



Momentum MSCA

Programme

Welcome Package

A Guide for Applicants

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1 Introduction

We are delighted to support your research journey as a **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellow** and ensure a smooth transition to your new academic and cultural environment.

Relocating to a new country is both an exciting and transformative experience. This **Welcome Package** has been carefully designed to provide you with all the essential information to help you settle in seamlessly. From visa procedures and housing options to financial guidance, this guide will serve as a valuable resource throughout your fellowship.

Hungary, with its rich scientific heritage, vibrant cultural scene, and warm hospitality, offers an inspiring environment for your research and personal growth. Whether you are based in Budapest or another Hungarian city, you will find a supportive academic community and ample opportunities to advance your career.

As you embark on this new chapter, we encourage you to make the most of your fellowship - engage with your host institution, connect with fellow researchers, and immerse yourself in the local culture. Our team, along with your host institution, and the MSCA community, is here to assist you at every step.

1.1 Purpose of this Guide

This guide is designed to support you in relocating to Hungary, offering essential information on visas, immigration, housing, and administrative procedures. It also introduces you to everyday life, and cultural tips to help you settle in. Our aim is to make your transition as smooth as possible so you can quickly feel at home, focus on your research, and enjoy your time in Hungary both professionally and personally.

Disclaimer: This information package is intended as a practical starting point, with specific examples and service providers rather than only general guidance. While we aim to include relevant and up-to-date resources, details such as service provider contacts, website links, price ranges, or availability may change over time and lose relevance. We have no formal or informal connection with any of the mentioned services, and neither the Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA), nor its affiliated institutions endorse them. We cannot take responsibility for the accuracy of external information or guarantee its validity now and for the entire duration of your Momentum MSCA Programme stay.

This guide was prepared by the Programme Management Team to support the international community of postdoctoral fellows, and we encourage you to verify the current status and details before making arrangements.



1.2 The Momentum MSA Premium Postdoctoral Programme

The Momentum MSCA Programme is an initiative under the MSCA framework that offers competitive funding for outstanding postdoctoral researchers in Hungary. It enables fellows to conduct independent research, collaborate with leading institutions, and access advanced training.

By promoting scientific excellence, international mobility, and interdisciplinary collaboration, the programme makes Hungary an attractive destination for researchers seeking to advance their careers. Participants benefit from knowledge exchange, career development opportunities, and the chance to contribute meaningfully to scientific progress.

The programme is co-funded by the European Commission and the Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences under the prestigious Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions grant.

1.3 About Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Programs

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) are a key part of the European Union's Horizon Europe framework, dedicated to supporting researchers at all career stages. These programs promote international collaboration, interdisciplinary research, and career development through competitive funding. MSCA fellowships enable researchers to gain valuable experience in diverse scientific environments while contributing to cutting-edge projects across Europe and beyond.

1.4 What Are the Long-Term Benefits of an MSCA Fellowship?

An MSCA fellowship provides significant long-term benefits, including enhanced career prospects, international research exposure, and access to top-tier training. Fellows build strong professional networks, develop transferable skills, and gain recognition in their respective fields. The financial support, mobility opportunities, and collaborative nature of MSCA projects help researchers establish themselves as leaders in their disciplines, opening doors to future academic and industry roles worldwide. Fellows also join the [MSCA Alumni Association](#), gaining lifelong access to a global community of researchers for networking, collaboration, and continued career development.

2 Before Arrival:

Preparing for your move to Hungary as an MSCA Postdoctoral Fellow involves several important steps to ensure a smooth transition. This section provides information on visa and immigration procedures, outlining everything from determining the correct visa type to gathering the necessary documents and submitting your application. You will also find essential information on what to expect upon arrival, key timelines, and contact points for further assistance.



Additionally, we highlight [EURAXESS Hungary](#), a valuable resource that offers information and support for researchers relocating to the country.

With help of this information package, we hope you can navigate the administrative process efficiently and focus on settling into your new research environment with confidence.

2.1 Mobility Coordination Support

Our **Mobility Coordinator** provides end-to-end assistance to researchers relocating to Hungary, offering personal guidance throughout the process of:

- Obtaining a visa, work permit, and residency permit
- Completing related administrative formalities

During your stay, the Mobility Coordinator can assist with:

- Reporting changes at the Government Office – e.g., change of address (must be reported within 3 days), change of passport, marital status updates, or other official records
- Renewing your Social Security Number (TAJ) card at the [National Health Insurance Fund](#) (NEAK) if needed

When leaving Hungary, the Coordinator will support you with:

- Informing relevant authorities of your departure
- Closing or updating your NEAK registration
- Deregistration from local address records

Please note: While the Mobility Coordinator provides support, the completion of all required steps and the responsibility for obtaining visas, permits, and registrations on time, rests with you as the applicant.

Name of mobility coordinator: Zsófia Fejes

Contact: mobility.momentum.msca@office.mta.hu

You can also contact the Momentum MSCA team at momentum.msca@mta.hu for additional information and support.

2.2 Visa and Work / Residency Permit Process for EU/EEA Researchers

The mobility coordinator is your main contact for practical arrangements related to your stay in Hungary. The coordinator will assist with certain administrative tasks directly. This may include help with tasks that are not a legal requirement for your employer but are important for settling in. Please note that the overall responsibility for completing the mobility process and ensuring that all registrations and legal requirements are met remains with you as the researcher.



2.2.1 First Contact & Preparation

- Your host institute will contact you regarding your employment (alkalmazás) or appointment (kinevezés) as a starting point.
- The mobility coordinator will:
 - Collect your personal data via an online form.
 - Prepare your hosting agreement and will contact you.

2.2.2 Upon Arrival in Hungary

For stays of up to 90 days, EU/EEA citizens do not need a visa. However, you must:

- Apply for a **registration card** via the Enter Hungary portal: <https://enterhungary.gov.hu/eh/>
- Apply for an **address card** at the Government Office (Kormányablak) - the mobility coordinator may assist you in person.

2.2.3 Administrative Support

The mobility coordinator will assist you directly with some administrative tasks and can provide support with others if required by your host institute. This includes:

- Recommending where to open a Hungarian bank account
- Recommending where to obtain a local SIM card
- Assisting with obtaining a Social Security Number (TAJ) - usually takes around two weeks with authorization (this task may also be handled by your host institution).
- Assisting with obtaining a tax identification number - issued immediately at NAV (National Tax and Customs Administration) with authorization (this task may also be handled by your host institution).
- Assisting with registration for the Client Gateway (Ügyfélkapu) at the Government Office (Kormányablak), which is essential for accessing public services.

2.2.4 Ongoing Support

Throughout your stay, the mobility coordinator can assist you with:

- Reporting any change of address at the Government Office ([Kormányablak](#)) within 3 days.
- Renewing your Social Security Number (TAJ) card ([Hungarian social security card](#)) at the [National Health Insurance Fund](#) (NEAK) with authorization.



2.3 Visa and Work / Residency Permit Process for Non-EU/EEA Researchers

The mobility coordinator is your main contact for practical arrangements related to your stay in Hungary. The coordinator will assist with certain administrative tasks. This may include help with tasks that are not a legal requirement for your employer but are important for settling in. Please note that the overall responsibility for completing the mobility process and ensuring that all registrations and legal requirements are met remains with you as the researcher.

2.3.1 First Contact & Preparation

- Your host institute will contact you regarding your employment (alkalmazás) or appointment (kinevezés) as a starting point.
- The mobility coordinator will:
 - Collect your personal data via an online form.
 - Prepare your hosting agreement and repatriation cost coverage statement.
 - Provide guidance on the residence permit application process.

2.3.2 Before Arrival in Hungary

- Please make sure to visit the Consular Services website for up-to-date information about your country/territory: <https://konzinfo.mfa.gov.hu/en/visa-free-travel-hungary>.
- If you are entitled to enter Hungary without a visa based on your nationality, you must apply for a residence permit for the purpose of research via the Enter Hungary portal: <https://enterhungary.gov.hu/eh/>
- **If you are not eligible for visa-free entry**, you must apply for a residence permit for the purpose of research at the nearest Hungarian consulate or embassy in your country of nationality or habitual residence.
- Your application must be approved before you can travel to Hungary.
- In some cases, you will also need a D-type long-term visa (national visa) for entry. This will be issued by the Hungarian consulate or embassy in your country once your residence permit is approved. Find your local Hungarian.

Visa Type

- **Non-EU/EEA citizens:** Apply for a D-type visa if you will stay for more than 90 days. This visa allows you to reside and work in Hungary.
- **Family members:** If you are bringing dependents, they may require a family reunification visa. Begin their visa application alongside yours.

Application Requirements

Include the following documents in your application:

- Hosting agreement with the research organisation
- Statement of commitment from the research organisation
- Proof of accommodation - see the *Housing* section of the Welcome Package.
- Comprehensive health insurance (included in the hosting agreement)
- Proof of subsistence (e.g., bank statement)
- One recent passport-size colour photograph (also required for extensions)

The immigration authority considers the application received once the administrative service fee has been paid, the applicant's facial photograph and fingerprints have been taken, and their signature specimen has been recorded.

Application Process

1. Locate your nearest Hungarian consulate or embassy

- Find your local Hungarian consulate [here](#).
- Contact them to confirm their submission process and appointment requirements.

2. Book an appointment

- Appointments may fill up quickly, especially in peak seasons. Schedule as early as possible.

3. Attend the appointment

- Bring all required documents, including photocopies.
- You may be asked brief questions about your purpose of travel and fellowship.

4. Processing time

- Visa applications typically take up to 30 calendar days, but this can vary by nationality and embassy workload.
- Apply **at least 2–3 months before** your intended departure date.

2.3.3 Upon Arrival in Hungary

Once in Hungary, you must complete several important registration steps, such as obtaining your residence permit, registering your address, and setting up a local bank account. These steps are mandatory for maintaining legal residence and for receiving your salary.

Collect your **residence permit card** and accommodation certificate (substitute for address card) from the Immigration Office ([OIF](#))- the mobility coordinator can assist you with making appointment.

2.3.4 Administrative Support

The mobility coordinator will assist you directly with some administrative tasks and can provide support with others if required by your host institute. This includes:

- Recommending where to open a Hungarian bank account
- Recommending where to obtain a local SIM card
- Assisting with obtaining a Social Security Number (TAJ) - usually takes around two weeks with authorization (this task may also be handled by your host institution).
- Assisting with obtaining a tax identification number - issued immediately at NAV (National Tax and Customs Administration) with authorization (this task may also be handled by your host institution).
- Assisting with registration for the Client Gateway (Ügyfélkapu) at the Government Office (Kormányablak), which is essential for accessing public services.

The host institute will also begin your onboarding process (welcome pack, job description, occupational health check, etc.).

2.3.5 Ongoing Support

Throughout your stay, the mobility coordinator can assist you with:

- Reporting any change of address at the Government Office (Kormányablak) or via the [Enter Hungary](#) portal within 3 calendar days of moving.
- Renewing your TAJ card ([Hungarian social security card](#)) at the National Health Insurance Fund (NEAK) with authorization.
- Providing guidance for residence permit extension if your stay is prolonged.

Suggested Timelines:

- 2–3 months before departure: Begin application process.
- No later than 4–6 weeks before departure: Attend visa appointment.
- No later than 2–3 weeks before departure: Follow up on application status.
- Upon arrival: Begin residence permit process within 30 days.

Contact Points:

- Hungarian Consulates/Embassies: [Hungarian Consular Service](#).
- Immigration and Asylum Office (Hungary): For residence permits and work permits, visit [official immigration portal](#).

Work Permit (if applicable):

Your host institution should assist you with obtaining a work permit, if necessary. Most researchers are exempt under MSCA fellowships but should confirm with their HR team.

2.4 Health Insurance Requirements

For visa applications to Hungary (Schengen type C or long-term type D), non-EU nationals must have travel or health insurance covering at least €30,000, including:

- Emergency medical treatment
- Hospitalization
- Medical repatriation



3 After Arrival

3.1 Address Registration, Tax Number, Bank Account and Mobile Phone Setup

Address Registration (Lakóhely-bejelentés)

Required for residence documentation and most administrative processes. Apply at your local district office (Kormányablak).

To arrange this, have with you: passport, residence permit card or visa, rental contract or accommodation certificate, and completed registration form (available on-site).

Tip: You will receive an Address Card (Lakcímkártya) - keep it safe, as it is often required for official procedures.

Tax Number (Adóazonosító jel)

Needed for employment, salary payments, and certain services. Apply at the National Tax and Customs Administration (NAV).

To arrange this, have with you: passport, residence permit card or visa, address card (if already issued), and completed application form (downloadable from NAV's website).

Tip: In many cases, your host institution's HR department can submit this for you - check before visiting in person.

Bank Account Setup

Required for salary payment and bill transfers. Open an account at any bank branch (e.g., CIB Bank, Erste Bank, K&H Bank, MBH Bank, OTP Bank, Raiffeisen Bank, Revolut, Wise etc.).

To arrange this, have with you: passport, residence permit card or visa, address card, and tax number.

Tip: Look for English-language online banking and check fees for international transfers.

Mobile Phone Setup

Essential for communication and online services (e.g., banking, e-signature). Purchase a SIM card or contract from One, Telekom, or Yettel.

To arrange this, have with you: passport, address card, and residence permit card (some providers require it).

Tip: Prepaid SIM cards are easiest to start with; you can switch to a contract later if desired.



3.2 Housing

Securing a comfortable and suitable place to live is one of the first and most important steps in your relocation for the MSCA fellowship. You will need to provide a Hungarian accommodation address as part of your residence permit application, so it is worth starting your search early. The local housing market can be competitive - especially in larger cities - and prices can change quickly, so planning ahead will help you secure a home that meets your needs and budget.

Acceptable proof of accommodation for your residence permit can include:

- A signed rental agreement
- Documentation of an apartment reservation (e.g., booking confirmation, invoice)
- Temporary accommodations are also acceptable

Start Your Search Early

Begin your housing search as soon as possible to ensure you can find accommodations that fit your budget and preferred location.

Long-Term Accommodation

Explore options via:

- Local real estate platforms
- University-managed housing services
- Trusted landlords referred by your host institution

Many Hungarian universities and research institutions operate housing offices for international researchers, which may facilitate discounted rates or trustworthy landlord contacts. Contact your host institution for details.

Temporary Accommodation

For your arrival period, you might consider:

- Domus Vendégház ([Domus Collegium Hungaricum](#)) – a dormitory style guest house run by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA), located at Abonyi utca 10, Budapest 1146, near City Park. It primarily hosts participants of the Domus Hungarica Scholarship Program, academic guests from abroad, affiliated external members, and other scholars connected to MTA initiatives. The guest house is conveniently located with easy access to public transport, making it simple to get around the city and reach key academic and cultural venues. It offers quiet spaces suitable for work and study, creating a comfortable environment for scholars. The atmosphere is welcoming, with friendly, English-speaking staff available to provide assistance. We can assist with reservation and confirmation.
- University guesthouses
- Airbnb or Booking.com or szallas.hu listings
- Hotels offerings

These short-term options can ease your transition while you finalize long-term arrangements.



Estimated Costs & Practical Tips

Please note that these figures are **estimates**, and prices can vary due to recent market fluctuations- it is crucial to conduct your own research:

Description	Estimate
Budapest Rent	Studio: €400–€600 / 1-bedroom: €600–€800 / Larger apartments: €800–€1,200+
Other Cities (e.g., Szeged, Debrecen)	Typically 20–30% cheaper than Budapest
Utilities (electricity, water, gas, internet)	€80–€150/month
Security Deposit	Generally two months' rent (refundable if no damages)

Practical advice when negotiating a rental:

- Clarify whether utilities are included in your rent
- Ask about "common costs" (közös költség) - a monthly fee for shared expenses such as cleaning, lighting, and maintenance of common areas (staircases, hallways, lifts, etc.)
- Ask for an English version of the lease contract if one is not already provided
- Most leases run for 12 months, but shorter terms may be negotiable
- Inspect the property before signing and document any existing damage
- Confirm how and when your security deposit will be returned

Useful Apartment Search Websites

When browsing listings, note that "kiadó" means for rent and "eladó" means for sale.

- dunahouse.hu
- realestatehungary.hu
- budapestrent.com
- ingatlan.com
- towerbudapest.com
- homesweethome.hu
- oc.hu

3.3 Health Insurance in Hungary

Relocating to Hungary for research often comes with the need to ensure that you and your family have the right health coverage from day one. Hungary has a **public health system** that offers high-quality, affordable care to insured residents, and a growing **private healthcare sector** for those who prefer faster access, modern facilities, or extra services.



Who Gets Free Public Healthcare?

Basic public healthcare in Hungary is free of charge for:

- Hungarian citizens
- EU/EEA citizens (plus Switzerland and the UK) with a valid [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#) or GHIC – for medically necessary and emergency care during their stay in Hungary
- Non-Hungarian residents employed in Hungary and registered with the National Health Insurance Fund (NEAK) – once you receive a TAJ card ([Hungarian social security card](#))

Free public care includes GP visits, specialist referrals, hospital treatment, and subsidized medicines. Some services - such as certain dental work or private hospital rooms - may require co-payment.

Getting a Social Security Number, TAJ Card

When you start employment in Hungary, your employer registers you with [NEAK](#), and you receive a TAJ card. This grants the same rights to public healthcare as Hungarian citizens.

Family members are not automatically covered under your TAJ card. They must:

- Qualify for their own NEAK registration (if eligible), or
- Join through a voluntary monthly contribution scheme, or
- Arrange private health insurance

EU/EEA Nationals

EU/EEA citizens and Swiss nationals can use their EHIC (or GHIC for UK nationals) for necessary and emergency care from arrival.

- EHIC does **not** cover planned procedures, private treatment, or repatriation.
- Once you receive a TAJ card, you will have full public coverage without needing additional insurance during your work period.

Non-EU Nationals and Uninsured Residents

For visa applications to Hungary (Schengen type C or long-term type D), non-EU nationals must have travel or health insurance covering at least €30,000, including:

- Emergency medical treatment
- Hospitalization
- Medical repatriation

This is a Schengen and Hungarian immigration requirement (not a NEAK rule) and must cover your entire stay until you obtain NEAK coverage.

If you are not yet employed in Hungary, arrange private health insurance before arrival or join NEAK voluntarily by paying a monthly contribution, which offers coverage similar to that of employed residents.



Accessing Medical Care

For **non-emergency care**, see a **general practitioner (GP)** first:

- Public system – You are usually assigned a GP based on your residential address; your local district/municipal office or an online search can help you find the right one.
- Private system – You can choose and book directly with any GP or clinic online.

The GP will assess your condition and, if needed, refer you to a specialist or hospital for further outpatient or inpatient care. Some specialties - such as dermatology, gynaecology, urology, otolaryngology, ophthalmology, oncology, and general surgery - can be accessed without a referral. Hospital treatment usually requires a GP referral, except in urgent cases.

Dental care is often private, and even high-quality private treatment is significantly cheaper than in Western Europe or the US.

Public vs. Private Healthcare

Hungary offers both public and private healthcare:

- Public clinics and hospitals – Funded by NEAK; low cost but may have longer wait times, especially outside major cities.
- Private clinics and hospitals – Faster appointments, modern facilities, and more English-speaking staff, but at higher cost.

Both locals and foreign residents often combine public coverage (via TAJ card) with private insurance for greater convenience and choice.

Private Health Insurance & Providers

Private health insurance is widely available in Hungary and is useful for:

- Those not yet covered by NEAK
- Family members of insured residents
- Anyone who prefers private clinics and hospitals

Policies usually cover consultations, diagnostics, hospitalization, and sometimes dental care.

Major private healthcare providers amongst others in Hungary include:

- [Allianz Worldwide Care](#)
- [Generali Hungary](#)
- [Medicare](#)
- [Premium Health Services](#)
- [Union Biztosító](#)

International insurance from your home country may also be valid - check your policy before arrival.

Emergency Care

Emergency services are available by calling 112. Patients will be treated regardless of insurance status; however, uninsured patients must pay the full cost of care.



If you do not require an ambulance but wish to go directly to a hospital emergency department, check the nearest facility that provides emergency care (sürgősségi ellátás). You can do try [calling 1812](tel:112) for more information or searching online here: surgossegi.info.

Pharmacies in Hungary (Gyógyszertár / Patika)

Pharmacies are marked with a **green cross** sign and are the only authorized sellers of prescription medicines and most over-the-counter drugs.

- Prescriptions (recept) can be paper-based or electronic (e-recept); for e-prescriptions, present your TAJ card or a valid ID.
- Many pharmacies offer online ordering with delivery or in-store pickup.
- Every town has an **on-duty pharmacy** (ügyeletes gyógyszertár) open at night, on Sundays, and on public holidays - locations are posted at each pharmacy and online.
- Drugstores (e.g., DM, Rossmann, Müller) and supermarkets sell vitamins, supplements, and wellness products.

Practical Tips

- Apply for your TAJ card as soon as possible after starting employment.
- Arrange insurance for dependents early.
- Carry your TAJ card or EHIC whenever visiting a doctor or pharmacy.
- Check in advance if private clinics accept your insurance.
- In smaller public facilities, English may be limited - consider bringing a translator or visiting a larger urban hospital or private clinic.

Useful Resources

- NEAK (National Health Insurance Fund): [LINK](#)
- EHIC Information: <https://ec.europa.eu/social>
- Hungarian emergency number: **112 - central number for ambulance, police, and fire services.**

3.4 Daily Life

3.4.1 Getting Around

Public Transport

Budapest has a well-developed, reliable, and affordable public transport network, including buses, trams, trolleybuses, and the metro.

- **Tickets & Passes:** You can purchase single tickets, daily passes, or a monthly pass (recommended for regular use).
Please note that valid tickets are often checked by bus drivers upon boarding, by conductors when exiting metro stations, and through random inspections on board.
- **Where to Buy:**
 - **Mobile Apps** – BudapestGO (plan routes, buy and validate tickets/passes) and VoxPay (alternative app for ticket purchase and validation).



- **Other Options** – Ticket machines at metro stations, tram/bus stops, and major hubs. If no machine is available, tickets can be purchased directly from bus drivers (payment options may vary).
- **Route Planning** – Google Maps also works well for public transport navigation.

Taxis

Taxis are regulated in Budapest and can be booked via phone, app, or hailed from designated taxi ranks. Always use licensed taxis with a yellow license plate and official markings.

- **Common Taxi Services:**
 - Bolt – <https://bolt.eu>
 - City Taxi – <https://citytaxi.hu>
 - Főtaxi – <https://fotaxi.hu>
- **Payment Tips:**
 - In-app payment is available for most taxi apps.
 - Card payments are generally accepted in licensed taxis, but always confirm with the driver at the start of your journey.

Bicycle Lanes & Cycling

Budapest is increasingly bike-friendly, with a growing network of dedicated bicycle lanes and shared-use paths.

- **City Bike Scheme:** [MOL Bubi](#) offers affordable bike rentals with pick-up/drop-off stations across the city.
- **Cycling Rules:** Cyclists must follow traffic regulations, ride on designated bike paths where available, and use lights after dark. Helmets are recommended, especially for longer rides or higher-speed roads.
- **Route Planning:** Google Maps and the MOL Bubi app provide cycling route suggestions and station locations.

Driving in Hungary

If you plan to drive:

- **Alcohol Limit:** Strict zero-tolerance policy (0.0‰).
- **Driving Side:** Drive on the right-hand side of the road.
- **Speed Limits:**
 - Built-up areas: 50 km/h
 - Main roads: 90 km/h
 - Expressways: 110 km/h
 - Motorways: 130 km/h
- **Enforcement:** Speed cameras (fixed and mobile) are widely used.
- **Route Planning:** Waze is the most popular navigation app for real-time traffic updates.

- **Car-Sharing Services:** Short-term car rentals are available via mobile apps such as [MOL Limo](#), and [GreenGo](#), which allow you to pick up and drop off vehicles across the city.

Getting Around the Country

Hungary has an extensive and reliable intercity transport system by **train** and **long-distance bus**.

- **Trains:** Operated mainly by MÁV-Start (<https://www.mavcsport.hu>), connecting Budapest with all major cities and towns. High-speed **InterCity (IC)** trains offer seat reservations for a small extra fee.
- **Buses:** Operated primarily by Volánbusz (<https://www.volanbusz.hu>), covering regional and cross-border destinations.
- **Buying Tickets:**
 - **Online:**
 - MÁV app or website for trains
 - Volánbusz website or app for buses
 - **At Stations:** Ticket offices and self-service machines are available at major railway and bus stations.
 - **On Board:** Tickets can sometimes be purchased from the conductor or driver, but prices may be higher.
- **Travel Tips:**
 - Reserve InterCity train seats in advance for popular routes.
 - Check schedules before travel, as rural services may be less frequent on weekends and public holidays.
 - For regional and rural travel, Google Maps and MÁV's online timetable are reliable planning tools.

Travelling with a Bike or with a Dog

- **With a Bike:**
 - On **Budapest public transport**, bikes are allowed only on certain vehicles (e.g., designated metro cars on M2 and M4, some tram lines, and suburban trains/HÉV). Look for the bicycle pictogram when boarding.
 - On **MÁV-Start trains**, you need a **bicycle ticket** (bring your own lock; bikes are stored in marked compartments).
 - MOL Bubi city bikes cannot be taken on public transport - they are for point-to-point rides only.
- **With a Dog:**
 - Dogs are allowed on Budapest public transport if they are **on a leash and muzzled** (small dogs in carriers do not require a muzzle). A standard ticket or pass is required for the dog.



- On trains and long-distance buses, dogs generally require a **pet ticket** (available at ticket offices, machines, and online), except guide dogs, which travel for free.
- Always carry your dog's vaccination booklet when travelling between regions or abroad.

3.4.2 Kindergarten and Elementary Schools in Hungary

Hungary offers a mix of **public**, **private**, and **international** education options for children from early childhood through to the end of compulsory schooling.

Kindergarten (Óvoda)

Compulsory attendance: From age 3 until school entry at age 6 (or 7 if school readiness is deferred).

Types of Kindergartens

- **Public (state-run):** Operated by local municipalities, free of charge except for meal fees.
- **Private & alternative pedagogy:** Includes **Waldorf, Montessori, Reggio Emilia, and Freinet** approaches, as well as bilingual or language-focused kindergartens. These charge tuition fees and may have limited spaces.
- **Church-run:** May incorporate religious education alongside the national curriculum.

Large cities such as **Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Győr, and Pécs** typically offer more diverse choices, but spaces - especially in alternative and bilingual programs - fill quickly.

Educational Focus

All Hungarian kindergartens emphasize play-based learning, social skills, creativity, and preparation for primary school.

In alternative pedagogy institutions, there is an additional focus on holistic child development, self-directed learning, and experiential activities.

- **Registration & Daily Schedule**
- **When to register:** Typically latest April for the September start. Mid-year entry may be possible if places are available.
- **How to initiate registration:**
 - For public kindergartens, contact your local municipality or the kindergarten in your catchment area directly. Bring your child's birth certificate, proof of address, and health/vaccination records.
 - For private or alternative kindergartens, contact the institution directly for their admission process, which may include interviews or trial days.
- **Opening hours:** Usually 07:00–17:00, Monday to Friday, schedules can vary - always check the specific opening hours with your chosen institution.

MTA Kindergarten & Nursery (Akadémiai Óvoda és Bölcsőde)

- **Type:** Public institution, maintained by MTA [Akadémia Óvoda és Bölcsőde](#).
- **Location:** Barsi utca 3, Budapest 1022 (II. district) [Bölcsőde Budapest+5MTA+5Oviba Megyek+5](#).
- **Pedagogical focus:** Emphasizes a holistic, joyful approach rooted in a complex program combining folk traditions, art therapy, story and drama pedagogy, and creativity - under the motto: "Knowledge. Love. Creativity." ("Tudás. Szeretet. Kreativitás.") [MTA+1](#).
- **Hours & Enrolment:** Open year-round in line with education regulations; applications for the September–August academic year must be submitted (e.g., by March 31 for the 2025/2026 year) and are subject to capacity

Elementary School (Általános Iskola)

Compulsory attendance: From age 6 (or 7 if school readiness is deferred) to age 14. Covers grades 1–8.

Types of Schools

- **Public schools:** Follow the Hungarian National Curriculum; free of charge. Instruction is mainly in Hungarian, with foreign language classes starting in early grades.
- **Private schools:** May offer alternative pedagogy or bilingual programs; tuition fees apply.
- **Church-run schools:** Integrate religious education into the curriculum.
- **International schools:** Found mainly in Budapest and some larger cities; offer IB, British, American, German, or French curricula. Tuition fees are significantly higher.

School Year and Schedule

- **School year:** Early September to mid-June.
- **Breaks:**
 - Autumn break (late October)
 - Winter break (late December – early January)
 - Spring break (Easter period)
 - **Summer break:** Mid-June to late August (about 10–11 weeks).

How to Initiate Registration

- **Public schools:** Registration usually takes place in April for the following September. Families must apply to the school in their catchment area (based on address or direct contact), though some schools accept applications from outside the district if places are available. Bring the child's birth certificate, proof of address, vaccination/health records, and previous school reports if applicable.
- **Private and international schools:** Contact the school directly. Applications may be open year-round and often involve entrance tests or interviews, especially for non-Hungarian speakers.



Useful to Know

- Meals in public institutions are subsidized but not free unless eligible based on income or family status.
- Before- and after-school supervision (*napközi*) is common in public elementary schools to accommodate working parents.
- For non-Hungarian-speaking children, bilingual or international schools may be more suitable, although some public schools offer integration programs.

After Elementary School

Following **grade 8** of elementary school (*általános iskola*), students typically continue to **secondary education** (*középfokú oktatás*) in one of the following:

- **Gymnasium (Gimnázium):** Academic-focused secondary schools preparing students for the *Matura* (Érettségi) exam and higher education.
- **Vocational Secondary Schools:** Combine academic subjects with vocational training, also leading to the *Matura* in many cases.

Some **combined institutions** (*összevont intézmények*) offer both **primary and secondary education** in the same school building - in these cases, students may continue directly into the gymnasium section without changing schools.

Hungary's higher education follows the **Bologna system**, which structures university studies into:

- **Bachelor's degree (BA/BSc)** – 3 to 4 years
- **Master's degree (MA/MSc)** – 1.5 to 2 years
- **Doctoral degree (PhD/DLA)** – typically 3 years

3.4.3 Cost of Living & Where to Shop

Cost of Living

Living costs in Hungary can vary significantly depending on location, lifestyle, and family size. Prices for goods and services have changed dynamically in recent years, so it is advisable to check up-to-date information before budgeting for your move. Everyday expenses such as food, transport, and utilities are generally lower than in many Western European countries, while imported goods and certain services may be more expensive.

Hungary uses the **Hungarian forint (HUF)** as its currency. While euros may be accepted in some tourist areas and larger shops, it is generally better to pay in forints for more favourable rates.

Where to Shop – Groceries & Everyday Essentials

Hungary offers a mix of **brick-and-mortar** stores and **online shopping** options:

- **Supermarkets** – Large chains such as Tesco, Spar, Auchan, Lidl, and Aldi offer a wide range of products, often including both local and imported brands.
- **Discount stores** – Lidl and Aldi are popular for good quality at lower prices.

- **Local markets** – Smaller neighbourhood markets, such as **Lehel Market** or **Fény Street Market**, and others are reliable for fresh produce, meats, and cheeses.
- **Specialty and international stores** – International grocery stores carry imported goods, premium cheeses, and specialty ingredients.
- **Online grocery shopping** – Online shopping is available at all large chains. [Kifli.hu](https://kifli.hu) is a popular home-delivery option offering a wide range of groceries, fresh produce, and bulky household items, which can be especially useful if you do not have a car.

Tip: All major chains offer loyalty programs with significant discounts. These can usually be registered for in-store or via the chain's mobile app.

Where to Shop – Household & Electronics

- **Electronics & appliances** – Popular retailers include Alza.hu (large selection, fast delivery), Euronics, and MediaMarkt. Many offer both home delivery and parcel locker pickup.
- **Online shopping – Delivery boxes and parcel lockers** across Hungary are generally reliable and secure, making them convenient for receiving orders if you are not home during delivery hours.

3.4.4 Living Well in Hungary

Hungary offers a rich cultural and historical heritage, with UNESCO World Heritage sites and a unique blend of architectural styles. From medieval castles and baroque town squares to art nouveau landmarks and contemporary designs, the country's built environment reflects its diverse history and cultural influences.

Hungarians tend to value punctuality, clear communication, and formality in professional settings. Initial greetings often include a handshake, and using academic or professional titles is common - especially with the older generation - until you are invited to use first names.

While English is widely spoken in academic and urban settings, learning a few basic Hungarian phrases is appreciated and can help you integrate into daily life.

Bank Holidays

Hungary observes the following public holidays when most offices, shops, and services are closed:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • January 1 – New Year's Day | • August 20 – St. Stephen's Day (Foundation of the State) |
| • March 15 – National Day (1848 Revolution) | • October 23 – 1956 Revolution Memorial Day |
| • Good Friday – Date varies | • November 1 – All Saints' Day |
| • Easter Monday – Date varies | • December 25–26 – Christmas |
| • May 1 – Labour Day | |
| • Pentecost Monday – Date varies | |

Note: If a public holiday falls on a Tuesday or Thursday, Hungary often designates a "working Saturday" to bridge the long weekend. Check your institution's calendar for exact dates.



Leisure and Cultural Life

Beyond work, Hungary provides a wealth of cultural and leisure opportunities. From the historic thermal baths to a dynamic arts and music scene, there is much to explore.

- English friendly theatres and performances – including occasional English-language theatre productions and regular stand-up comedy nights in Budapest.
- Classical music - venues such as the [Művészetek Palotája](#) (Palace of Arts) and [Zeneakadémia](#) (Liszt Academy) offer world-class performances in stunning settings.
- Festivals and open-air concerts – frequent in spring and summer, featuring genres from classical to contemporary.
- Short guided thematic tours in English – highly recommended for exploring Hungarian history, architecture, and neighbourhoods with local insights.
- Countryside and nature – day or weekend trips to Lake Balaton, the wine regions of Balaton, Mátra, Eger, Tokaj, Szekszárd or Villány, the Danube Bend towns (Esztergom, Visegrád, Szentendre), or national parks such as Hortobágy and Bükk.
- Larger cities outside Budapest – Szeged, Debrecen, and Pécs offer unique architecture, museums, and a more relaxed pace of life.
- Sports and fitness facilities – Hungary offers a wide range of options for staying active, from municipal swimming pools, gyms, and yoga studios to running tracks and cycling routes along the Danube. Many cities also have tennis courts, football pitches, and rowing clubs, and the country hosts numerous international sporting events throughout the year.
- Thermal baths – from historic bathhouses in Budapest to spa towns across the country.
- Ruin pubs – unique to Budapest's nightlife, often hosting art, music, and community events.

Engaging with the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA)

For those in research, the [MTA event calendar](#) lists conferences, lectures, and cultural programmes open to the public.

Researchers' Night (*Kutatók Éjszakája*) is a free, Europe-wide science outreach event held annually, typically on the **last Friday of September**. Its goal is to make science and research accessible to the general public - especially students - through interactive programmes, laboratory visits, workshops, lectures, and demonstrations. In Hungary, it is organised by multiple universities, research institutes, and cultural institutions, often coordinated through national and EU-supported projects. Events take place nationwide and are free of charge. Many are suitable for non-Hungarian speakers, particularly those involving demonstrations, guided tours in English, or visually engaging presentations.

The Celebration of Hungarian Science (*Magyar Tudomány Ünnepe*) is an annual nationwide programme series organised by the **Hungarian Academy of Sciences** every



November. Its aim is to showcase the achievements of Hungarian science and address current issues affecting the scientific community.

The celebration honours István Széchenyi's historic offer in 1825, when he pledged one year's income from his estates to establish the Hungarian Learned Society - the predecessor of today's MTA. In November, public events, lectures, and panel discussions take place across Hungary. Many are open to the general public and may be enjoyable even for those who do not speak Hungarian.

4 Before Leaving Hungary

Before your departure, please ensure the following steps are completed):

- EU/EEA citizens must deregister at the Government Office (Kormányablak)
- Non-EU/EEA citizens must deregister via the Enter Hungary portal
- Deregister at the National Health Insurance Fund (NEAK)

The mobility coordinator will be available to guide you through these processes and help ensuring you complete all required documentation before you leave Hungary.



5 Additional Resources

Resource	URL	Description
Guidance for writing MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship Proposals	https://msca-net.eu/scientific-community/msca-postdoctoral-fellowships-pf/	Resources and guidance for preparing a strong MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship proposal.
European Charter for Researchers	https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/european-charter	Principles regarding the roles, responsibilities, and entitlements of researchers.
Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers	https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/code	General principles and requirements that should be followed when recruiting researchers.
European Textbook on Ethics in Research	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/12567a07-6beb-4998-95cd-8bca103fcf43	Comprehensive resource on ethical considerations in research.
Toolkit "Gender in EU-funded research"	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c17a4eba-49ab-40f1-bb7b-bb6faaf8dec8	Practical guidance on integrating gender considerations into EU-funded research projects.
Understanding gender dimension for MSCA projects	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hq4eWo3ORfY	Video explaining the importance of the gender dimension in Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) projects.
Marie Curie researchers and their long-term career development: A comparative study (2014)	https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/9c2cb7d8-3773-430c-b1c0-db94ec421b01	Research study examining the long-term career paths of Marie Curie researchers.
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions – Collection of EC Videos	https://audiovisual.ec.europa.eu/en/event/59959	Collection of videos related to Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA).