

Regional M&A network teams up with international partners

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11 April 2005

Budapest Business Journal

IMAP, a U.S.-based network of middle-market M&A organizations, entered into an agreement on March 12 with **M&A CEE**, a nine-member network of M&A advisory companies in Central and Eastern Europe, the two organizations announced in New York last Friday. IMAP, which has 60 members, will thus broaden its Central and Eastern European coverage, while **M&A CEE** members will gain access to IMAP's worldwide organization, a press release said. "We were looking to expand our membership into the region. Our IMAP member in Poland, Pawel Jagiello, generated the initial spark and the relationship blossomed rapidly," explained Mark Esbeck, president of IMAP. This agreement has the potential to expand IMAP's membership to over 70 firms located in more than 110 countries around the world. The two organizations will cooperate in marketing and networking efforts for a one year period.

After that year, members of the two organizations will decide whether the two networks will continue the cooperation or merge with each other, said István Préda, owner and managing director of **M&A CEE** network member Magánbankár Kft. "Both networks share the philosophy of building a network of independently-owned advisory firms staffed by experienced dealmakers," said Rachel Sargent, president of **M&A CEE**. The International Network of M&A Partners (IMAP) was formed in 1971, as an exclusive global partnership of mid-market advisory firms dealing with mergers and acquisitions. IMAP advisors provide strategic merger, acquisition, divestiture and related corporate finance services for transactions typically between \$5 million and \$250 million. In 2002, IMAP firms managed nearly 220 transactions creating \$4.4 billion in value. **M&A CEE** was formed just 18 months ago to meet the growing demand for cross-border investment banking services from mid-market companies with ambitions to expand in Central and Eastern Europe. The network represents independent M&A advisory firms in Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Russia, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine.