

ÁRPÁD NÉMETH

**PART OWNER AND MANAGING PARTNER,
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of roles, from recruitment to talent development, employee relations, compensation and benefits, and more, providing opportunities for specialization and growth. HR professionals work with people from all levels of the organization, giving them exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences. HR professionals are in high demand, which will only increase in the future, making it a stable and secure career choice. However, I also think that a career in HR allows us to make a meaningful impact on the lives of employees and the success of the organization.

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WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES FACING HR IN THE HUNGARIAN MARKET?

The trends have not changed too much lately. Talent acquisition is still a hot topic, as finding and retaining skilled employees who fit with the company culture is always a challenge, and in a competitive job market like ours nowadays, this can be even more difficult. Employers need to offer attractive compensation packages and flexible work arrangements to attract and retain top talent. Furthermore, Hungary has a relatively low unemployment rate, but there may still be a skills gap in specific industries; therefore, employers need to invest in training/development programs to upskill their current workforce and bridge this skills gap. In addition, complying with various labor laws, regulations, and data protection rules is also essential. Keeping up with changing regulations can be a challenge, especially for small and medium-sized businesses that may not have dedicated HR staff.

In terms of diversity and inclusion, HR professionals may need to create programs that promote diversity and inclusion and ensure that their hiring practices are fair and unbiased

BACKGROUND INFO

Árpád Németh is part owner and managing partner of Friisberg & Partners International, a leading executive search firm in 18 countries, offering management consultancy services focusing on executive search.

He graduated as an economist and for 25 years has been active in the executive search market, leading the Hungarian operation since 2014. During these years, Friisberg has grown while ranked among the top players in Hungary.

He has two daughters and a son. As hobbies, he enjoys traveling and playing tennis and basketball.

WHY WOULD YOU RECOMMEND TAKING UP HR AS A CAREER?

HR is interesting and diversified, with lots of challenges. It is a critical function in any organization that manages the most valuable asset: its people. HR offers a broad range

Business Name	Friisberg & Partners International Kft.
Top Executive	Árpád Németh, Zoltán Pethő
Description of Business or Services	Executive search
Year founded in Hungary	2000
Total turnover in 2022 (HUF mln)	813
HQ in Hungary	1126 Budapest, Derkovits utca 9.
Website	www.friisberg.com

Lastly, the technology/AI challenge is growing: the rapid pace of technological change can be both a boon and a challenge for HR professionals. On the one hand, HR can leverage new technologies to automate repetitive tasks, improve the candidate experience, and increase efficiency. On the other hand, HR professionals need to stay updated with the latest HR tech and ensure that their processes are secure and compliant.

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH THE LEVEL OF EDUCATION, BOTH FOR THE HUNGARIAN WORKFORCE IN GENERAL AND FOR HR SPECIALISTS IN PARTICULAR?

There is a growing demand for skilled workers with high-level qualifications, particularly in the technology and engineering sectors. This is driven by the increasing digitalization of the economy and the need for specialized knowledge and skills. However, the education system is struggling to keep up with the changing needs of the labor market, resulting in a skills gap that hinders productivity and economic growth. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of digital literacy and the ability to work remotely. Many workers lack the skills to use digital tools and collaborate remotely effectively.

Finally, there is a significant mismatch between graduates' skills and employers' needs. This is due in part to a lack of communication and collaboration between academia and industry and a lack of emphasis on practical skills and work experience in higher education. HR specialists will need to work more closely with academic institutions to ensure that the education system produces graduates with the skills and knowledge that meet the needs of the labor market. I think that there is still a lot of work to do.

WHAT ONE CHANGE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MADE IN YOUR SECTOR?

A change that could benefit the executive search sector in Hungary would be that clients accept that the market is continuously changing. This means that, besides

adopting more modern and innovative HR technologies, it would be reasonable if they would be more flexible in their maximalist approach and faster in their decisions. HR technologies such as AI-powered recruitment tools, chatbots for employee communication, and data analytics for workforce planning and performance management are clearly the future. Still, they need to be used wisely not to lose focus on the people and their individual situations. So, the “soft side” remains essential. This is why executive search will always flourish to assist clients in finding the best suitable candidates.

