe's scientific competitiveness for the benefit of all.

It is in our interest to host an important large investment in science that will inspire regional cooperation, make use of intellectual capital, further extend the reach of Europe's research network, and last but not least, create jobs and harvest new talents.

It is in Europe's, or more precisely the European Union's interest for decisions on large scientific investments to be transparent, traceable and fair. This is a European value that inspired countries to join the EU. It is in Europe's interest to make an expensive scientific investment at a place where the local characteristics and professional and human conditions are optimal; where the investment of many hundreds of millions of Euro can achieve the maximum result. That place is Hungary.

Let us serve the best interest of Europe, the region, Hungary and all participants.

Edit Herczog
Member of European Parliament, President of the ESS
Hungarian National Council



CITY IMAGE

Debrecen is the Best Communicator

Image Factory and Observer Budapest Mediamonitoring have completed their second annual research project on best communicating Hungarian municipalities. Results were released in three categories. Winners for most attractive image in the past year were Debrecen (among large cities), Esztergom (among mid-sized cities) and Balatonfüred (among small cities).

As the second-largest city in the country Debrecen makes serious efforts to a worthy economic, scientific and cultural competitor to the capital in the eye of the public. Thanks to this Debrecen is in the élan: the city offers cultural programs, popular public events and sport programs year round. A significant number of news articles covered the city's economic successes: press reported on job-creating investments, incoming companies and technological breakthroughs.

Lajos Kósa, the mayor of Debrecen, claimed at the award ceremony in Budapest that city leaders in Debrecen consciously choose to compete against much larger cities. For example, Debrecen is competing to host the first youth Olympics. According to the mayor these projects not only help put Debrecen on the world map, but often prove



Lajos Kósa, Mayor of Debrecen

that there is cause for optimism and self-respect. This approach has helped the city land

dozens of European and international events in the last decade.

FOCUS

Glossary of scientific terms

The press is increasingly prone to use scientific expressions that are foreign to many average readers. Let's get up to speed. Often what is at stake are investments of several hundreds of millions of Euro, not to mention the service institutions and initiatives that accompany them.

ELI (Extreme Light Infrastructure)

Based on a promising discovery, this European superlaser is planned to be a thousand times stronger than current French or American versions. The technology itself is so new that possible applications are still being calculated: breakthroughs are anticipated in research and therapy, where first steps have already been taken. The sum of the investment is almost 400 million Euro. The location of the investment will be decided upon in 2010.

ERA (European Research Area)

The ERA was established in 2000 with the goal of ensuring that Europe's scientists can cooperate by making use of the most modern equipment and technology. There is an effort to optimize and harmonize scientific research within the Area in the interest of making the widest use of research results. Today the ERA has become one of the most important aspects of European integration and is one of the key pillars of the Lisbon Strategy.



ESFRI (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures)

The ESFRI was founded in 2002 to harmonize the planning of large investments in research at the European level. By 2006 they had developed recommendations for 35 strategically important large investments to be built by 2015, and had come up with the ESFRI Roadmap to create a research network. The number of projects in the ESFRI action plan has risen to 44. The planned investments are not to be funded through EU monies but instead through contributions from effected countries: the EU acts as a catalyst by advancing decision making and bringing together interested parties.

ESS (European Spallation Source)

The ESS is currently one of the biggest planned EU R&D installations. It can make the difference in our effort to catch up with Japan and the USA condensed matter research. ESS can open up new fields in pharmaceutical and transport industry (automobile manufacturing, aeronautics) biotechnology, materials science, energy storage and saving, food industry research etc.

The 1-1,2 million Euro investment's research center will create thousands of jobs in the host country and its immediate surroundings during construction and during operations.

ILL (Institut Laue-Langevin)

The Laue-Langevin Institute, located in Grenoble, France, hosts the world's strongest continuous neutron source. Every year the 58 MW research reactor hosts 1200 researchers from 40 different countries. The institute is supported by Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, with contributions from ten other European states.

SNS (Spallation Neutron Source)

This 1,5 billion-dollar spallation neutron source has been operating in Oak Ridge, USA since 2006, and is in the Guinness Book of Records. Experiments had just begun in the facility in the spring of 2009 when the government decided to expand capacity: the USA has committed to spend another one billion dollars on a new research facility able to host another 4000 researchers per year to do work based on Ferenc Mezei's long pulse spallation technology.

SCIENCE-POLICY

“The ESS would be more important than hosting the Olympics”

After going through the scientific rounds, the fate of the ESS is now in the political sphere, claimed Professor Ferenc Mezei as a guest on Hungarian national radio’s Talk About Science program on Tuesday. The father of modern spallation technology stressed, that as long as the technical project work speeds up as planned, the actually slower progress on the political side will not hurt. Increasing Hungary’s chances requires intense diplomacy.

Referring to diplomatic sources, Professor Ferenc Mezei said that official Letters of Intent from participating countries on the location of the ESS – including the crucial German position – are still being waited for. News has it that President Sarkozy of France prefers the Swedish site, based on significant economic and political considerations. The high level of Hungarian science – especially given that neutron research has been conducted here since 1958 – helped the Debrecen proposal to fully meet the scientific and technical requirements for hosting an ESS class facility. However, Debrecen’s success as a center of science is not enough in itself, but it’s an encouraging entrance ticket. Staying with the example of France, the approximately 150 million Euro French contribution will clearly go to the project with clear expectations of

economic return for France. It is well known that Sweden and Spain not only committed significant resources to the preparation of the project, but also conducted a wide and intense political-, economic- and scientific-diplomatic lobby campaign with European governments. The annual 100 million Euro ESS budget will substantially enhance the R&D resources spent in Hungary on fundamental research. This in itself is a powerful reason for the Hungarian government to maintain the candidature of Debrecen for hosting ESS until a formal and binding decision comes into existence, knowing that effective diplomatic efforts over the next weeks-months could change the way the wind blows. According to Professor Mezei, if the technical project work progresses without delay, diplomacy can take the time it needs. Given the project’s fifty-year

lifespan, it will not compromise the competitive advantage that ESS will bring for Europe, if the ongoing multilateral diplomatic efforts to arrive at a final site decision take some extra months time. However, the conditions for speeding up the international preparatory and planning work of the design review must be provided by the Hungarian and Swedish finalists, together with the cooperating partner ESS-Bilbao, independently of the pace of the political decision making process.



Professor Ferenc Mezei

DOMESTIC NEWS

The Hungarian government unequivocally supports ESS in Debrecen

Prime Minister Gordon Bajnai stated that the Hungarian government is putting its full weight behind supporting the Debrecen proposal for the construction of the ESS. He noted that the Spanish proposal had been withdrawn, but that nothing has been decided yet, leaving Hungary and Sweden still competing.



Gordon Bajnai

This statement was made after Bajnai had completed a one-hour meeting with Lajos Kósa, the mayor of Debrecen. The Prime Minister and the Mayor (who is the vice-president of the main opposition party) have discussed various matters concerning municipal policy and next year state budget issues. The main purpose of Bajnai’s visit to Debrecen on July 28 was to inaugurate an information technology office complex that has created hundreds of new jobs. Bajnai praised Debrecen’s success in competing for EU projects.

New Scientific Investments in Central Europe

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It is in Central Europe’s and Hungary’s interest to attract a few such investments to the region. This viewpoint is supported by Romania’s support for the ESS Debrecen proposal, expressed in an official Letter of Intent. Hungary’s goal is of course to have European research infrastructures built in this country. The large project ESS will have a great economic impact in its host country, and is based on highly developed and practicable operational technology.



ESS Illustration: ESFRI Report 2006

It should be noted that we cannot speak of an East-West divide on this issue. These investments – which may have a great impact on the way/quality of life of our times – contribute to strengthening of the European Research Area (ERA) by broadening its human and material base to the whole of the Union. Investments that reflect the cutting edge of global science and which extends the scope of cooperation and circulation of ideas and „brain“ show great promise for the next generation of scientists – in the East as well as the West.

Life is best in Debrecen

Debrecen is the clear winner according to quality of life research conducted by Haszon Magazine. The economics magazine measured how liveable cities are from the point of view of 25 year olds, families with two children, and pensioners. The study ranked twelve Hungarian cities in terms of quality of life data.

The listing took into account 13 factors, including hospital capacity, air pollution, crime rates, job availability, average salary, quality of education, cinemas, spas and wellness centers, quality of transportation, and housing rent levels. All this was done while weighting factors for the given target groups.

Some numbers for Debrecen that were part of the 13 evaluated parameters: 2920 hospital beds, 37 primary schools, 14 cinemas, 8 thermal baths and wellness centers, and 52000 HUF (192 Euro) monthly rental fee for a 55 m² apartment.

The analysis of Debrecen showed that the city’s consistently high ranking is thanks to not only to its rapidly developing economy, but also to the high placement rate of its schools and its developed transportation infrastructure.

CULTURE

Ready to play? Let's take a look at a map of Europe and check out what programs and entertainment options various centers of science have to offer in the third week of August.



Flower Carnival in Debrecen, 2008

Debrecen

The city is hosting the 40th Flower Carnival between August 14 and 21. Being one of the country's finest events, hundreds of thousands of visitors are expected to flock to Debrecen.

- On Friday the city will host outdoor children's programs, flower-potting competitions, classical concerts by some of the country's best musicians, and fireworks.
- Saturday will play host to the football gala and the opera gala, for lovers of sport and music alike.
- Dance theater performances will thrill fans of folk and modern dance on Sunday.

Grenoble

- Children of Latin America – Jean-Félix Fayolle's photo exhibit in the Hauquelin Library.
- Orchid exhibit in the Chartreuse Gallery, near Grenoble.
- Le Madrigale – as part of a festival of sacral music, the Membra Jesu nostri cantata cycle will be performed in the St Anthony Abbey.

Lund

From August 8 to the final show on September 1 Swedish soloists and international musicians will be performing classical organ concerts in the Skane church. The program will be augmented by performances on other fascinating instruments.

- On Saturday Hans Nordenborg will be playing the organ in the Bosebo church.

- On Sunday Bengt Wittje will be performing on the imposing Allhelgonakyrkan organ, built in 1891 and located near Lund's medieval cathedral.

Marseille

- The blooming of music – classical music festival, with culinary delights from Provence. Site: département de Bouches-du-Rhone.
- Mediterranean boats and harbours – exhibit of paintings from the 18th to the 20th century at the Palace of Arts.
- Jazz night on the Sea – performance by the French Sumo trio on the deck of the L'Illienne, with wine and food.
- Birth and rebirth of Rue de la République – exhibits and events to celebrate the history and recently begun refurbishing of the town center's 1,3 km street.

Ulm

- "Zero Lives" – avant-garde European art from the 50s and 60s in the Exhibit Hall.
- Dreams in the desert: art of Australian Aborigines: the Donald Kahn collection in the Ulm Museum.
- Music of the spheres and voices of the world – performances of Hildegard von Bingen's (1098-1179) pieces at the central church.
- Survival of the Fittest: exhibit organized by the Tübingen University Geography Institute at the Natural History Culture Center.



MAILBOX

> Barroso counting on Hungary for the European neutron research facility



José Manuel Barroso

In a letter to Edit Herczog, president of the ESS Hungary National Council, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso stated that the European neutron research facility must make use of valuable Hungarian experience in the field, and that he thus hopes that Hungary will maintain an interest in the ESS project. In his letter Barroso points out that the Commission has already recommended that the decision on location be transparent and involve all those member states with a stake and who are involved in financing the project. The President of the Commission claimed that the publication posted on the Swedish project's website, which named Lund as the victor despite the fact that a final decision has not been made, was a Swedish initiative, and not a European one.

> Romania supports Hungary

Gerard Jitoreanu, President of the Romanian Research Authority, has written the Czech presidency to make public Romania's support of the ESS Debrecen proposal. He emphasized that constructing the research facility in Debrecen would make possible research opportunities not just for Romania, but for all countries in the region. It would have a positive effect on society, infrastructure, the economy and education. Jitoreanu confirmed that Romania not only supports the project politically, but is ready to contribute to the financing of the project should it be built in Debrecen. He noted that Romania, like Hungary, is critical of the decision-making procedure and requests that the process be made more transparent.

> Gordon Bajnai turns to his colleagues

Hungarian Prime Minister Gordon Bajnai has written to his French, Italian, German and British counterparts. He drew their attention to the courageous plan in the Lisbon Strategy that call for the Union to become the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society.

The Hungarian Prime Minister expressed his opinion that European scientific research infrastructure and R&D expenditures are contributing to the conservation of an unhealthy imbalance. One of the principles of the European Research Area accepted by all member states calls for the rebalancing of such geographic inequalities.

Bajnai's letter also stated that Hungary would support an increase in Union investments in research on the condition that all member states benefit from the positive effects of more active R&D. He noted that the high number of plans require a rethinking of the decision-making procedures in the interest of enhanced efficiency for all by a more just and judicious distribution, such that decisions be acceptable to all participating states.