I'm not a robot

Ouverture frontiere hongrie

La chancelière allemande Angela Merkel et le Premier ministre hongrois Viktor Orban ont célébré ce lundi le trentième anniversaire de la fin du Rideau de fer entre l'Est et l'Ouest avec la volonté de mettre l'accent sur ce qui unit les Européens et non pas sur ce qui les divise.Angela Merkel, invitée de Viktor Orban, s'est rendue en Hongrie, dans la ville frontalière de Sopron où, le 19 août 1989, plus de 600 Allemands de l'Est, avaient profité de l'ouverture d'un poste-frontière avec l'Autriche, à l'occasion d'un "pique-nique paneuropéen", pour fuir à l'Ouest.L'événement fut une brèche décisive dans le "Rideau de fer", cette séparation idéologique puis physique, établie en Europe au lendemain de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale entre la zone d'influence soviétique à l'Est et les pays de l'Ouest."Je ne serais pas une femme politique et je ne pourrais pas être chancelière d'une Allemagne réunifiée" si ces événements n'avaient pas eu lieu, a déclaré Mme Merkel, manifestement émue, au cours d'une conférence de presse. Ce pique-nique "est devenu un symbole international prouvant que le désir de liberté ne peut pas être repoussé", a-t-elle auparavant estimé dans un discours aux côtés de M. Orban, après un service religieux dans une église de la ville. "Sopron montre ce qui fait de nous des Européens, a poursuivi Mme Merkel : (le pique-nique) était un positionnement en faveur de la solidarité, de la liberté et de la paix, pour une Europe à visage humain". Ces valeurs doivent continuer d'"unir l'Europe", a soutenu la chancelière, appelant également à "combattre les causes de la fuite et des persécutions" qui poussent des personnes à l'exil, vers l'Europe notamment.La politique européenne d'asile a suscité ces dernières années de vives crispations incarnées par les postures divergentes d'Angela Merkel et de Viktor Orban au pic de la vague de réfugiés de 2015. Alors que la chancelière conservatrice avait d'abord plaidé pour une politique d'asile généreuse, le Premier ministre souverainiste hongrois y a opposé un refus catégorique de l'immigration."Pas de contradiction"Mais à Sopron, Angela Merkel s'est gardée de critiquer ouvertement Viktor Orban sur cette question, comme elle l'avait fait au cours de leur dernière rencontre à Berlin en juillet 2018. "Ursula Von der Leyen [la présidente désignée de la Commission européenne] a dit qu'elle entendait relancer les discussions afin de trouver une position commune européenne sur les questions de migration et je trouve cela important", s'est-elle contentée d'expliquer."Pour régler le problème dans sa totalité, je pense qu'il faut travailler sur ce qui nous unit et tenter de surmonter les différends", a ajouté le chancelière.Depuis 2015, plus de 200 kilomètres de clôtures érigées par le gouvernement de Viktor Orban contre les migrants ferment les frontières sud de la Hongrie avec la Serbie et la Croatie. Angela Merkel a toujours rejeté cette "politique des barbelés" au cœur de l'UE. Le Premier ministre hongrois a assuré lundi qu'il n'y avait "pas de contradiction" entre le démantèlement du Rideau de fer, qui a abouti à la chute du Mur de Berlin le 9 novembre 1989, et la construction de nouvelles clôtures aux frontières européennes. Dans les deux cas, le but est de bâtir une "Europe de paix et de sécurité", a-t-il soutenu.Fille d'un pasteur parti vivre avec toute sa famille volontairement dans l'Allemagne de l'Est communiste et athée pour prêcher l'Evangile, Angela Merkel, âgée de 65 ans, s'affiche comme une responsable qui ne cède rien sur les valeurs de liberté, de justice et d'Etat de droit.Aux yeux de Viktor Orban, âgé de 56 ans et qui a débuté dans l'arène politique en tant que dissident libéral en 1989, la chute du communisme a d'abord marqué pour la Hongrie et les autres pays de l'Est la reconquête de leur souveraineté, un principe sur laquelle il s'est montré de plus en plus intransigeant au fil des ans, jusqu'à être accusé de dérives antidémocratiques dans son exercice du pouvoir. Au-delà de leurs divergences politiques, les deux gouvernements ont des intérêts économiques étroitement liés, l'Allemagne étant le principal partenaire économique de la Hongrie du fait notamment de la forte implantation de ses constructeurs automobiles dans ce pays. « Tous droits de reproduction et de représentation réservés. ©2025 Agence France-Presse. Toutes les informations (texte, photo, vidéo, infographie fixe ou animée, contenu sonore ou multimédia) reproduites dans cette page sont protégées par la législation en vigueur sur les droits de propriété intellectuelle. Par conséquent, toute reproduction, représentation, modification, traduction, exploitation commerciale ou réutilisation de quelque manière que ce soit est interdite sans l'accord préalable écrit de l'AFP, à l'exception de l'usage non commercial personnel. L'AFP ne pourra être tenue pour responsable des retards, erreurs, omissions qui ne peuvent être exclus dans le domaine des informations de presse, ni des conséquences des actions ou transactions effectuées sur la base de ces informations. AFP et son logo sont des marques déposées » Le 10 septembre 1989, à minuit, la Hongrie ouvre sa frontière avec l'Autriche.Avec la Tchécoslovaquie, la Hongrie se montrait plus tolérante lorsqu'il s'agissait de passer à l'Ouest et les Allemands de l'Est qui désiraient fuir le régime communiste de la République démocratique allemande (RDA) transitaient très souvent par ces deux pays. Le 10 septembre 1989, le ministre des Affaires étrangères hongrois, Gyula Horn, annonce officiellement à la télévision que les frontières de la Hongrie seront dorénavant ouvertes à tout le monde et que le pays va laisser passer à l'Ouest les ressortissants est-allemands présents sur son territoire. À minuit, la Hongrie ouvre sa frontière avec l'Autriche. Le chancelier ouest-allemand Helmut Kolh remercie le gouvernement communiste hongrois pour cette « décision de solidarité européenne ». À l'inverse l'Allemagne de l'Est, en colère, dénonce vivement cette initiative. La une de Sud Ouest, le 11 septembre 1989. archives Sud Ouest Le lendemain, le 11 septembre, l'événement historique fait la une de "Sud Ouest" qui écrit :La nuit dernière, les quelque 60.000 Est-Allemands réfugiés en Hongrie ont pu commencer à franchir la frontière vers l'Autriche, sous les cris de joie et les applaudissements.Munis d'un passeport délivré par l'ambassade de la République fédérale d'Allemagne (RFA) à Budapest, les citoyens est-allemands vont ensuite gagner l'Allemagne de l'Ouest. En voiture, en bus, à pied. À leur arrivée, on leur donne des vêtements et un peu d'argent pour refaire leur vie. Sud Ouest,le 12 septembre 1989. archives Sud Ouest Pour le seul premier jour, « plus de 6.000 réfugiés avaient franchi la frontière entre la Hongrie et l'Autriche à 15 h » , relate "Sud Ouest" dans son édition du 12 septembre. « Plus de 4.000 sont attendus dans la nuit. Un événement qui modifie les relations entre les pays du Pacte de Varsovie ». Et quelques jours plus tard, selon le ministre de l'intérieur autrichien ce sont plus de 13 000 Allemands de l'Est qui ont quitté la Hongrie. En agrandissant brusquement la brèche dans le Rideau de fer qui emprisonnait les populations de l'Europe de l'Est communiste, la décision hongroise aura un effet dévastateur sur le régime communiste de sa voisine, la RDA. La réunification devient inéluctable Sud Ouest dimanche, le 17 septembre 1989. archives sud Ouest Depuis sa création, en 1949, l'Allemagne de l'Est voit en effet fuir une partie de sa population pour des raisons politiques vers la RFA. En quelques jours, la ville allemande de Passau, en Bavière au confluent du Danube, de l'Inn et de l'Ilz, voit affluer des milliers des « vacanciers » est-allemands par milliers…. Majoritairement des jeunes, entre 20 et 40 ans, qui ne supportent plus de vivre à l'Est. La majorité de ceux qui fuient le pays a entre 20 et 40 ans : pour la RDA, c'est l'hémorragie de ses forces vives. Et pour l'Allemagne de l'Ouest, un afflux de main-d'œuvre qui va bouleverser la donne économique du pays.La question de la réunification allemande est désormais posée et elle semble inéluctable , comme l'écrit André Mannon dans "Sud Ouest dimanche", le 17 septembre suivant :Que se passerait-il si les deux Allemagne n'en faisaient qu'une ? L'équilibre européen serait bouleversé. Pourtant, la réunification, est inéluctable. Un anniversaire passé sous silenceAu grand dam des ex-communistes réformateurs hongrois, en particulier du courageux chef du gouvernement d'alors, Miklos Nemeth, la date du 10 septembre n'est pas franchement célébrée en Hongrie. La droite hongroise lui préfère celle du 20 août, jour du "pique-nique paneuropéen". Cette grande manifestation pacifiste organisée à cheval sur le rideau de fer entre la Hongrie et l'Autriche avait été le théâtre d'une première percée de plusieurs centaines d'Allemands de l'Est. Le trentième anniversaire de cet événement hautement symbolique a été célébré par le Premier ministre Viktor Orban et Angela Merkel dans la ville hongroise de Sopron, frontalière avec l'Autriche."Les Allemands se souviennent avec une grande reconnaissance de ce que la Hongrie a fait pour surmonter leur division", avait déclaré la chancelière allemande. Angela Merkel s'inscrivait alors pleinement dans les pas de son mentor, l'ancien chancelier Helmut Kohl, qui avait déclaré le jour de la réunification allemande que "le sol sur lequel repose la porte de Brandebourg est hongrois". En effet, dans les semaines qui avaient suivi l'ouverture de la frontière austro-hongroise, plus de soixante mille citoyens de la RDA avaient rejoint la République fédérale d'Allemagne via la Hongrie et l'Autriche et, deux mois plus tard, le mur de Berlin, devenu obsolète, tombait.L'ombre des barbelésMais la clôture de barbelés érigée à l'automne 2015 à la frontière méridionale de la Hongrie, pour tenter de barrer la route aux migrants en provenance du Moyen-Orient, a terni le prestige international de la Hongrie, héritage de son soulèvement antisoviétique en 1956, puis de son rôle pour abattre l'ordre bipolaire en 1989. La chancelière allemande Angela Merkel a ajouté à son hommage une critique voilée de la politique actuelle de Budapest : "Parfois nous devons dépasser nos propres ombres pour assumer nos responsabilités communes envers l'Europe et le monde. Les réfugiés venant de zones de guerre, cherchant refuge ici, nous rappellent l'importance de lutter contre les raisons qui les ont poussés à fuir." Viktor Orban, le chef du gouvernement hongrois, a balayé à maintes reprises les critiques de ses contradicteurs, argumentant qu'en se verrouillant contre les migrants en 2015, la Hongrie avait protégé l'espace de libre-circulation de Schengen. "L'ouverture des frontières de 1989 et la protection de ces frontières aujourd'hui sont les deux faces d'une même pièce, expliquait-il dès 2016 devant le Parlement allemand. Nous nous battions pour la liberté de l'Europe et maintenant nous protégeons cette liberté."Radio Free Europe bientôt de retour en Hongrie?L'emblématique radio états-unienne, créée en 1949 à des fins de propagande anticommuniste, pourrait bientôt reprendre du service en Hongrie, où elle a cessé d'émettre après la guerre froide. Selon le New York Times, Radio Free Europe pourrait obtenir le feu vert du Congrès américain dès septembre et commencer ses émissions en hongrois en mai prochain. Un affront pour Viktor Orban, qui plus est au moment où la Hongrie commémore les trente ans de l'ouverture du rideau de fer. RFE a aussi repris du service en Bulgarie et en Roumanie cette année. The Magyars, as Hungarians are also known, first settled in modern Hungary in the ninth century. They built a thriving society that was almost toppled in 1241 when warriors from East Asia called Mongols invaded and devastated the region. The Magyars forced the Mongols out but were once again invaded by the warriors in 1285.After beating the Mongols a second time, the Hungarians began a centuries-long feud with the Ottoman Empire. First formed in 1299, the Ottoman Empire ruled a large portion of Eastern Europe and the Middle East for over 600 years. (The empire fell apart in 1923 and became the country of Turkey.)The Ottoman Turks conquered Hungary in 1541 and controlled the country until 1699, when neighboring Austria kicked out the Turks and ruled the country for many years. Hungary eventually joined the Austro-Hungarian Empire as an equal partner in 1867 but the empire dissolved in 1918, after World War I. Hungary fought alongside the Axis powers—Germany, Italy, and Japan—in World War II, from 1940 to 1945. The former Soviet Union, now Russia, occupied Hungary during the final year of the war. As a result, communists governed Hungary until 1990, when it held its first democratic elections. Ce jour-là, le ciel est gris au-dessus d'Hegyeshalom, un village hongrois planté à quelques encablures de la frontière autrichienne. Rien ne l'a prédestiné à entrer dans les livres d'histoire. Ni la veille, ni les mois précédents, on y avait vu un rassemblement réclamant l'ouverture à l'Ouest, pas plus que dans le reste du pays. Pourtant ce 2 mai 1989, les garde-frontières, sentinelles du rideau de fer, commencent à découper la double rangée de grillage barbelé et électrifié qui sépare la Hongrie (et ses «pays frères») de l'Ouest. Les fils barbelés un peu distendus, juste assez pour céder sous le poids de ceux qui essaieraient de les franchir et déclencher ainsi un signal d'alarme, sont roulés et mis à l'arrière de camions militaires sur ordre de Budapest.En Hongrie, pays le plus réformateur du Bloc de l'Est avec la Pologne, l'ouverture des frontières n'a pas été l'aboutissement de mois de mobilisation populaire, comme en Allemagne de l'Est, mais le fruit d'une série de décisions politiques et de signaux envoyés à l'Ouest par un gouvernement bien décidé à changer le système communiste. La mise à bas du rideau de fer à Hegyeshalom, sur la route entre Budapest et Vienne, est l'un des plus soigneusement orchestrés.Côté hongrois, les pince-monseigneur des garde-frontières claquent et les pelleteuses venues arracher les poteaux de la clôture ronronnent. Côté autrichien, les flashs des journalistes du bloc de l'Ouest crépitent. Mais ce qui est présenté comme la première brèche dans le rideau de fer est surtout une mise en scène : le démantèlement a commencé dès avril. Quand la nouvelle est rendue publique, et l'invitation lancée aux journalistes, plus des deux tiers des 260 kilomètres de grillage ont déjà disparu.Comparée aux dispositifs est-allemands ou même tchécoslovaques, la clôture hongroise est modeste. Deux rangées de barbelés, l'une haute et électrifiée, l'autre plus basse et destinée à écarter les animaux du système d'alarme, ont remplacé en 1971 le champ de mines qui marquait la frontière. Ponctué de miradors, le système n'en reste pas moins d'une efficacité redoutable. Entre 1966, date d'édification du rideau de fer physique, et 1988, deux tentatives de fuite par jour en moyenne ont été recensées par les autorités hongroises, soit 13 500 au total. Seules 300 ont réussi. Et aucune statistique n'a jamais été à même de comptabiliser les candidats à l'exil que la clôture a découragés.Pourtant depuis quelque temps, l'existence même de la clôture est remise en cause. Dès 1986, un rapport officiel pointe un système de surveillance dépassé et défaillant, qui ne se déclenche plus qu'aux passages des sangliers. Sa conclusion est radicale : plutôt que de dépenser une somme folle pour le rénover, mieux vaut tout supprimer. Longtemps perdu dans les rouages bureaucratiques, le texte est déterré début 1989 par le nouveau Premier ministre hongrois, Miklós Németh. Jeune réformateur à la formation d'économiste, il vient d'être nommé à la tête du pays pour en poursuivre la transformation et éviter la banqueroute. La fin du rideau de fer, récemment qualifié de «grillage de la honte» par Imre Pozsgay, le leader des réformateurs, lui permettrait d'avancer vers les deux objectifs.«C'était aussi une décision de principe, affirme Németh dans une interview accordée à l'AFP en août. Cette clôture était un anachronisme. Budapest et Vienne présentaient une candidature conjointe pour l'Exposition universelle de 1992. Quel message aurions-nous envoyé au monde ?» Németh tâte le terrain, commence par faciliter les voyages de l'autre côté du rideau de fer. Peu après son arrivée au pouvoir en novembre 1988, des files de voitures se forment régulièrement aux poste-frontières avec l'Autriche, preuve que des passages sont possibles. Il n'est pas alors question d'évasion, plutôt de virées dans les supermarchés de l'Ouest, pour acheter des bananes, des machines à laver et toutes autres choses introuvables dans les magasins d'Etat hongrois.En mars 1989, Németh se rend à Moscou pour consulter Mikhaïl Gorbatchev et met la question du démantèlement de la clôture sur le tapis. «Faites ce que bon vous semble», lui répond le leader soviétique, débordé par les conséquences en série de la Perestroïka. La transformation de la frontière ne sera pas longue. Le 27 juin, quand le ministre hongrois des Affaires étrangères et son homologue autrichien s'attaquent à coups de cisaille au barbelé près de Sopron, la clôture n'est déjà plus qu'un vestige. Quelques centaines de mètres de grillage ont même dû être remis en place pour la photo.Les premiers intéressés par ces images d'ouverture dans le rideau de fer, ne sont pas hongrois mais est-allemands. A Berlin, le vieil Erich Honecker, à la tête de la RDA depuis 1971 et tenant de l'orthodoxie communiste, exclut toujours la moindre ouverture de son pays. Alors, à l'été, ses concitoyens filent, direction la Hongrie, pour les vacances, mais aussi dans l'espoir de réussir à franchir la frontière de l'Ouest, débarrassée de son barbelé. Sur la route des campings du lac Balaton, où ils seront des dizaines de milliers à s'entasser, beaucoup font un crochet par Budapest et l'ambassade de RFA. Ils réclament des passeports ouest-allemands, auquel tout citoyen de RDA a droit, et qui y sont distribués à la chaîne.Mais ces documents de voyage, à la couverture verte flambant neuve, ne les mèneront pas loin. Les douaniers hongrois, qui continuent à garder la frontière, regardent ces papiers trop neufs avec suspicion. Leurs pages vierges ne contiennent pas le visa que la Hongrie exige même des Ouest-Allemands pour quitter le territoire et leurs porteurs sont refoulés.Bloqués dans leurs campings, où ils sont plus de 60 000 à la fin de l'été, les Est-Allemands commencent à perdre espoir de traverser légalement. Les passages clandestins de la frontière se multiplient, parfois au rythme de plusieurs centaines par jour, par petits groupes. Du côté autrichien, ces traversées sont devenues une attraction. A Mörbisch, près de Sopron, «des touristes en goguette vont chaque soir "guetter les réfugiés" près de la forêt. Ils deviennent si envahissants que les gendarmes ont fermé la route et collé sur la barrière un tract dissuadant les promeneurs nocturnes de venir avec des torches lumineuses ou des chiens pour ne pas effrayer les fugitifs», raconte Libération le 29 août 1989.Tous n'arrivent pas à tromper la vigilance des gardes hongrois, mais se faire rattraper par la patrouille n'a plus les mêmes conséquences que quelques mois plus tôt. Les autorités hongroises, en pleine discussion avec le chancelier ouest-allemand Helmut Kohl pour préparer l'ouverture officielle de la frontière, ont ordonné de garder les fuyards quelques heures au poste avant de les libérer, plutôt que de les renvoyer vers la RDA. Une attitude perçue comme un encouragement par tous ceux qui envisagent de prendre la route de l'exil. Mieux, les garde-frontières hongrois n'apposent plus dans les passeports le tampon infamant signalant une tentative de fuite, qui valait auparavant des ennuis en série dans l'ensemble des pays communistes.Le 19 août, un «pique-nique européen» est organisé par le réformateur hongrois Imre Pozsgay et la société civile autrichienne : les autorités des deux pays ont accepté d'ouvrir exceptionnellement le poste-frontière désaffecté de Sopron. Une délégation doit partir de Hongrie et rallier le village autrichien le plus proche avant de revenir moins de deux heures plus tard. Mais à l'heure prévue pour cette marche symbolique, ce ne sont pas des Hongrois mais plusieurs centaines d'Est-Allemands qui se présentent face aux quelques garde-frontières que l'on a placés là.Leur chef, Arpad Bella, a raconté à Libération, en 1999, cet événement décisif. «Si je donnais l'ordre de tirer, je savais que toute ma vie ces morts défileraient devant mes yeux. Si je les laissais passer, je risquais d'être poursuivi en justice.» Il choisira de s'écarter et de laisser la foule franchir la porte qui donne sur l'Autriche, dont la serrure rouillée n'a pas été remplacée. Plus de 600 ressortissants de la RDA passeront la frontière cet après-midi-là. Arpad Bella ne sera pas inquiété par le gouvernement hongrois, parfaitement au courant d'une opération qui rendait l'ouverture de la frontière inéluctable.Après plusieurs semaines d'hésitation, Budapest cède le 10 septembre à minuit, et autorise les «citoyens de RDA désireux de se rendre dans le pays de leur choix» à passer à l'Ouest. La «grande évasion» dont parle la presse ouest-allemande depuis des semaines devient officielle. Les Trabant, petites voitures de la RDA au moteur deux-temps, foncent sur les routes qui mènent à l'Autriche. Jusque-là abandonnées à la frontière par ceux qui tentaient la traversée clandestine, et dépecées par les Hongrois à la recherche de pièces de rechange, elles sont le nouveau symbole de l'exode motorisé vers la RFA.Dans la nuit, des files d'attente se forment aux points de passage. Les contrôles sont expéditifs côté hongrois, plus sérieux chez les Autrichiens, qui photocopient tous les papiers d'identité par crainte que quelques agents des services secrets de l'Est ne se glissent dans cette vague de réfugiés. Une fois les formalités passées, les Trabant pétaradent sur les routes, plus de dix heures durant, direction la Bavière. Leurs occupants ont gratté un D et le R de DDR (Deutsch Demokratische Republik, RDA) et ne se présentent plus que comme «Allemands», sans qualificatif géographique ou idéologique.A leur arrivée en RFA, on les accueille avec un message du ministère de l'Intérieur, qui leur souhaite la bienvenue dans leur «nouveau chez eux», 50 marks et des bons d'essence. Les autorités de l'Ouest poussent même la bienveillance jusqu'à conseiller aux stations-service de se procurer un carburant particulier, mélange d'huile et d'essence, seul à même de faire avancer les Trabant. Certains «Ossies» se mettent immédiatement en quête de travail. «Au départ, je ne pensais pas quitter l'Est, ça m'est venu comme ça, avoue Uwe, un «Trabant-people» cité dans le quotidien Sud-Ouest du 15 septembre 1989. Pendant les trois semaines que j'ai passées en Hongrie, je me suis demandé si je ne faisais pas une folie, si je n'allais pas devenir un clochard libre avec un diplôme d'informaticien.»Ils sont environ 15 000 à suivre cette vague dans la semaine qui suit l'ouverture de la frontière, 120 000 au tout début novembre. La brèche dans le rideau de fer est ouverte, elle ne se refermera pas, précipitant la chute du mur de Berlin. Le 3 octobre 1990, lors de la réunification allemande, le chancelier Helmut Kohl ne s'y trompera pas, en déclarant en guise d'hommage : «Le sol sur lequel repose la porte de Brandebourg est hongrois.» T. RexAli and Sean travel back 66 million years to get a look at the most famous dinosaur of all time—the Tyrannosaurus Rex! Tour guide Simon reveals that the T. rex may be related to … a chicken? Find out if Simon is for real—or for the birds. Le 27 juin 1989, les ministres des Affaires étrangères hongrois et autrichien tailladaient devant les caméras la barrière de barbelés qui séparait leurs deux pays. Comment est-on arrivé à ce geste spectaculaire ? Lecture 7 min. Publié le 19 août 2009 à 16h10, mis à jour le 10 juin 2022 à 00h12 L'histoire de l'ouverture de la frontière entre la Hongrie et l'Autriche est un véritable roman, que raconte fort bien le livre passionnant* publié récemment par Andreas Oplatka [un journaliste hongrois émigré qui couvrait à l'époque l'Europe de l'Est pour la Neue Zürcher Zeitung, de Zurich]. Pour lui, tout commence dans la seconde moitié de 1986, lorsque les responsables de la police des frontières hongroise – à commencer par János Székely, qui venait d'être nommé à leur tête – dénoncent l'état technique désastreux du Rideau de fer dans un rapport officiel. Se référant à leur expérience de tous les jours, ils en arrivent à une conclusion simple : à l'époque des satellites, il serait vain de dépenser des milliards de forints pour rénover cette barrière obsolète ; mieux vaudrait tout liquider. Compte tenu des particularités de l'époque, leur rapport va circuler pendant deux ans dans les labyrinthes de la bureaucratie étatique. D'autant que personne n'ose prendre une telle décision. C'est alors que la Hongrie introduit, le 1er janvier 1988, le "passeport universel" [un document unique qui vient remplacer le passeport intérieur et le passeport international, qui n'était jusque-là délivré qu'au compte-gouttes]. Cette innovation, pour les Hongrois, veut clairement dire : "Ceux qui veulent partir peuvent partir." Mais, alors, pourquoi les autorités maintiennent-elles une frontière infranchissable ? Le 24 novembre 1988 survient un événement important : Miklós Németh, 40 ans, est nommé au poste de Premier ministre à la place de Károly Grósz, qui reste Premier secrétaire du PC hongrois. Németh constate que le pays est au bord de la faillite. Il scrute le budget de 1989 en expert-comptable pour voir où il peut économiser de l'argent. Son attention est attirée sur le coût exorbitant de l'entretien de la frontière avec l'Autriche. D'un trait, il supprime le poste budgétaire. Il annoncera cette décision en février 1989 au chancelier autrichien Franz Vranitzky, à Vienne, lors de son premier voyage à l'étranger. Les Autrichiens ne sautent d'ailleurs pas de joie. Car ils en concluent que cela va alourdir la tâche des gardes-frontières autrichiens... Restait à savoir comment la direction soviétique allait réagir. Bravant le "conseil" catégorique de Károly Grósz, Németh se rend le 3 mars à Moscou et y rencontre Mikhaïl Gorbatchev. Le chef du gouvernement hongrois parle de l'introduction du multipartisme, de la situation économique du pays, du retrait des troupes soviétiques... et du rapatriement des armes nucléaires entreposées en Hongrie. Fait typique de l'époque, Németh n'a appris qu'une fois nommé que les Soviétiques stockaient depuis la fin des années 1960 des armes nucléaires au nord du lac Balaton. Gorbatchev répond que la direction soviétique va examiner la question et donner une réponse en temps voulu. (Le "temps voulu" arrivera quelques mois plus tard, lorsque les Soviétiques annonceront aux dirigeants hongrois que le stock d'armes nucléaires a été rapatrié. Une information que le ministre de la Défense, Ferenc Kárpáti, accueillera en jurant comme un charretier : personne, pas même les services secrets, n'était au courant de ce transfert.) A la fin de sa conversation avec Gorbatchev, Németh annonce en passant que Budapest veut démanteler son dispositif frontalier. Réponse inattendue de Gorbatchev : "Faites ce que bon vous semble." Selon Oplatka, Gorbatchev s'attendait certainement à ce que les pays du Bloc se contentent de suivre la ligne libérale de la perestroïka et qu'ils consolident de l'extérieur son cours branlant. Derrière cette phrase, on distingue également une nouvelle vision du "camp socialiste" : les partis communistes au pouvoir ne répondaient de leurs actes que devant leurs peuples – autrement dit, la doctrine Brejnev, qui limitait la souveraineté des pays socialistes, était révolue. En fait, l'affaire de la frontière hongroise et le problème des réfugiés d'Allemagne de l'Est [attendant en Hongrie l'ouverture de la frontière pour passer à l'Ouest] n'existent pas pour Moscou. Quand les dirigeants de la RDA font à plusieurs reprises le voyage à Moscou en les priant de faire pression sur les Hongrois, les Soviétiques gardent le silence. La direction du Parti communiste soviétique ne réagit pas non plus aux inquiétudes des Tchécoslovaques, des Roumains et des Bulgares, qui se plaignent de la politique "séparatiste" des Hongrois. Pendant ce temps, la Hongrie prépare activement la suppression de sa barrière frontalière occidentale. La situation évolue également sur le plan politique. Les relations se détériorent entre Károly Grósz et Miklós Németh. Fin avril, Grósz parle de l'introduction d'un "état d'urgence économique", tandis que Németh se libère de plus en plus de la tutelle du Parti pour diriger le pays ; il va même jusqu'à remanier son gouvernement, le 10 mai, sans en référer à Grósz. C'est à cette occasion qu'il nomme Gyula Horn ministre des Affaires étrangères. Ce dernier va faire partie, avec Németh et le ministre de l'Intérieur, István Horváth (en place depuis le 1er janvier 1988), de la troïka responsable de la destruction du Rideau de fer. Au début de l'été 1989, la RDA commence à s'inquiéter sérieusement de la situation. A juste titre, car c'est le début des vacances d'été et 10 % de la population est-allemande (soit plus de 1,5 million de personnes) a déjà quitté ou s'apprête à quitter le territoire national. Les dirigeants de la RDA se doutent déjà des conséquences envisageables si les habitants du pays réalisent pleinement la portée des événements hongrois. Surtout lorsque, le 27 juin, Gyula Horn et son collègue autrichien, Alois Mock, coupent des barbelés près de Sopron, sous l'œil des caméras de télévision. Selon Oplatka, les images de ce moment historique étaient destinées au seul grand public. Car, à cette date, le Rideau de fer n'existe déjà pratiquement plus – ou si peu qu'on a du mal à trouver un tronçon intact pour mettre en scène les ministres et leurs cisailles. Le démantèlement de la frontière bat en fait son plein depuis le 2 mai. Les fils de fer barbelés ont peu à peu disparu, mais la police des frontières hongroise continue à surveiller sévèrement la frontière occidentale du pays. C'est ce qui va provoquer la crise de la fin de l'été : les Allemands de l'Est, présents en grand nombre dans le pays, sont bien obligés de constater qu'il n'est pas si simple de passer à l'Ouest depuis la Hongrie. Mais, comme les autorités hongroises ne les rapatrient pas non plus en RDA, ils commencent à se rassembler. Pour attendre l'ouverture des postes-frontières. Les 7 et 8 juillet, le Conseil politique du pacte de Varsovie se réunit à Bucarest. Erich Honecker, le chef du Parti est-allemand, s'apprête à faire une sortie violente contre les Hongrois et les Polonais. Mais le destin intervient sous la forme d'une colique hépatique : Honecker doit rentrer d'urgence pour se faire soigner, sans avoir pu prononcer son grand discours sur l'exacerbation de la lutte des classes. La dernière contre-attaque vient donc des Roumains et des Bulgares, protestation que Gorbatchev écoute en s'enfermant dans un silence obstiné. Le Premier secrétaire du Parti roumain, Nicolae Ceausescu, écrit tout de même une lettre de protestation à Moscou pour se plaindre de ce qui se passe en Hongrie. "Qu'est-ce que nous pouvons y faire ? Envoyer les chars ?" lui aurait répondu Gorbatchev. Début août, les Allemands de l'Est sont de plus en plus nombreux à se presser en Hongrie : 181 personnes qui se sont réfugiées dans les locaux de l'ambassade de RFA à Budapest sont évacuées en avion vers l'Ouest, ce qui donne lieu à des scènes dignes de romans d'espionnage. Mais, pour les autres, les conditions de vie commencent à devenir intenables, notamment dans les campings du lac Balaton. A la mi-août, aucune issue ne semble se dégager. Budapest prend alors contact avec Bonn, et les deux gouvernements demandent d'un commun accord l'intervention de tierces parties : la Croix-Rouge internationale et l'ordre de Malte. Cela pour éviter de donner ne serait-ce que l'impression qu'ils "négocient" les citoyens de la RDA aux dépens de celle-ci. Le 17 août, lors d'un Conseil des ministres orageux, le destin des Allemands de l'Est revient encore sur le tapis. Mais, deux jours plus tard, les projets sont dépassés par la réalité : le monde entier voit à la télévision plusieurs centaines de fugitifs traverser en courant une section de la frontière austro-hongroise provisoirement ouverte à l'occasion d'un "pique-nique paneuropéen". Il devient impossible de reculer : la décision d'ouvrir les frontières est prise le 22 août. Il ne manque plus qu'à fixer une date officielle et à en organiser le déroulement. Le 25 août, sur demande hongroise, Miklós Németh et Gyula Horn rencontrent au château de Gymnich le chancelier allemand Helmuth Kohl et son ministre des Affaires étrangères, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Kohl est extrêmement touché par la décision de la Hongrie de laisser les citoyens de la RDA traverser la frontière, et demande aux Hongrois ce qu'ils veulent en contrepartie. Németh lui répond que la Hongrie ne "vend pas des êtres humains". Il fait allusion à la Roumanie de Ceausescu, d'où les Saxons et les Juifs n'avaient pu s'expatrier pendant de longues années que contre de fortes compensations financières. Certains, en Hongrie, critiquent encore aujourd'hui Németh pour ne pas avoir su tirer un meilleur parti de la situation. Une autre question tarabuste Kohl : "Est-ce que Gorbatchev est au courant ?" "C'est notre affaire, nous en prenons l'entière responsabilité", lui répondent les Hongrois, sans pour autant le rassurer complètement. Aussi, le chancelier allemand décide d'appeler lui-même le numéro un soviétique. Celui-ci, d'après les souvenirs de Kohl, lui aurait dit : "Les Hongrois sont des gens bien." Pour Kohl, Moscou donnait ainsi son feu vert. Les souvenirs de Gorbatchev divergent. Il pense lui avoir dit : "Le Premier ministre hongrois, Miklós Németh, est quelqu'un de bien." Ce qui signifiait que Kohl pouvait lui faire confiance. Dès lors, tout est joué. Après quelques rebondissements – qui sont racontés en détail dans le livre d'Oplatka –, le gouvernement hongrois annonce le 10 septembre sa décision d'ouvrir sa frontière avec l'Autriche le lendemain. Des milliers d'Allemands de l'Est profitent immédiatement de la décision [on estime à 15 000 le nombre des réfugiés qui sont passés au cours de la première semaine]. L'Histoire est en marche – même si personne ne peut encore prévoir que le mur de Berlin va s'écrouler deux mois plus tard, le 9 novembre, ensevelissant sous ses décombres quarante années de séparation entre Est et Ouest. * Der erste Riss in der Mauer, September 1989 – Ungarn öffnet die Grenze (Zsolnay Verlag, Vienne, 2009). Monument commémorant le "pique-nique paneuropéen" , par le sculpteur hongrois Miklós Melocco, près de Sopron en Hongrie 9 novembre 1989, le mur de Berlin s'effondre. Un fait historique qui marque la fin de la Guerre froide et du Rideau de fer, frontière idéologique et physique qui a déchiré pendant plus de 40 ans l'Europe entre l'Ouest et l'Est. En amont de cet événement majeur, la décision officielle de la Hongrie de démanteler, à partir du 2 mai 1989, "son" rideau de fer le long de la frontière avec l'Autriche, d'une longueur de 360 kilomètres. C'est ce choix des dirigeants hongrois qui permettra, au cours d'un "pique-nique paneuropéen" organisé quelques mois plus tard, le 19 août, à environ 600 "touristes" est-allemands de franchir pour la première fois massivement la frontière entre l'Est et l'Ouest, et ainsi de rejoindre la RFA. Plusieurs dizaines de milliers suivront à partir du 11 septembre de la même année, lorsque la Hongrie ouvrira définitivement sa frontière avec l'Autriche. Cet exode contribuera à rendre la situation politique intenable pour le gouvernement est-allemand, rapidement ébranlé par d'importantes manifestations en octobre 1989. L'une des revendications des manifestants est alors de pouvoir voyager librement, ce que le gouvernement est-allemand finit par accepter le 9 novembre, jour de la chute du mur de Berlin. Le Rideau de fer hongrois, premier à tomber Le 24 novembre 1988, le réformateur Miklós Németh, favorable à une libéralisation politique et économique du régime communiste, devient Premier ministre hongrois. Et très rapidement, au cours d'un voyage à Moscou en mars 1989, il fait part au dirigeant de l'URSS Mikhaïl Gorbatchev de son intention de démanteler la clôture à la frontière austro-hongroise, devenue obsolète et dont la reconstruction aurait coûté une fortune à la Hongrie. Ce dernier décide alors de le laisser maître du destin de son pays et de s'abstenir d'intervenir. Dès le 2 mai, les Hongrois commencent donc à faire officiellement tomber le rideau de fer (Miklós Németh affirme en août 2019 à l'AFP qu'il ne s'agit que de la date où la décision a été rendue publique mais que le démantèlement avait commencé dès le mois d'avril). Le 27 juin, les ministres des Affaires étrangères autrichien Alois Mock et hongrois Gyula Horn coupent, dans un geste de communication à l'attention de la communauté internationale, les fils de la clôture face aux caméras de télévision non loin de Sopron, à la frontière entre leurs deux Etats. Cette rencontre suscite l'espoir en Allemagne de l'Est : en juillet, des dizaines de milliers de citoyens est-allemands se rendent en Hongrie. Si le pays attire à l'époque tous les étés de nombreux touristes d'Allemagne de l'Est, cette année-là leur nombre est bien plus important. Car beaucoup d'entre eux espèrent profiter du démantèlement de la frontière pour passer en Autriche. C'est à quelques kilomètres de l'endroit où s'étaient rencontrés les ministres des Affaires étrangères hongrois et autrichien que se tient le fameux "pique-nique paneuropéen" du 19 août. Autre événement symbolique, celui-ci va jouer, selon l'historienne Elisabeth du Réau, "un rôle important en catalysant l'espoir des citoyens est-allemands" . Il s'agit d'une initiative du mouvement paneuropéen, créé par Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi à Vienne en 1926 et dirigé à cette période par Otto de Habsbourg, organisée par des opposants hongrois et ayant pour objet la célébration de la réconciliation entre l'Autriche et la Hongrie. C'est ainsi que les autorités du pays ouvrent, pour quelques heures, un poste frontière afin que les Autrichiens puissent rencontrer les Hongrois. Environ 600 Allemands de l'Est prennent alors l'initiative de franchir la frontière sans autorisation. Bien qu'ils aient encore l'ordre de tirer dans de pareils cas, les garde-frontières décident de ne pas le faire. Cette ouverture ne dure cependant pas plus de trois heures. Trois semaines déterminantes Fin août, on dénombre plusieurs dizaines de milliers de citoyens est-allemands (65 000 selon les estimations), dont le flux vers la

Italian volunteers.[79] In July 1849 the Hungarian Parliament proclaimed and enacted the first laws of ethnic and minority rights in the world.[80] Many members of the nationalities gained the coveted highest positions within the Hungarian Army, like János Damjanich and Józef Bem. The Hungarian forces (Honvédség) defeated Austrian armies. To counter the successes of the Hungarian revolutionary army, Habsburg Emperor Franz Joseph I asked for help from the "Gendarme of Europe", Tsar Nicholas I, whose Russian armies invaded Hungary. This made Artúr Görgey surrender in August 1849. The leader of the Austrian army, Julius Jacob von Haynau, became governor of Hungary for a few months and ordered the execution of the 13 Martyrs of Arad, leaders of the Hungarian army, and Prime Minister Batthyány in October 1849. Kossuth escaped into exile. Following the war of 1848–1849, the whole country was in "passive resistance". Because of external and internal problems, reforms seemed inevitable, and major military defeats of Austria forced the Habsburgs to negotiate the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, by which the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary was formed. This empire had the second largest area in Europe (after the Russian Empire), and it was the third most populous (after Russia and the German Empire). The two realms were governed separately by two parliaments from two capital cities, with a common monarch and common external and military policies. Economically, the empire was a customs union. The old Hungarian Constitution was restored, and Franz Joseph I was crowned as King of Hungary. The era witnessed impressive economic development. The formerly backward Hungarian economy became relatively modern and industrialised by the turn of the 20th century, although agriculture remained dominant until 1890.[81] In 1873, the old capital Buda and Óbuda were officially united with Pest,[82] creating the new metropolis of Budapest.[83][84] Many of the state institutions and the modern administrative system of Hungary were established during this period. The Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen consisted of the territories of the Kingdom of Hungary (16) and the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia (17) After the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo, Prime Minister István Tisza and his cabinet tried to avoid the outbreak and escalating of a war in Europe, but their diplomatic efforts were unsuccessful. Austria-Hungary drafted over 4 million soldiers from the Kingdom of Hungary on the side of Germany, Bulgaria, and Turkey. The troops raised in the Kingdom of Hungary spent little time defending the actual territory of Hungary, with the exceptions of the Brusilov offensive in June 1916 and a few months later when the Romanian army made an attack into Transylvania,[85][self-published source?] both of which were repelled. The Central Powers conquered Serbia. Romania declared war. The Central Powers conquered southern Romania and the Romanian capital Bucharest. In 1916 Franz Joseph died, and the new monarch Charles IV sympathised with the pacifists. With great difficulty, the Central Powers stopped and repelled the attacks of the Russian Empire. The Eastern Front of the Allied (Entente) Powers completely collapsed. The Austro-Hungarian Empire then withdrew from all defeated countries. Despite great success on the Eastern Front, Germany suffered complete defeat on the Western Front. By 1918, the economic situation had deteriorated (strikes in factories were organised by leftist and pacifist movements) and uprisings in the army had become common. In the capital cities, the Austrian and Hungarian leftist liberal movements and their leaders supported the separatism of ethnic minorities. Austria-Hungary signed a general armistice in Padua on 3 November 1918.[86] In October 1918, Hungary's union with Austria was dissolved.[87] Main articles: Hungary between the World Wars, Hungarian interwar economy, and Treaty of TrianonThis subsection needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources in this subsection. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.Find sources: "Hungary" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (April 2025) (Learn how and when to remove this message)With the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost 72% of its territory, its sea ports, and 3,425,000 ethnic Hungarians.[88][89] Majority Hungarian areas (according to the 1910 census) detached from Hungary Following the First World War, Hungary underwent a period of profound political upheaval, beginning with the Aster Revolution in 1918, which brought the social-democratic Mihály Károlyi to power as prime minister. The Hungarian Royal Honvéd army still had more than 1,400,000 soldiers[90][91] when Károlyi was installed. Károlyi yielded to U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's demand for pacifism by ordering the disarmament of the Hungarian army.[92][93] Disarmament meant that Hungary was to remain without a national defence at a time of particular vulnerability. During the rule of Károlyi's pacifist cabinet, Hungary lost control over approximately 75% of its pre-war territories (325,411 square kilometres (125,642 sq mi)) without a fight and was subject to foreign occupation. The Little Entente, sensing an opportunity, invaded the country from three sides—Romania invaded Transylvania, Czechoslovakia annexed Upper Hungary (today's Slovakia), and a joint Serb-French coalition annexed Vojvodina and other southern regions. In March 1919, communists led by Béla Kun ousted the Károlyi government and proclaimed the Hungarian Soviet Republic (Tanácsköztársaság), followed by a thorough Red Terror campaign. Despite some successes on the Czechoslovak front, Kun's forces were ultimately unable to resist the Romanian invasion; by August 1919, Romanian troops occupied Budapest and ousted Kun. Miklós Horthy, Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary (1920–1944) In November 1919, rightist forces led by former Austro-Hungarian admiral Miklós Horthy entered Budapest; exhausted by the war and its aftermath, the populace accepted Horthy's leadership. In January 1920, parliamentary elections were held, and Horthy was proclaimed regent of the reestablished Kingdom of Hungary, inaugurating the so-called "Horthy era" (Horthy-kor). The new government worked quickly to normalise foreign relations while turning a blind eye to a White Terror that swept through the countryside; extrajudicial killings of suspected communists and Jews lasted well into 1920. On 4 June 1920, the Treaty of Trianon established new borders for Hungary. The country lost 71% of its territory and 66% of its pre-war population, as well as many sources of raw materials and its sole port at Fiume.[94][95] Though the revision of the treaty quickly rose to the top of the national political agenda, the Horthy government was not willing to resort to military intervention to do so. The initial years of the Horthy regime were preoccupied with putsch attempts by Charles IV, the Austro-Hungarian pretender; continued suppression of communists; and a migration crisis triggered by the Trianon territorial changes. The government's actions continued to drift right with the passage of antisemitic laws and, because of the continued isolation of the Little Entente, economic and then political gravitation towards Italy and Germany. The Great Depression further exacerbated the situation, and the popularity of fascist politicians increased, such as Gyula Gömbös and Ferenc Szálasi, promising economic and social recovery. Horthy's nationalist agenda reached its apogee in 1938 and 1940, when the Nazis rewarded Hungary's staunchly pro-Germany foreign policy in the First and Second Vienna Awards, peacefully restoring ethnic-Hungarian-majority areas lost after Trianon. In 1939, Hungary regained further territory from Czechoslovakia through force. Hungary formally joined the Axis powers on 20 November 1940 and in 1941 participated in the invasion of Yugoslavia, gaining some of its former territories in the south. Main articles: Hungary during World War II, Holocaust in Hungary, and Soviet occupation of Hungary Kingdom of Hungary, 1941–1944 Hungary formally entered World War II as an Axis power on 26 June 1941, declaring war on the Soviet Union after unidentified planes bombed Kassa, Munkács, and Rahó. Hungarian troops fought on the Eastern Front for two years. Despite early success at the Battle of Uman,[96] the government began seeking a secret peace pact with the Allies after the Second Army suffered catastrophic losses at the River Don in January 1943. Learning of the planned defection, German troops occupied Hungary on 19 March 1944 to guarantee Horthy's compliance. In October, as the Soviet front approached, and the government made further efforts to disengage from the war, German troops ousted Horthy and installed a puppet government under Szálasi's fascist Arrow Cross Party.[96] Szálasi pledged all the country's capabilities in service of the German war machine. By October 1944, the Soviets had reached the river Tisza, and despite some losses, succeeded in encircling and besieging Budapest in December. On 13 February 1945, Budapest surrendered; by April, German troops left the country under Soviet military occupation. 200,000 Hungarians were expelled from Czechoslovakia in exchange for 70,000 Slovaks living in Hungary. 202,000 ethnic Germans were expelled to Germany,[97] and through the 1947 Paris Peace Treaties, Hungary was again reduced to its immediate post-Trianon borders. Jewish women being arrested on Wesselényi Street in Budapest during the Holocaust, c. 20–22 October 1944 The war left Hungary devastated, destroying over 60% of the economy and causing significant loss of life. In addition to the over 600,000 Hungarian Jews killed,[98] as many as 280,000[99] other Hungarians were raped, murdered and executed or deported for slave labour.[100][101][102][103][104][105][106][107][108][109] After German occupation, Hungary participated in the Holocaust,[110][111] deporting nearly 440,000 Jews, mainly to Auschwitz; nearly all of them were murdered.[112][113] The Horthy government's complicity in the Holocaust remains a point of controversy and contention. Main articles: Hungarian Republic (1946–1949), Hungarian People's Republic, and Hungarian Revolution of 1956 See also: Goulash Communism A destroyed Soviet tank in Budapest during the Revolution of 1956. Time's Man of the Year for 1956 was the Hungarian freedom fighter[114] Following the defeat of Nazi Germany, Hungary became a satellite state of the Soviet Union. The Soviet leadership selected Mátyás Rákosi to front the Stalinisation of the country, and Rákosi de facto ruled Hungary from 1949 to 1956. His government's policies of militarisation, industrialisation, collectivisation, and war compensation led to a severe decline in living standards. In imitation of Stalin's KGB, the Rákosi government established a secret political police, the ÁVH, to enforce the regime; approximately 350,000 officials and intellectuals were imprisoned or executed from 1948 to 1956.[115] Many freethinkers, democrats, and Horthy-era dignitaries were secretly arrested and extrajudicially interned in domestic and foreign gulags. Some 600,000 Hungarians were deported to Soviet labour camps, where at least 200,000 died.[116] After Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet Union pursued a programme of de-Stalinisation that was inimical to Rákosi, leading to his deposition. The following political cooling saw the ascent of Imre Nagy to the premiership. Nagy promised market liberalisation and political openness. Rákosi eventually managed to discredit Nagy and replace him with the more hard-line Ernő Gerő. Hungary joined the Warsaw Pact in May 1955, as societal dissatisfaction with the regime swelled. Following the firing on peaceful demonstrations by Soviet soldiers and secret police, and rallies throughout the country on 23 October 1956, protesters took to the streets in Budapest, initiating the 1956 Revolution. In an effort to quell the chaos, Nagy returned as premier, promised free elections, and took Hungary out of the Warsaw Pact. The violence nonetheless continued as revolutionary militias sprung up against the Soviet Army and the ÁVH; the roughly 3,000-strong resistance fought Soviet tanks using Molotov cocktails and machine-pistols. Though the preponderance of the Soviets was immense, they suffered heavy losses, and by 30 October 1956, most Soviet troops had withdrawn from Budapest to garrison the countryside. For a time, the Soviet leadership was unsure how to respond but eventually decided to intervene to prevent a destabilisation of the Soviet bloc. On 4 November, reinforcements of more than 150,000 troops and 2,500 tanks entered the country from the Soviet Union.[117] Nearly 20,000 Hungarians were killed resisting the intervention, while an additional 21,600 were imprisoned afterward for political reasons. Some 13,000 were interned and 230 brought to trial and executed. Nagy was secretly tried, found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed by hanging in June 1958. Because borders were briefly opened, nearly a quarter of a million people fled the country by the time the revolution was suppressed.[118] János Kádár, General Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (1956–1988) After a second, briefer period of Soviet military occupation, János Kádár, Nagy's former minister of state, was chosen by the Soviet leadership to head the new government and chair the new ruling Socialist Workers' Party. Kádár quickly normalised the situation. In 1963, the government granted a general amnesty. Kádár proclaimed a new policy line, according to which the people were no longer compelled to profess loyalty to the party if they tacitly accepted the socialist regime as a fact of life. Kádár introduced new planning priorities in the economy, such as allowing farmers significant plots of private land within the collective farm system (háztáji gazdálkodás). The living standard rose as consumer goods and food production took precedence over military production, which was reduced to one-tenth of prerevolutionary levels. In 1968, the New Economic Mechanism introduced free-market elements into the socialist command economy. From the 1960s through the late 1980s, Hungary was often referred to as "the happiest barrack" within the Eastern bloc. During the latter part of the Cold War Hungary's GDP per capita was fourth only to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet Union.[119] As a result of this relatively high standard of living, a more liberalised economy, a less censored press, and less restricted travel rights, Hungary was generally considered one of the more liberal countries in which to live in Central Europe during communism. In 1980, Hungary sent a Cosmonaut into space as part of the Interkosmos. The first Hungarian astronaut was Bertalan Farkas. Hungary became the seventh nation to be represented in space by him.[120] In the 1980s, however, living standards steeply declined again because of a worldwide recession to which communism was unable to respond.[121] By the time Kádár died in 1989, the Soviet Union was in steep decline and a younger generation of reformists saw liberalisation as the solution to economic and social issues. See also: Revolutions of 1989, 2006 protests in Hungary, 2015 European migrant crisis, and COVID-19 pandemic in Hungary The Visegrád Group signing ceremony, 15 February 1991 Hungary's transition from communism to capitalism (rendszerváltás, "regime change") was peaceful and prompted by economic stagnation, domestic political pressure, and changing relations with other Warsaw Pact countries. Although the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party began Round Table Talks with various opposition groups in March 1989, the reburial of Imre Nagy as a revolutionary martyr that June is widely considered the symbolic end of communism in Hungary. Free elections were held in May 1990, and the Hungarian Democratic Forum, a major conservative opposition group, was elected to the head of a coalition government. József Antall became the first democratically elected prime minister since World War II. With the removal of state subsidies and rapid privatisation in 1991, Hungary was affected by a severe economic recession. The Antall government's austerity measures proved unpopular, and the Communist Party's legal and political heir, the Socialist Party, won the subsequent 1994 elections. This abrupt shift in the political landscape was repeated in 1998 and 2002; in each electoral cycle, the governing party was ousted and the erstwhile opposition elected. Like most other post-communist European states, however, Hungary broadly pursued an integrationist agenda, joining NATO in 1999 and the European Union in 2004. As a NATO member, Hungary was involved in the Yugoslav Wars. Police car at Hungary-Serbia border barrierIn 2006, major nationwide protests erupted after it was revealed that Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány had claimed in a closed-door speech that his party "lied" to win the recent elections. The popularity of left-wing parties plummeted in the ensuing political upheaval, and in 2010, Viktor Orbán's national-conservative Fidesz party was elected to a parliamentary supermajority. The legislature consequently approved a new constitution, among other sweeping governmental and legal changes including the establishment of new parliamentary constituencies, decreasing the number of parliamentarians, and shifting to single-round parliamentary elections. Fidesz has won supermajorities in every subsequent election. Since Orbán's election in 2010, Hungary has undergone democratic backsliding. It has been characterised as an illiberal democracy,[122]:95 hybrid regime, kleptocracy, dominant-party system, and mafia state.[123][124][125] Orbán has publicly embraced illiberalism,[126]:9 characterising Hungary as an "illiberal Christian democracy".[127][128] As a result of these developments, Hungary's relationship with the United States and the European Union have entered a period of protracted strain. Past and ongoing areas of conflict include LGBT rights,[129] migration,[130][131] the lex CEU,[132] Hungary's decision to authorise Russian and Chinese vaccines during the coronavirus pandemic,[133][134] and international sanctions against Russia.[135] The Orbán government has simultaneously come under increased international scrutiny over rule-of-law concerns. Hungary has and continues to dispute these allegations.[136] In 2018, the European Parliament voted to act against Hungary under the terms of Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union. In March 2025, Estonia pushed for a suspension of Hungary's EU voting rights.[137][138] Main articles: Geography of Hungary and Climate of Hungary See also: List of national parks of Hungary Geographic map of Hungary Hungary is a landlocked country. Its geography has traditionally been defined by its two main waterways, the Danube and Tisza rivers. The common tripartite division—Dunántúl ("beyond the Danube", Transdanubia), Tiszántúl ("beyond the Tisza"), and Duna–Tisza köze ("between the Danube and Tisza")—is a reflection of this. The Danube flows north–south through the centre of contemporary Hungary, and the entire country lies within its drainage basin. Transdanubia, which stretches westward from the centre of the country towards Austria, is a primarily hilly region with a terrain varied by low mountains. These include the very eastern stretch of the Alps, Alpokalja, in the west of the country, the Transdanubian Mountains in the central region of Transdanubia, and the Mecsek Mountains and Villány Mountains in the south. The highest point of the area is the Írott-kő in the Alps, at 882 metres (2,894 ft). The Little Hungarian Plain (Kisalföld) is found in northern Transdanubia. Lake Balaton and Lake Hévíz, the largest lake in Central Europe and the largest thermal lake in the world, respectively, are in Transdanubia as well. Lake Balaton The Duna–Tisza köze and Tiszántúl are characterised mainly by the Great Hungarian Plain (Alföld), which stretches across most of the eastern and southeastern areas of the country. To the north of the plain are the foothills of the Carpathians in a wide band near the Slovakian border. The Kékes at 1,014 m (3,327 ft) is the tallest mountain in Hungary and is found there. Phytogeographically, Hungary belongs to the Central European province of the Circumboreal Region within the Boreal Kingdom. According to the WWF, the territory of Hungary belongs to the terrestrial ecoregion of Pannonian mixed forests.[139] Hungary has a temperate seasonal climate,[140][141] with generally warm summers with low overall humidity levels but frequent rain showers and cold snowy winters. Average annual temperature is 9.7 °C (49.5 °F). Temperature extremes are 41.9 °C (107.4 °F) on 20 July 2007 at Kiskunhalas in the summer and −35 °C (−31.0 °F) on 16 February 1940 at Miskolc in the winter. Average high temperature in the summer is 23 to 28 °C (73 to 82 °F) and average low temperature in the winter is −3 to −7 °C (27 to 19 °F). The average yearly rainfall is approximately 600 mm (23.6 in). Main articles: Politics of Hungary, Government of Hungary, and Taxation in HungaryTamás Sulyok,President since 2024Viktor Orbán,Prime Minister since 2010 Hungary is a unitary, parliamentary republic. The Hungarian political system operates under a framework reformed in 2012; this constitutional document is the Fundamental Law of Hungary. Amendments generally require a two-thirds majority of parliament; the fundamental principles of the constitution (as expressed in the articles guaranteeing human dignity, the separation of powers, the state structure, and the rule of law) are valid in perpetuity. 199 Members of Parliament (országgyűlési képviselő) are elected to the highest organ of state authority, the unicameral Országgyűlés (National Assembly), every four years in a single-round first-past-the-post election with an election threshold of 5%.[citation needed]The Hungarian Parliament Building on the banks of the Danube in Budapest The President of the Republic (köztársasági elnök) serves as the head of state and is elected by the National Assembly every five years. The president is invested primarily with representative responsibilities and powers: receiving foreign heads of state, formally nominating the prime minister at the recommendation of the National Assembly, and serving as commander-in-chief of the armed forces.[142] Importantly, the president is also invested with veto power and may send legislation to the 15-member Constitutional Court for review. The third most significant governmental position in Hungary is the Speaker of the National Assembly, who is elected by the National Assembly and responsible for overseeing the daily sessions of the body.[citation needed] The prime minister (miniszterelnök) is elected by the National Assembly, serving as the head of government and exercising executive power. Traditionally, the prime minister is the leader of the largest party in parliament. The prime minister selects Cabinet ministers and has the exclusive right to dismiss them, although cabinet nominees must appear before consultative open hearings before one or more parliamentary committees, survive a vote in the National Assembly, and be formally approved by the president. The Cabinet reports to Parliament.[citation needed] Main articles: Political parties in Hungary, Elections in Hungary, and Electoral system of Hungary Current Structure of the National Assembly of HungaryStructureSeats199Political groupsGovernment (135) Fidesz (116) KDNP (19) Supported by (1) German minority (1) Opposition (65) United for Hungary (57) DK (16) Momentum (10) MSZP (10) Jobbik (8) Dialogue (6) LMP (5) Ind. (2) MHM (6) Since the fall of communism, Hungary has a multi-party system. The last Hungarian parliamentary election took place on 3 April 2022.[143] The result was a victory for Fidesz–KDNP alliance, preserving its two-thirds majority with Orbán remaining prime minister.[144] It was the third election according to the new Constitution of Hungary which went into force on 1 January 2012. The new electoral law also entered into force that day. The voters elected 199 MPs instead of previous 386 lawmakers.[145][146] Since 2014, voters of ethnic minorities in Hungary are able to vote on nationality lists. The minorities can obtain a preferential mandate if they reach the quarter of the ninety-third part of the list votes.[147] Nationalities who did not get a mandate could send a nationality spokesman to the National Assembly. The current political landscape in Hungary is dominated by the conservative Fidesz, who have a near supermajority, and three medium-sized parties, the left-wing Democratic Coalition (DK), the far-right Our Homeland Movement and liberal Momentum. Main articles: Law of Hungary, Law enforcement in Hungary, and Human rights in Hungary The original and future seat of the Curia, the Supreme court of Hungary The judicial system of Hungary is a civil law system, divided between courts with regular civil and criminal jurisdiction, and administrative courts with jurisdiction over litigation between individuals and the public administration. Hungarian law is codified and based on German law and, in a wider sense, civil law or Roman law. The court system for civil and criminal jurisdiction consists of local courts (járásbíróság), regional appellate courts (ítélőtábla), and the supreme court (Kúria). Hungary's highest courts are located in Budapest.[148] Law enforcement in Hungary is split among the police and the National Tax and Customs Administration. The Hungarian Police is the main and largest state law enforcement agency in Hungary. It carries nearly all general police duties such as criminal investigation, patrol activity, traffic policing, border control. It is led by the national police commissioner under the control of the Minister of the Interior. The body is divided into county police departments which are also divided into regional and town police departments. The National Police has subordinate agencies with nationwide jurisdiction, such as the "Nemzeti Nyomozó Iroda" (National Bureau of Investigation), a civilian police force specialised in investigating serious crimes, and the gendarmerie-like, militarised "Készenléti rendőrség" (Stand-by Police) mainly dealing with riots and often reinforcing local police forces. Because of Hungary's accession to the Schengen Treaty, the police and border guards were merged into a single national corps, with the border guards (Határőrség Magyarországon) becoming police officers. This merger took place in January 2008. The Customs and Excise Authority remained subject to the Ministry of Finance under the National Tax and Customs Administration.[149] Main article: Foreign relations of Hungary Meeting of the leaders of the Visegrád Group, Germany and France in 2013 United Nations conference in the assembly hall of the House of Magnates in the Hungarian Parliament Building The foreign policy is based on four basic commitments: to Atlantic co-operation, to European integration, to international development and to international law.[150] Hungary has been a member of the United Nations since December 1955 and a member of the European Union, NATO, the OECD, the Visegrád Group, the WTO, the World Bank, the AIIB and the IMF. Hungary took on the presidency of the Council of the European Union for half a year in 2011 and the next will be in 2024. In 2015, Hungary was the fifth largest OECD non-DAC donor of development aid in the world, which represents 0.13% of its Gross National Income. Budapest is home to more than 100 embassies and representative bodies as an international political actor.[151] Hungary hosts the main and regional headquarters of many international organisations as well, including European Institute of Innovation and Technology, European Police College, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Centre for Democratic Transition, Institute of International Education, International Labour Organization, International Organization for Migration, International Red Cross, Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, Danube Commission and others.[152] Since 1989, the top foreign policy goal has been achieving integration into Western economic and security organisations. Hungary joined the Partnership for Peace programme in 1994 and has actively supported the IFOR and SFOR missions in Bosnia. Since 1989 Hungary has improved its often frosty neighbour relations by signing basic treaties with Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. These renounce all outstanding territorial claims and lay the foundation for constructive relations. However, the issue of ethnic Hungarian minority rights in Romania, Slovakia, and Serbia periodically cause bilateral tensions to flare up. However, relations with Serbia have more recently become extremely close due to strong Hungarian advocacy for Serbian EU membership, while relations with Slovakia have warmed due to cooperation on shared priorities within EU structures.[153][154] Since 2017, the relations with Ukraine rapidly deteriorated over the issue of the Hungarian minority in Ukraine.[155] Since 1989, Hungary has signed all of the OSCE documents, and served as the OSCE's Chairman-in-Office in 1997. Historically, Hungary has had particularly friendly relations with Poland; this special relationship was recognised by the parliaments of both countries in 2007 with the joint declaration of 23 March as "The Day of Polish-Hungarian Friendship".[156] According to the 2024 Global Peace Index, Hungary is the 14th most peaceful country in the world.[157] Main articles: Hungarian Defence Forces and Military history of Hungary See also: List of wars involving Hungary and List of equipment of the Hungarian Ground Forces HDF 34th Special Forces Battalion JAS 39 Gripen multirole combat aircraft The president holds the title of commander-in-chief of the nation's armed forces. The Ministry of Defence jointly with chief of staff administers the armed forces, including the Hungarian Ground Force (HDF) and the Hungarian Air Force. Since 2007, the Hungarian Armed Forces has been under a unified command structure. The Ministry of Defence maintains political and civil control over the army. A subordinate Joint Forces Command coordinates and commands the HDF. In 2016, the armed forces had 31,080 personnel on active duty, the operative reserve brought the total number of troops to fifty thousand. In 2016, it was planned that military spending the following year would be $1.21 billion, about 0.94% of the country's GDP, well below the NATO target of 2%. In 2012, the government adopted a resolution in which it pledged to increase defence spending to 1.4% of GDP by 2022.[158] Military service is voluntary, though conscription may occur in wartime. In a significant move for modernisation, Hungary decided in 2001 to buy 14 JAS 39 Gripen fighter aircraft for about 800 million EUR. Hungarian National Cyber Security Centre was re-organised in 2016 in order to become more efficient through cyber security.[159] In 2016, the Hungarian military had about 700 troops stationed in foreign countries as part of international peacekeeping forces, including 100 HDF troops in the NATO-led ISAF force in Afghanistan, 210 Hungarian soldiers in Kosovo under command of KFOR, and 160 troops in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hungary sent a 300-strong logistics unit to Iraq in order to help the U.S. occupation with armed transport convoys, though public opinion opposed the country's participation in the war.[citation needed] Main article: Administrative divisions of Hungary Hungary is divided into 19 counties (vármegye). The capital (főváros) Budapest is an independent entity. The counties and the capital are the 20 NUTS third-level units of Hungary. The states are further subdivided into 174 districts (járás).[160] The districts are further divided into towns and villages, of which 25 are designated towns with county rights (megyei jogú város), sometimes known as "urban counties" in English. The local authorities of these towns have extended powers, but these towns belong to the territory of the respective district instead of being independent territorial units. County and district councils and municipalities have different roles and separate responsibilities relating to local government. The role of the counties are basically administrative and focus on strategic development, while preschools, public water utilities, garbage disposal, elderly care, and rescue services are administered by the municipalities. Since 1996, the counties and city of Budapest have been grouped into seven regions for statistical and development purposes. These seven regions constitute NUTS' second-level units of Hungary. They are Central Hungary, Central Transdanubia, Northern Great Plain, Northern Hungary, Southern Transdanubia, Southern Great Plain, and Western Transdanubia. Counties of HungaryRegions of HungaryThe districts of HungaryTowns and villages in Hungary County(vármegye) Administrativecentre Population Region Bács-Kiskun Kecskemét 524,841 Southern Great Plain Baranya Pécs 391,455 Southern Transdanubia Békés Békéscsaba 361,802 Southern Great Plain Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Miskolc 684,793 Northern Hungary Capital City of Budapest Budapest 1,744,665 Central Hungary Csongrád-Csanád Szeged 421,827 Southern Great Plain Fejér Székesfehérvár 426,120 Central Transdanubia Győr-Moson-Sopron Győr 449,967 Western Transdanubia Hajdú-Bihar Debrecen 565,674 Northern Great Plain Heves Eger 307,985 Northern Hungary Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok Szolnok 386,752 Northern Great Plain Komárom-Esztergom Tatabánya 311,411 Central Transdanubia Nógrád Salgótarján 201,919 Northern Hungary Pest Budapest 1,237,561 Central Hungary Somogy Kaposvár 317,947 Southern Transdanubia Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg Nyíregyháza 552,000 Northern Great Plain Tolna Szekszárd 231,183 Southern Transdanubia Vas Szombathely 257,688 Western Transdanubia Veszprém Veszprém 353,068 Central Transdanubia Zala Zalaegerszeg 287,043 Western Transdanubia Main article: List of cities and towns of Hungary Budapest, the capital and most populous city of Hungary Hungary has 3,152 municipalities as of 15 July 2013: 346 towns (Hungarian term: város, plural: városok; the terminology does not distinguish between cities and towns – the term town is used in official translations) and 2,806 villages (Hungarian: község, plural: községek) which fully cover the territory of the country. The number of towns can change, since villages can be elevated to town status by act of the president. Budapest has a special status and is not included in any county while 23 of the towns are so-called urban counties (megyei jogú város – town with county rights). All county seats except Budapest are urban counties. Four of the cities (Budapest, Miskolc, Győr, and Pécs) have agglomerations, and the Hungarian Statistical Office distinguishes seventeen other areas in earlier stages of agglomeration development.[161] The largest city is Budapest. There are more than 100 villages with fewer than 100 inhabitants while the smallest villages have fewer than 20 inhabitants.[citation needed] Main article: Economy of Hungary Hungary is an OECD high-income mixed economy with a very high human development index and skilled labour force with the 16th lowest income inequality in the world.[162] Furthermore, it is the 9th most complex economy according to the Economic Complexity Index.[163] The economy is the 57th-largest in the world (out of 188 countries measured by IMF) with $265.037 billion output[164] and ranks 49th in the world in terms of GDP per capita by purchasing power parity. The employment rate was 68.3% in 2017;[165] the employment structure shows the characteristics of post-industrial economies, 63.2% of employed workforce work in service sector, the industry contributed by 29.7%, while agriculture with 7.1%. Unemployment rate was 4.1% in 2017,[166] down from 11% during the 2008 financial crisis. Hungary is part of the European single market which represents more than 508 million consumers. Several domestic commercial policies are determined by agreements among European Union members and by EU legislation. Hungary is an export-oriented market economy with a heavy emphasis on foreign trade, thus the country is the 36th largest export economy in the world. The country has more than $100 billion export in 2015 with high, $9.003 billion trade surplus, of which 79% went to the EU and 21% was extra-EU trade.[167] Hungary has a more than 80% privately owned economy with 39.1% overall taxation, which provides the basis for the country's welfare economy. On the expenditure side, household consumption is the main component of GDP and accounts for 50% of its total use, followed by gross fixed capital formation with 22% and government expenditure with 20%.[168] Hungary continues to be one of the leading nations for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) in Central and Eastern Europe; the inward FDI in the country was $119.8 billion in 2015, while investing more than $50 billion abroad.[7] As of 2015[update], the key trading partners were Germany, Austria, Romania, Slovakia, France, Italy, Poland and Czech Republic.[169] Major industries include food processing, pharmaceuticals, motor vehicles, information technology, chemicals, metallurgy, machinery, electrical goods, and tourism (with 12.1 million international tourists in 2014).[170] Hungary is the largest electronics producer in Central and Eastern Europe. Electronics manufacturing and research are among the main drivers of innovation and economic growth in the country. In the past 20 years Hungary has also grown into a major centre for mobile technology, information security, and related hardware research.[171] Large Hungarian companies are included in the BUX, the stock market index listed on Budapest Stock Exchange. Well-known companies include the Fortune Global 500 firm MOL Group, the OTP Bank, Gedeon Richter Plc., Magyar Telekom, CIG Pannonia, FHB Bank, Zwack Unicum and more.[172] Besides this Hungary has a large portion of specialised small and medium enterprise, for example a significant number of automotive suppliers and technology start ups among others.[173] Budapest is the financial and business capital, classified as an Alpha world city in the study by the Globalization and World Cities Research Network.[174] Budapest is the primate city of Hungary regarding business and economy, accounting for 39% of the national income, the city has a gross metropolitan product more than $100 billion in 2015, making it one of the largest regional economies in the European Union.[175][176] Budapest is also among the Top 100 GDP performing cities in the world, measured by PricewaterhouseCoopers.[177] Hungary maintains its own currency, the Hungarian forint (HUF), although the economy fulfills the Maastricht criteria with the exception of public debt, but it is also significantly below the EU average with the level of 75.3% in 2015. The Hungarian National Bank is currently focusing on price stability with an inflation target of 3%.[178] Hungary's corporate tax rate is only 9%, which is relatively low for EU states.[179] Main articles: Science and technology in Hungary and List of Hungarian Nobel laureates Albert Szent-Györgyi won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his discovery of Vitamin C. The Nobel Prize has been awarded to 15 Hungarians Founded in 1782, the Budapest University of Technology and Economics is the oldest institute of technology in the world Hungary's achievements in science and technology have been significant, and research and development efforts form an integral part of the country's economy. Hungary spent 1.61% of its gross domestic product (GDP) on civil research and development in 2020, which is the 25th highest ratio in the world.[180] Hungary ranks 32nd among the most innovative countries in the Bloomberg Innovation Index.[181] Hungary was ranked 36th in the Global Innovation Index in 2024.[182] In 2014, Hungary counted 2,651 full-time equivalent researchers per million inhabitants, steadily increasing from 2,131 in 2010 and compares with 3,984 in the U.S. or 4,380 in Germany.[183] Hungary's high technology industry has benefited from both the country's skilled workforce and the strong presence of foreign high-tech firms and research centres. Hungary also has one of the highest rates of filed patents, the sixth highest ratio of high-tech and medium high-tech output in the total industrial output, the 12th highest research FDI inflow, placed 14th in research talent in business enterprise and has the 17th best overall innovation efficiency ratio in the world.[184] The key actor of research and development in Hungary is the National Research, Development and Innovation (NRDI) Office, which is a national strategic and funding agency for scientific research, development and innovation, the primary source of advice on RDI policy for the Hungarian government and the primary RDI funding agency. Its role is to develop RDI policy and ensure that Hungary adequately invest in RDI by funding excellent research and supporting innovation to increase competitiveness and to prepare the RDI strategy of the government, to handle the NRDI Fund and represents the government and RDI community in international organisations.[185] Scientific research is supported partly by industry and partly by the state, through universities and by scientific state-institutions such as Hungarian Academy of Sciences.[186][187] Hungary has been the home of some of the most prominent researchers in various scientific disciplines, notably physics, mathematics, chemistry and engineering. As of 2018, thirteen Hungarian scientists have been recipients of a Nobel Prize.[188] Until 2012 three individuals—Csoma, János Bolyai and Tihanyi—were included in the UNESCO Memory of the World register as well as the collective contributions Tabula Hungariae and Bibliotheca Corviniana. Contemporary scientists include mathematician László Lovász, physicist Albert-László Barabási, physicist Ferenc Krausz, and biochemist Árpád Pusztai. Hungary has excellent mathematics education which has trained numerous outstanding scientists. Famous Hungarian mathematicians include father Farkas Bolyai and son János Bolyai, who was one of the founders of non-Euclidean geometry; Paul Erdős, famed for publishing in over forty languages and whose Erdős numbers are still tracked, and John von Neumann, a key contributor in the fields of quantum mechanics and game theory, a pioneer of digital computing, and the chief mathematician in the Manhattan Project. Notable Hungarian inventions include the lead dioxide match (János Irinyi), a type of carburetor (Donát Bánki, János Csonka), the electric (AC) train engine and generator (Kálmán Kandó), holography (Dennis Gabor), the Kalman filter (Rudolf E. Kálmán), and Rubik's Cube (Ernő Rubik). Main article: Transport in Hungary Siemens Desiro passenger trains on the Hungarian State Railways network, which is one of the densest in the world Hungary has a highly developed road, railway, air, and water transport system. Budapest serves as an important hub for the Hungarian railway system (MÁV). The capital is served by three large train stations called Keleti (Eastern), Nyugati (Western), and Déli (Southern) pályaudvars (termii). Szolnok is the most important railway hub outside Budapest, while Tiszai Railway Station in Miskolc and the main stations of Szombathely, Győr, Szeged, and Székesfehérvár are also key to the network. From March 2024, transport on the Hungarian railway MÁV will be free for people aged 65 and over and under 14 years of age.[189] Budapest, Debrecen, Miskolc, and Szeged have tram networks. The Budapest Metro is the second-oldest underground metro system in the world; its Line 1 dates from 1896. The system consists of four lines. A commuter rail system, HÉV, operates in the Budapest metropolitan area. Hungary has a total length of approximately 1,314 km (816.48 mi) motorways (Hungarian: autópálya). Motorway sections are being added to the existing network, which already connects many major economically important cities to the capital. Ports are located at Budapest, Dunaújváros and Baja. There are five international airports: Budapest Ferenc Liszt (informally called "Ferihegy"), Debrecen, Hévíz–Balaton (also called Sármellék Airport), Győr-Pér, and Pécs-Pogány, but only two of these (Budapest and Debrecen) receive scheduled flights. Low-budget airline Wizz Air is based at Ferihegy. Main articles: Energy in Hungary and Renewable energy in Hungary Headquarters of the MOL Group Hungary's total energy supply is dominated by fossil fuels, with natural gas occupying the largest share, followed by oil and coal.[190] In June 2020, Hungary passed a law binding itself to a target of net-zero emissions by 2050. As part of a broader restructuring of the nation's energy and climate policies, Hungary also extended its National Energy Strategy 2030 to look even further, adding an outlook until 2040 that prioritises carbon-neutral and cost-effective energy while focusing on reinforcing energy security and energy independence.[190] Key forces in the country's 2050 target include renewables, nuclear electricity, and electrification of end-use sectors. Significant investments in the power sector are expected, including for the construction of two new nuclear energy generating units. Renewable energy capacity has increased significantly, but in recent years growth in the renewables sector has stagnated. What is more, certain policies that limit development of wind power are expected to negatively impact the renewables sector.[190] Hungary's emission of greenhouse gases has dropped alongside the economy's decreasing use of carbon-based fuels. However, independent analysis has identified space for Hungary to set more ambitious emiss

Polgár generally considered the strongest female chess player of all time. Some of the world's best sabre athletes have historically also hailed from Hungary,[255][256] and in 2009, the Hungary men's national ice hockey team qualified for their first IIHF World Championship, in 2015, they qualified for their second world championship in the top division. Hungary portalEurope portal Outline of Hungary Index of Hungary-related articles ^ Multiple answer was available in the census, hence the total may add to more than 100%. ^ Excluding population who did not declare an ethnicity. ^ Hungarian: Magyarország [ˈmɒɟɒrorsaːɡ] Nagy, Kálmán (2007). A honfoglalás korának hadtörténete [Military History of the Age of the Hungarian Conquest] (in Hungarian). Budapest: Heraldika Kiadó. ^ "The Story Behind the Hungarian National Anthem". Jules S. Vállay. Archived from the original on 10 October 2017. Retrieved 8 May 2017. ^ a b "The Fundamental Law of Hungary" (PDF). Hungarian State. 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