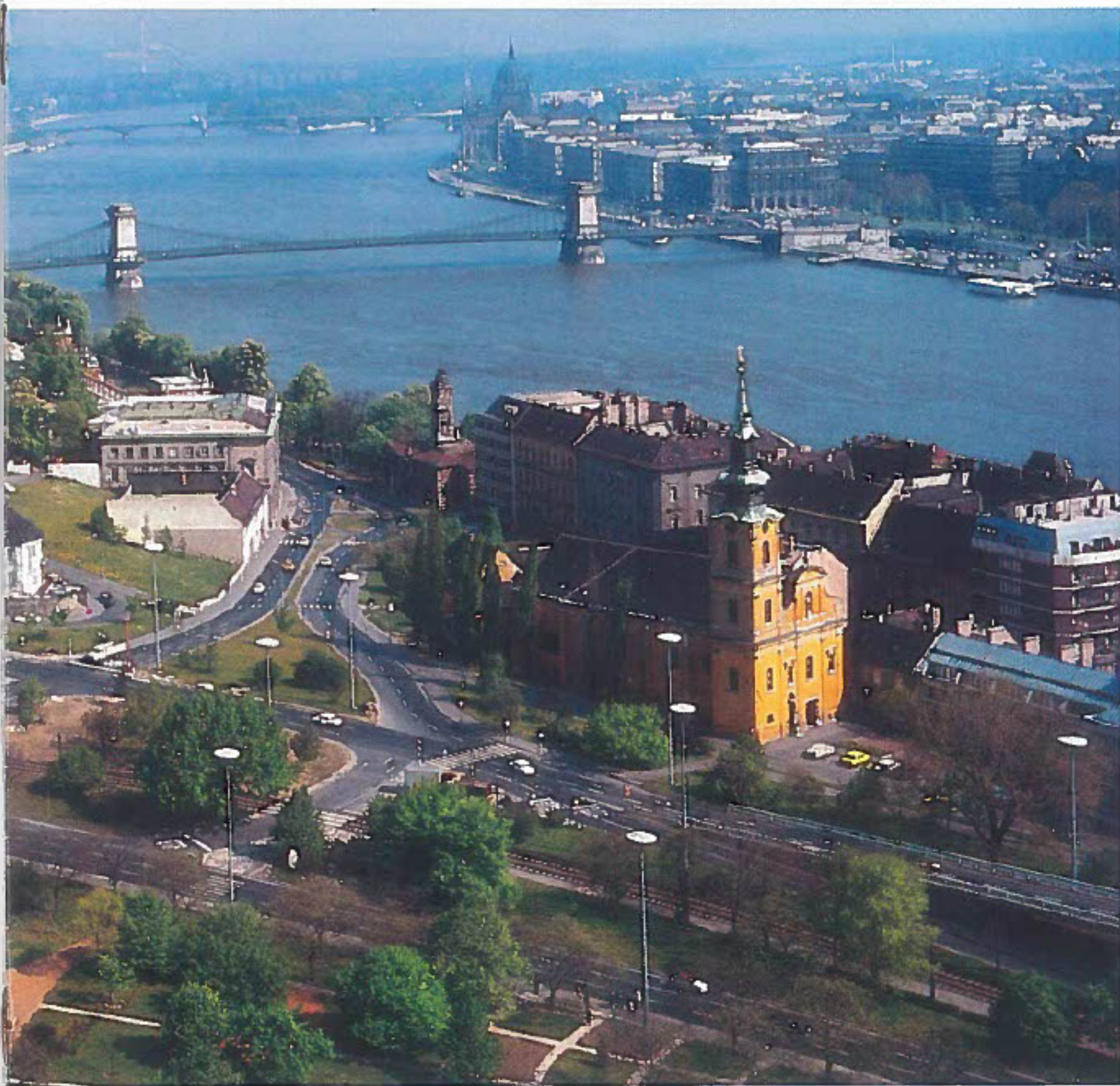


BUDAPEST CANDIDATE



**FOR THE
II. EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTER**

Dr. József Antall

Prime Minister of the Republic of Hungary

Dear Reader,

It gives me great pleasure to be able in this small publication to introduce to you Budapest, one of the possible sites for the 2nd European Youth Centre, and thus make the choice between the nominated cities much easier.

The Government of the Republic of Hungary very much appreciates the decision of the Council of Europe to establish a new European Youth Centre in the central and eastern region of Europe, and shall provide all the assistance requested in the establishment and operation of the planned 2nd Centre. It is our firm conviction that Budapest, the capital of the Republic of Hungary, would be an appropriate site for the establishment of the Centre from every respect.

Our country played a leading role in the process of change in Central and Eastern Europe, is stable, and has a balanced parliamentary democracy.

We have been members of the Council of Europe for three years now, in 1991 Hungary signed an Europe Agreement with the European Communities and their Member States, and we actively participate in the organs of European integration.

The state and youth organisational and parliamentary institutions of the youth structure are developed and strong.

Our country is situated at the point where three great European cultures and ethnic groups (Indo-European, Slavic and Romance) come together, and is thus ideal for playing the role of a "bridge".

I would like to take the opportunity to once more confirm the earlier provided guarantees, and to make it clear that the Government of Hungary would regard it as a great honour to be able to provide a home for an institution receiving the youth of Europe.

In the spirit of these thoughts,

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large, sweeping initial 'J' followed by 'ózsef' and a final flourish.

II. European Youth Centre in Budapest

In 1990 the youth ministers of the Council of Europe put forward a proposal for the establishment of a new European Youth Centre in the central and eastern region of Europe. That move was justified by the fact that in an expanding Europe, the training, language study and co-operation requirements have multiplied. According to the conceptions, the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg and the Centre to be established would be institutions with identical legal status and under common direction, but with significant division of tasks. In these few pages we would like to in text and pictures to introduce the nominee country, its capital city, and the establishment which may offer a home to the 2nd Centre.

One of the most characteristic features of Hungary is that it was included and involved in a great deal which occurred in Europe, America and Asia over one thousand years. This land is a meeting point for the different cultures and world views too. Following the Celts, Scythians, Romans, Huns, Avars, and Franks, the Magyars settled here at the meeting point of the Latin, the Germanic and the Slavic peoples, as a nation different from all the others and therefore suitable to incorporate their values and their groups, and to act as



an intermediary, protective and enriching additional party among and for those nations. In the towns of Italy you find Roman Catholic churches, in Norway Protestant churches, and in Russia, Orthodox churches, but in Hungary you find them all. In Debrecen in the 17th century, all at the same time, the influence of Turkish orientation was present in the city hall, French theology influenced the Great Church, German pedagogy was reflected in the college, Hungarian industry was alive in the companies of shoemakers, and eastern European trade was represented in the merchants guilds. Even the conquering concepts were tamed at the Hungarian borders: here Islam lost a battle, western Christianity made peace with the Greek Orthodox Church, and we introduced the first legislation on emancipation as well (in 1844). The 20th century has reinforced Hungary's role in integration, although sometimes in a false and value destroying manner. Following the change of political system, that all received particular stress.

Three years ago we were still able to imagine that our problems were enough for us. However, we soon had to wake up to the fact that our connecting and bridging role has increased validity today. Perhaps the differing and contradictory interests may be finally solved with Hungary's intermediation, and that is what a united Europe requires of us. The reconstruction of our constitutional state, the establishment of a modern economy, the implementation of a system of democratic, political and social institutions, the provision of the conditions of peace, and the liberation of the youth, have been progressing at a rapid pace for three years now.

The city situated along both banks of the River Danube illustrates the beauties of Hungary, forming a harmonic unit of wild mountains, tame hills, productive plain and waters. Each year 15–16 million foreign visitors enjoy the magnificent view across Budapest, in its embrace of the silver-grey river, from the viewing points of Gellért Hill, Buda Castle and the Buda Hills.

Budapest is definitely a metropolitan city. With its population of 2 million, its busy airport (with numerous daily flights from the major European cities), and its high transit turnover, it creates the impression of a throbbing, modern metropolis. Despite that feature, Budapest has remained very much a human city of human proportions, and with a special atmosphere. There are no skyscrapers, raised railways or slums. The slopes of Buda, and the flat area of Pest, separated by the broad ribbon of the Danube, form a unique view, coloured by atmospheric streets, ancient monuments, and green parks. The ruins of Aquincum, which 2,000 years ago was the Roman provincial capital, are an organic part of the present city. There is no point in trying to describe the cultural role of Budapest in detail, since it has innumerable theatres, opera houses, and other cultural facilities. Nor do we need to mention its outstanding role in international sport, its educational and co-operational role as a very old university city, its thousands of restaurants founded on the world famous Hungarian cuisine, or its internationally renowned spas, since all that information about the Hungarian capital is already common knowledge.





Finally, about the building itself.

As its name indicates, Hotel Ifjúság (Ifjúság = Youth) has had close contacts with the young for years, hosting hundreds of youth groups, youth seminars and conferences. (For example, most recently the session of the Executive Committee of ERYICA was held at the hotel.). The most memorable event held at the hotel involved the conciliation discussions of the Framework for All-European Youth and Student Co-operation which took place in 1979–1980.

Today, when the youth structure is very developed and diverse, all the most important international youth organisations (CENYC, IUSY, DEMYC, IFLRY, The Scout Association, EYCD, etc.) have fully authorised and very active member organisations in Hungary the Hotel Ifjúság is increasingly the venue of the various international youth co-operation fora.

Paper can convey no more, therefore we hope that you will see the rest personally in Budapest, at the 2nd European Youth Centre.

Office of the Prime Minister
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