

PRESS RELEASE  
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## UNPRECEDENTED INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS: KESZTHELY IS THE ONLY HUNGARIAN TOWN TO BE INCLUDED IN THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF RURAL LAKES

Today, the representative body supported the initiative of the mayor Dr. Gergely Tóth to join the European Network of European Rural Lakes (nEULakes). Keszthely - and with it Lake Balaton - is the first and only Hungarian town to join this prestigious European cooperation, alongside the beautiful lakes and lakeside towns of countries such as Italy, Spain, Finland, Switzerland, Luxembourg, France, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia, Ireland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Poland and Greece.

This is a huge opportunity for the city, for the Balaton region, for Keszthely-Zala region!

The city, along with Lake Balaton, will be part of the European bloodstream in environmental, social and economic terms! In the short term, on the one hand, it will ensure direct access to European Union funds, in which the association has accumulated a decade and a half of experience since 2010. On the other hand, the development of a new network will provide the opportunity for international exchanges of experience and access to good practice from lakeside municipalities in other countries. In the medium term - through Keszthely - all the coastal municipalities of the region and Lake Balaton can benefit from this membership and strengthen the regional position of the town. In the long term, it will enhance the prestige and image of our town abroad.

Riccardo Venchiarutti, President of the Association and Mayor of the Italian municipality of Iseo, had a meeting with the Mayor of Keszthely on 9 January 2025 and invited the town to join.

Why Keszthely? The Alliance's criteria included, on the one hand, the natural and cultural values of the town and its surroundings, its geographical location and, on the other hand, the professional background and main vision of the new mayor for the town. Dr Gergely Tóth considers this step to be a great achievement and an opportunity which the municipality will exploit to the full in the future.

The aim of the nEULakes Alliance is to establish long-term cooperation between municipalities in several European countries in a holistic approach to the use of lakes. The cities involved have similar environmental, social and economic characteristics and synergies at European level will increase knowledge and enhance the effectiveness of local development initiatives.

Articles that were published:

<https://www.magyarhirlap.hu/kronika/20250129-az-europai-videki-tavak-halozatanak-tagja-lett-keszthely>

<https://www.economx.hu/belfold/keszthely-balaton-siker-magyar-varos-europa-szovetseg.803472.html>

<https://www.balatonica.hu/article/Keszthely-is-tagja-lett-a-nivos-Europai-Videki-Tavak-Halozatanak>

<https://www.zaol.hu/helyi-kozelet/2025/01/testuleti-ules-keszthely>

<https://www.hirbalaton.hu/keszthely-egyeduli-magyar-varoskent-felvetelt-nyert-az-europai-videki-tavak-halozataba/>