

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Calling Planet Earth - Space Outreach to the General Public (6)

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POPULARIZATION THROUGH A QUARTER OF THE SPACE AGE - 15 YEARS OF A SPACE WEB
PORTAL IN HUNGARY

Abstract

In 2017, we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the beginning of space age, as well as the 15th birthday of the popular Hungarian astronautical web portal Űrvilág (the name meaning Space World, www.urvilag.hu). A small group of young experts, students and space enthusiasts decided to dedicate some of their spare time to create and maintain a daily news site on a non-profit basis. As opposed to printed media, publishing on the web has certain advantages: it requires moderate financial investment, can disseminate information quickly and can potentially reach out to a large audience. The access to our articles has always been free for the readers and we declared that other media outlets can also freely use our materials provided that the source is properly referenced. We offer a searchable on-line full-text data base of our articles published since the very beginning – nearly 8000 items by now. These serve our original aim of bringing international and national space news, current events closer to the public in their mother tongue.

We do not only translate and give background to leading international space news. The portal is strongly committed to communicating the wide range of applications and spin-offs rooted in space activity. We realized that this aspect is usually missing from the mass media, although the acceptance of space research in the general public critically depends on the understanding of the space-related applications that affect the modern economy and everyday life. We also provide the Hungarian space research community with a means of communicating their achievements to the taxpayers.

Our portal actively promoted the accession of Hungary to the European Space Agency as a member state, which occurred in 2015. During the 15 years of its existence, with its comprehensive and reliable coverage of space topics, the Űrvilág portal generated a stable reader base and is highly recognised in professional circles as well.