

HOTTÓ, ISTVÁN

Mosaics from the last decade of the former Border Guard

Introductory thoughts

„The interpretation of the term border protection has completely changed today, since while from the perspective of military science and police science this activity includes territorial defense and military tasks, in a broad sense border protection nowadays includes all legal and technical means, as well as military and Police methods, that are embodied in preventing the illegal crossing of the country’s state border and that can be linked to the protection of state border order. At the same time, the task of the Police is not border protection, but border policing in nature and consists of sub-tasks such as guarding the state border, controlling border traffic, and maintaining border order. Border guarding is a historical category that can be continuously examined using research methods from both military science and police science. The method and quality of border guarding reflects the social priorities of the country that employs it.”¹

Border Guard Day has been celebrated every year since 1992 on June 27, St. Ladislaus Day, the patron saint of border guards. The tradition was not interrupted by the organization merging with the Police on January 1, 2008. Thanks to the dedication of the Chairman of the board of trustees of the Border Guard Culture Foundation, Lt. Col. László Vájlok, master instructor, and Dr. József Balla, deputy dean for general and development, the Border Guard Memorial (Memorial Room) was born at the Border Police Department of the Faculty of Law of the University of Public Service,

¹ Hautzinger, Z. (2020): A határvédelem arca. A hadtudománytól a rendészettudományig - társadalmi kihívások a nemzeti összetartozás évében [From military science to police science - societal challenges in the year of national cohesion]. Magyar Hadtudományi Társaság Határőr Szakosztály Pécsi Szakcsoportja. Pécs, 96

which was inaugurated on September 1, 2022, on the 30th anniversary of the Faculty, and has since been an integral part of the education of border police students and the preservation of tradition.² At the initiative of Lieutenant General József Béndek, the last national commander of the Border Guard, the Border Guard Memorial in Apátistvánfalva, located in the Őrség, is one of the most significant symbols that worthily preserves memories and traditions. The wreath-laying ceremony on Saint Ladislaus Day at the Apátistvánfalva Border Guard Memorial will be organized by the Körmendi Police Technical School from 2019; before that, the wreath-laying ceremonies were organized by the National Police Headquarters. The post, which was then destined to be closed down, was reborn sixteen years later and became a memorial site in 2007 thanks to the organizing work of the last national commander of the Border Guard, Lieutenant General József Béndek and his colleagues. The border guard monument was placed at the Apátistvánfalva guard post, where former border guards commemorate and lay wreaths every year on Saint Ladislaus Day.³

„Let the nation’s grace be a reminder of loyalty and duty towards the freedom of the Hungarian Homeland...”⁴

The above thought can be read on the marble plaque placed on the wall of the Apátistvánfalva Border Guard Memorial. The quote from a letter by

² Határőr Kultúráért Alapítvány. (2022). Határőr emlékhely (Emlékszoba) avatása [Opening of the Border Guard Memorial (Memorial Room)].

Source: <https://hokalapitvany.hu/hataror-emlekhely-emlekszoba-avatasra/>
Accessed: 16.03.2025

³ Hottó, I. (2023): Gondolatok a határőrség letűnt korának üzeneteiről, értékeiről és fennmaradt szimbólumairól [Reflections on the messages, values and surviving symbols of a bygone era of the Border Guard]. Rendőrségi Tanulmányok, 6(4), Budapest. 104-106

⁴ Magyar Idők. Kossuth levele, Emlékeztető hűségre, kötelességre [Kossuth's letter, Reminder of loyalty, duty].

Source: <https://www.magyaridok.hu/lugas/kossuth-levele-3530249/>
Accessed: 16.03.2025

Lajos Kossuth faithfully reflects the spirit and message of the border guard for visitors to the memorial.⁵

At the turn of the millennium, a border guard specialist group was established in Pécs in the spirit of King Saint Ladislaus with the aim of initially dealing with specific knowledge related to policing within military science and later as a separate discipline within the framework of an independent police science society. The Pécs Specialist Group of the Border Police Department of the Hungarian Military Science Society was founded on May 17, 2000, at the Pécs Border Guard Directorate, whose president was border guard lieutenant colonel Zoltán Tubák and whose secretary was border guard major Gyula Gaál. The current president of the specialist group is retired police colonel Péter Zámbó. The periodical, established in 2002 at the initiative of Zoltán Hautzinger, was launched primarily with the aim of making study-like versions of lectures and comments related to conferences organized in Pécs available in a uniformly edited manner to those who were unable to attend the events. On the other hand, they should provide an opportunity for all those who wish to express their thoughts in the fields of military science, police science, law, and other social or natural sciences.⁶

The Border Guard of the Ministry of Interior in 1989

The year 1989 marked a historic turning point in the life of the Border Guard. The technical locks and restrictions that facilitated total border surveillance were removed from the state border, the methods of border surveillance changed, and a radical transformation of the body began.

The number of illegal border crossings on the Hungarian-Romanian border has increased significantly since 1987. At the beginning of 1989, there

⁵ Hottó, I. (2023): Gondolatok a határőrség letűnt korának üzeneteiről, értékeiről és fennmaradt szimbólumairól [Reflections on the messages, values and surviving symbols of a bygone era of the Border Guard]. Rendőrségi Tanulmányok, 6(4), Budapest.105

⁶ Gaál, Gy. (2024): A rendészettudomány huszonöt kötete [Twenty-five volumes of police science]. Magyar rendészet, 2024/1. Budapest. 167

were thirteen thousand Romanian refugees in the country who arrived illegally, with a few exceptions, and their number had increased to thirty thousand by November. Border violations also occurred; for example, on May 29, 1987, a Romanian mounted patrol officer in the Hungarian-Romanian-Yugoslavian triple border area, while pursuing a border violator, strayed into Hungarian territory and used his weapon against the Romanian citizen, who died. In August 1989, a Romanian border violator was captured on Hungarian territory by patrols from the neighboring state in the Gyulavári area. The refugees were first taken to border guard posts, where they were given food and possibly clothing until they could be transported onward, and where they were provided with baby food and diapers, if necessary, for small children. All of this placed a severe financial burden on the Orosháza and Nyírbátor border guard districts.

The Political Committee of the MSZMP assessed the circumstances in February as such that the previous border guard system must be transformed in line with the expectations of the new times, which implies that the tasks of passport management should be taken over by professional border guards instead of regular border guards. The body officially began the dismantling of the signaling system on May 2, and - although the rehabilitation of the area took until 1990 - it was completed by August. Prior to this, in May, the entry restrictions to the southern border strip were lifted, and by August 1, the tracking strip and the border strip were also removed from the western border. Our country joined the Geneva Convention on October 15, and new refugee camps were established in Békéscsaba and Hajdúszoboszló.

The lifting of border restrictions and the internal situation in Romania significantly increased the number of border violators. By July 1989, border guards had arrested five thousand border violators, mostly Romanians and East Germans. In the second half of the year, attempts by the latter to violate the border became widespread, and the number of violent incidents also increased. During the Pan-European Picnic held in the Fertőrákos area

in August, several hundred GDR citizens crossed into Austria. On one occasion, border violators heading west attacked the patrol. On August 21, the patrol's gun accidentally went off, fatally shooting the attacking border violator.⁷ A joint Hungarian-Austrian investigation found the border guard innocent, and the residents of the neighboring towns of Sankt Martin and Deutschkreutz collected 10,000 shillings for him. In an increasingly tense situation, the government decided to open the western border crossings to GDR citizens, which the Border Guard implemented on September 11.

Border traffic increased significantly, with 34 million people crossing the border in the first half of the year, and by the end of the year, the traffic had reached a record. Act XVIII of 1989 granted Hungarian citizens a universal passport as a matter of citizenship. The number of people arriving from the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria, Poland, and Yugoslavia increased significantly.

The Council of Ministers discussed the situation of the Border Guard in December and decided on organizational changes. According to its Resolution No. 2046/1989⁸: „...the Border Guard shall begin from January 1, 1990, and shall complete by 1995 the performance of tasks at the posts and traffic control points with professional and civilian personnel.”

The increasing growth of border traffic, its control, the change in the legal assessment of prohibited border violations, and the decrease in the previous significance of Western border relations also justified changes within the organization. The emphasis had to be placed increasingly on the development of a law enforcement-type organization. Researchers already recognized at that time that, despite the military-technical level of the time, the weapons available to the border guard would be ineffective against a

⁷ Nagy, Gy. (2010): Határőrség 1957-2007. Rendvédelmi - Történeti -Füzetek, Acta Historiae Preasidii Ordinis, 18(21), Budapest. 57-65

⁸ A Magyar Köztársaság államhatáráról, annak rendjéről, őrizetéről és átlépések szabályairól szóló törvényjavaslat alapelveiről szóló 2046/1989. Minisztertanácsi Határozat, Határozatok Tára 17. [Decision 2046/1989 of the Council of Ministers on the Basic Principles of the Bill on the State Border of the Republic of Hungary, its Order, Guarding and Rules of Crossing, Decree No 17.]

regular military attack, so there was no justification for operating as an armed force and military weapons, and instead, it had to move towards becoming an armed body. Accordingly, instead of a large number of conscripts, border guard tasks had to be gradually solved with professional personnel.⁹

The gradual withdrawal of the conscripts and the measures related to it were well-founded in the information available at the time, taking into account the expected social and migration changes at that time, thus providing an adequate basis for further legislative efforts. On the other hand, they did not take into account the deepening crisis of the political system and the subsequent conflicts, such as the Yugoslav Civil War and the actual migration crisis that followed.¹⁰ The line began with the Danube section of the Győr district, followed by the rest of the Czechoslovak section, and then the Austrian, Yugoslav, Soviet and Romanian border sections. According to calculations, by the end of the process, the number of Border Guard personnel would have decreased by 60% and its operating costs by one-third. The Border Guard officers took the oath to the Constitution of the Republic of Hungary on December 18.

The Border Guard of the Ministry of Interior between 1990-1998 - War situation and radical transformation

The period between 1990 and 1998 in the history of the Border Guard was defined by the transition to an organization consisting of professional bor-

⁹ Fórizs. S., Gáspár, L., Paku J. (1990): Határőrizet és határőrség a kilencvenes években [Border surveillance and border guards in the nineties]. Határőrségi Tanulmányok, (1). 39-72

¹⁰ Ritecz Gy. (2023): Az európai (schengeni) határőrizeti követelményekre való felkészülés helyzete és további feladatok Magyarországon. [The state of preparation for European (Schengen) border control requirements and further tasks in Hungary]. Európai Tükör (the bi-monthly journal of the Integration Strategy Task Force), Budapest. 8

der guards following the withdrawal of conscripted soldiers, the management of fundamental changes in the field of border order, border surveillance, and border traffic, and the new tasks due to the Yugoslav civil war. New states were created around our country, and Hungary now borders seven countries instead of the previous five. This also required the renewal of agreements and partnerships regulating cooperation related to state borders.

Border traffic increased significantly; in the first half of 1990, the number of Hungarians visiting abroad increased by 86% to nearly six million, and the number of people arriving from Austria by 112%, Czechoslovakia by 138%, Yugoslavia by 246%, the Soviet Union by 151% and Romania by 362%. More people also came from England by 158%, France by 222% and the USA by 153% than in 1989. Border traffic exceeded 100 million by the end of the year and remained around this level in the following years. In April 1990, authorities replaced total control with selective control to manage high traffic. They categorized passengers into three groups: Hungarians, foreigners requiring a visa, and foreigners exempt from a visa. At the same time, they eliminated passport stamping for Hungarian citizens.

It appeared mainly among those arriving from Romania, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia – smuggling of goods, currency exchange, and selling on black markets. By 1991, illegal barter trade had reached enormous proportions; tumultuous scenes were the order of the day on trains heading to Poland and Romania, border guards or police officers were attacked several times, and border crossings were closed. International crime also increased. The use of false documents increased, and increasingly better-quality forgeries appeared. Drug smuggling became more common in the second half of the decade. Unilateral controls were abolished on the Hungarian-Czechoslovak border on September 12, 1991. New crossings were opened one after another towards Austria, and joint border controls were introduced. Since 1995, new crossings have been opened on the Slovak and Slovenian borders as well. The EU Phare program was involved in

the modernization of border posts, which began in 1995 at the border posts of Nagylaki, Gyula, Ártánd, Záhony, Rajka, and Réthic.

At the beginning of the Yugoslav Civil War, from June 27, 1991, the Yugoslav People's Army primarily wanted to take control of the border crossings, and on October 14, it began to mine the main routes leading across the border in the Ivándárda-Ilocska-Sárok area. From August 17, refugees appeared at the border posts and on the green border. The national commander of the Border Guard ordered reinforced service at the affected border section and reinforced the local border guard forces by five hundred people. The government ordered the establishment of law enforcement action battalions, and by the end of 1992, there were already nineteen action battalions reinforced with armored personnel carriers. Due to the prolonged fighting, a liaison command was established in the Baranya Triangle, and this area was reinforced with one action battalion. The EU assisted in monitoring the goods embargo imposed by the EU against Yugoslavia in 1994 with two German guard posts at Mohács. For years, the Border Guard crossed the IFOR/SFOR lines - primarily at the Barcs and Drávaszabolcs crossings. As a result of the war, traffic at the Hungarian-Austrian border crossings increased enormously.

Illegal migration grew rapidly. The Orosháza district was reinforced with four hundred border guards in 1992 due to the high number of border violations - eight thousand in 1991. Human smuggling also began to increase in 1990, and in that year, the border guards caught forty-six human smugglers and one hundred and sixteen helpers, and in 1991, two hundred and twenty-one human smugglers and two hundred and fifty-four helpers. Criminals helped with 60% of the thirty thousand illegal border crossings. The export of stolen cars began on the Hungarian-Yugoslav border section in 1995, and there were several firefights on the green border with the increasingly violent organized car smuggling gangs, who were, in many cases, supported with machine guns from the other side of the border. Alcohol smuggling also took on significant proportions in this area.

In April 1992, the Border Guard's Aliens and Violations Department was established, and the police departments of the body began their work. Eight community hostels were established at the directorates. The new Aliens Act¹¹ adopted in 1994 gave the Border Guard more powers. The Minister of the Interior established a border police department at the Police Officers' College on September 1, 1992. In 1995, the Zalaegerszeg and Sopron directorates were abolished, the two Budapest directorates were merged, the Siklós training base was liquidated, and the Sopron training and further training institute was established, with a branch in Csorna. In April 1998, the last conscripts were discharged from the Border Guard. The Act on Border Guard and Border Patrol¹² completed the legal framework regulating the activities of the Border Guard. To join the European Union, the Border Guard began in 1994 and successfully continued its preparations to meet the border guard requirements of the Schengen Agreement even after accession. The Act on Criminal Procedure¹³ defined the range of crimes in the event of which the Border Guard may act.

The Border Guard between 1998-2004 - On the way to the European Union

In the period between 1998 and 2004, the Border Guard was defined by the preparation for Hungary's accession to the Schengen area, the emergence of additional laws regulating its tasks, and the management of the aftermath of the Southern Civil War. Act XIX of 1998 on Criminal Procedure, adopted in 1998, defined the scope of crimes in the event of which the Border Guard of the Ministry of Justice may act. The Act on the Entry and Residence of Foreigners regulated the Border Guard's powers and tasks in the field of immigration control.

¹¹ Act LXXXVI of 1993 on the entry, residence and immigration of foreigners in Hungary. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=99300086.TV&txtrerer=99400034.TV>

¹² Act XXXII of 1997 on Border Guard and Border Guard

¹³ Act XIX of 1998 on Criminal Procedure

To suppress the Yugoslav civil war, NATO began bombing Serbian territories in early 1999. To ensure border order and to receive those fleeing the bombings, the national commander set up a liaison command at the Kiskunhalas border guard directorate, which he reinforced with a border patrol battalion. The border guards working in the endangered area successfully fulfilled their tasks.

The number of illegal border crossings, with minor fluctuations, has been consistently high. While 12,446 people attempted to cross the border illegally in 1997, the number increased to 15,196 in 1999 and 9,781 in 2002. Initially, more than two-thirds of these were directed towards the green border: inwardly, mainly towards the Ukrainian and Romanian, and later the Yugoslav border sections, while outwardly, mainly towards Austria, Slovenia, and then Slovakia. The main methods of committing the crime were hiding in vehicles and using forged travel documents, and the number of cases related to forged public documents at border crossings increased.

„The use of increasingly high-quality counterfeit travel documents, the use of the most modern technical devices, and the use of stolen original stamps can be observed. A frequently used method of committing human smuggling is to hide migrants in vehicles involved in international traffic. In several cases, large numbers of illegal border crossers have been caught, who were tried to be transported across the state border in the cargo holds of trucks or in hiding places in trucks designed for this purpose.”¹⁴

Many people arrived in Hungary legally who wanted to continue westward illegally. At the border crossings, they tried to filter out those who did not have all the conditions for entry. In 2001, the Border Guard turned back 30,115 people, mainly at the Romanian and Ukrainian border crossings. Human smuggling activity was also linked to illegal migration. In 1998, the Border Guard’s investigative bodies acted against 558 human

¹⁴ Gaál, Gy. (2017): Az embercsempészet elleni fellépés a Határőrség erőivel, eszközeivel [Combating human smuggling with the forces and means of the Border Guard]. Pécsi Határőr Tudományos Közlemények. Special No 18. Pécs. 78

smugglers, and in 2002, 573. The proportion of Hungarians among human smugglers has been steadily increasing, reaching 40% by 2002. The Border Guard's investigative bodies have acted effectively in the fight against well-organized and highly equipped human smuggling organizations. International cooperation in law enforcement has strengthened. In 2001, a border policing operation called „*High Impact Operation*”¹⁵ was carried out at the future external borders under the supervision of the EU Presidency, in which the Border Guard successfully participated; furthermore, during joint airport operations such as High Impact Operation TP 12PT and RIO I-IITP 13PT.¹⁶ It became apparent that continuous contact between international airports and comprehensive information exchanges are essential.¹⁷

During the international operation conducted in 2002 with German-Austrian-Slovenian-Romanian-Hungarian cooperation, 23 people smugglers were arrested. Effective border control increasingly required the use of modern technical equipment. Intensive technical development, supported by the Phare program and the COOP programs, began in 1998. During this period, border crossing points were equipped with modern computer equipment by 2004, which facilitated the checking of travel documents and the detection of forgeries, and systems were established to support rapid data transmission. Industrial endoscopes and CO measuring devices were installed at the crossing points to search for people hiding in vehicles. High-performance mobile thermal cameras, handheld night vision devices, and devices suitable for closing migration routes were installed on the green border to aid detection. Patrol boats equipped with modern infrastructure arrived to control the border waters. The replacement of Niva off-

¹⁵ High Impact Operation

¹⁶ Risk Immigration Operation I-II.

¹⁷ Bendes, Gy., Dankowski A. (2004): A Budapesti Határőr Igazgatóság csatlakozása az Európai Határ Információs hálózathoz és a Légi Határok Központjának munkájához. [The Budapest Border Guard Directorate joins the European Border Information Network and the Air Border Centre]. Határrendészeti Tanulmányok, Határőrség Tudományos Tanácsa, Budapest. 34-66

road vehicles received from the Russian state debt also began. The border guards were effectively trained to use the new equipment in parallel with the developments, but the effectiveness was negatively affected by the significant deductions made in the Border Guard budget in 2002. Despite this, the EU Commission, which monitored the level of preparation in 2002, although it objected to the budgetary deductions, ultimately gave an upbeat assessment.

In parallel with all this, the adoption and implementation of the Schengen *acquis* and the preparation of the staff for the new requirements continued. The reconstruction of border crossing points on the future external borders in accordance with Schengen standards continued. Local border traffic in the border area - following the termination of the relevant agreements - ceased for citizens of Ukraine, Serbia, and Montenegro, and then, in accordance with EU requirements, a visa requirement was introduced from November 1, 2003.¹⁸

The Border Guard of the Ministry of Interior after 2004 - on the way to the Schengen area

Hungary joined the European Union on May 1, 2004. This created an internal border of 1,139 km in the areas bordering Austria, Slovenia, and Slovakia. The external border of the EU was created on the 1,103 km long border section with Ukraine, Romania, Serbia-Montenegro, and Croatia, where the Hungarian border guards had to meet the EU's higher security requirements. Customs controls were abolished on the internal border, and Hungarian citizens can now travel with an identity card within the EU. The possibility of traveling to Croatia with an identity card remained after accession.

¹⁸ Hottó, I. (2023): Gondolatok a határőrség letűnt korának üzeneteiről, értékeiről és fennmaradt szimbólumairól [Reflections on the messages, values and surviving symbols of a bygone era of the Border Guard]. *Rendőrségi Tanulmányok*, 6(4), Budapest. 107

After accession, the Border Guard of the Ministry of Interior continued its preparations for the period when Hungary will also become a member of the Schengen area. The Schengen Agreement imposes several conditions on travelers entering the EU's external borders and not belonging to the Union. The selective, differentiated control method applied in border traffic and the passenger categories used in the separation of border crossings already meet the Schengen requirements. The Border Guard received modern equipment worth 27 million Euros by 2004 within the framework of the COOP programs covering four development cycles.¹⁹ The installation of the unified automatic travel document and license plate reading system was completed in December 2000, and the computer system equipped with mobile technical devices, which is used at the railway, water, and temporary crossing points, is still under development. Schengen requirements have already been taken into account in the developments at border crossing points carried out after 2000 and in the construction of new motorway crossing points. The EU continues to support the strengthening of external borders and the establishment of border crossing points in accordance with Schengen requirements.

Based on the Constitution amended on January 1, 2004, the dual task system of the Border Guard was abolished. It became an armed law enforcement agency with national jurisdiction, which operated under the Ministry of the Interior (since then the Ministry of Justice) until June 2006 and basically performed law enforcement tasks. During the modernization, 63 border police departments were established instead of the 125 border guard and border traffic branches, and the regional and central bodies were modified accordingly. Border traffic is controlled at 112 border crossing points belonging to the organization of border police branches.²⁰

¹⁹ Hegedűs, E. (2016): Motorizáció a XX. századi magyar határőrizetben [Motorisation in the Hungarian border police of the 20th century]. Rendvédelemi-történeti Füzetek, Acta Historiae Preasidii Ordinis, XXVI. (52), Budapest. 30

²⁰ Nagy, Gy. (2010): Border Police 1957-2007. Rendvédelmi - Történeti -Füzetek, Acta Historiae Preasidii Ordinis, 18(21), Budapest. 62-63

To combat crime, a complex control system was established between the Border Guard, the Police, the Customs and Financial Guard, the Immigration and Citizenship Office and the National Inspectorate for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Integrated Management Centre was established after May 1, 2004, to combat crime. Close cooperation with neighboring countries in the areas of service tasks and investigative actions serves to combat international crime more effectively.²¹ Joint liaison offices were established for this purpose, for example, at Hegyeshalom-Nickelsdorf.

After joining the Schengen area, internal border controls were abolished entirely. In the interests of the security of the country and the Union, it became necessary to carry out immigration control of foreigners and to detect illegal arrivals in internal areas as well. The Border Guard deployment organizations were established for this task, which, in addition to continuous control, also constitute a reserve force for border police operations. The European Union Border Guard Agency is capable of reinforcing border police forces with reserves throughout the Union if necessary. The independent Border Guard ceased to exist at the end of 2008 and was integrated into the Police organization.

Closing thoughts

As the writer of these lines, a former regular border guard and platoon leader of the Apátfalva Border Guard post, my job was to coordinate the liquidation of the post in November 1991. Finally, after my time there, I was among the last to leave the gate of the closed post with our patrol commander, Major Tibor Somogyi, who had always served as an example to us, platoon leader Miklós Guj, and platoon leader Géza Horváth.

Life is a great scriptwriter, thanks to which sixteen years later, in 2007, at the meetings of the National Defense and Law Enforcement Committee

²¹ Nagy, Gy. (2010): Border Police 1957-2007. Rendvédelmi - Történeti -Füzetek, Acta Historiae Praesidii Ordinis, 18(21), Budapest. 62

of the Parliament, as a civil servant of the Office of the Parliament, I was able to personally witness what Lieutenant General József Béndek, the national commander of the Border Guard, said about the integration of the Border Guard and the challenges of the future, and then at the end of the committee meeting on December 13, the presentation of the committee resolution read out by Károly Kontrát, who chaired the meeting, which we can now look back on from a historical perspective.²²

At the meeting of the National Defense and Law Enforcement Committee of the National Assembly in 2007, Border Guard Lieutenant General József Béndek, the national commander of the Border Guard, reported on the integration of the Border Guard and the challenges of the future, then at the end of the committee meeting on December 13, Károly Kontrát read out the committee resolution on the integration of the Border Guard, which also meant the cessation of the independent Border Guard. At that time, Lieutenant General József Béndek placed the commemorative ribbon on the border guard battalion, then Chairman Károly Kontrát and Zoltán Gál, former Chairman of the National Defense and Law Enforcement Committee, also placed the committee's commemorative ribbon. After that, the members of the committee and those present laid wreaths at the headstones of the border guard heroes in the courtyard.²³

The Border Guard in Hungary ceased to be an independent law enforcement body with national jurisdiction, and on January 1, 2008, the organization was integrated into the Police of the Republic of Hungary. The Border Guard's assets, worth nearly eighty billion forints, which were primarily real estate, vehicles, and equipment, were managed by the Police in

²² Hottó, I. (2023): Gondolatok a határőrség letűnt korának üzeneteiről, értékeiről és fennmaradt szimbólumairól [Reflections on the messages, values and surviving symbols of a bygone era of the Border Guard]. Rendőrségi Tanulmányok, 6(4), Budapest.139-140

²³ Minutes of the external meeting of the National Assembly's Committee on Defence and Law Enforcement held on Thursday, 13 December 2007, at 10 a.m. at the National Command Headquarters of the Border Guard

Source: <https://www.parlament.hu/documents/static/biz38/bizjkv38/HOB/0712131.htm>
Accessed:16.03.2025

the future. The National Police Headquarters, as the legal successor body of the Border Guard National Command, continues to pay special attention to the preservation and maintenance of the Border Guard's traditions and its corporate spirit.²⁴

²⁴ Hottó, I. (2023): *Gondolatok a határőrség letűnt korának üzeneteiről, értékeiről és fennmaradt szimbólumairól* [Reflections on the messages, values and surviving symbols of a bygone era of the Border Guard]. *Rendőrségi Tanulmányok*, 6(4), Budapest. 141-142