



PRESS RELEASE
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The world's best balloonists to compete in Hungary this September

Lausanne, Switzerland, 29 May 2024 – **Over a hundred hot air balloons from more than thirty countries around the world will colour the skies of Szeged, Hungary, between 8-14 September 2024, at the 25th FAI World Hot Air Balloon Championship, the biggest international competition in hot air ballooning.**

A multitude of huge and colourful hot air balloons, silently flying between heaven and earth, will take over the airspace of Szeged, one of the most beautiful cities in Hungary.

The sport's most prestigious competition will attract participants from more than 30 countries from all over the world, from Australia to Canada, including Japan, China, India, Brazil, the United States, - one of the top countries of previous World Championships - and many other European countries, and of course everyone will be cheering on the Hungarian competitors.

For the first time, pilots from Colombia, Egypt, Israel and Armenia will be welcomed to the FAI World Championships.

Previous champion Swiss pilot Stefan Zeberli will be defending his title, gained at the FAI World Hot Air Balloon Championships in Slovenia in 2022. Yudai Fujita of Japan became Vice-Champion in 2022, so all eyes will be on him as he endeavours to take the top spot on the podium this year, although France's Nicolas Schwartz who came third in 2022 will also be hoping to climb up the rankings.

"The people of Szeged and hot-air balloon enthusiasts are used to seeing huge, colourful wonders floating into our sights every year. In 2021, we hosted the European Hot Air Balloon Championships, and this year it is a great honour to host the World Championships as well," said Viktor Knezevics, Managing Director of Szeged Transport Company.

In September, Szeged will become the centre of international hot air ballooning, with spectacular balloons starting to appear in the sky during the training days between 5-7 September. The competition starts on the 8th and for almost a week the colourful aerial parade will amaze spectators.

Editor's note

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About FAI

FAI, the World Air Sports Federation, is the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records. The FAI was founded in 1905 and is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

FAI activities include Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Airships, Amateur-Built and Experimental Aircraft, Balloons, Drones, Gliding, Hang Gliding, Helicopters, Manpowered Flying, Microlights, Parachuting, Paragliding, Paramotors, Power Flying and all other Aeronautic activities and Space records.

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