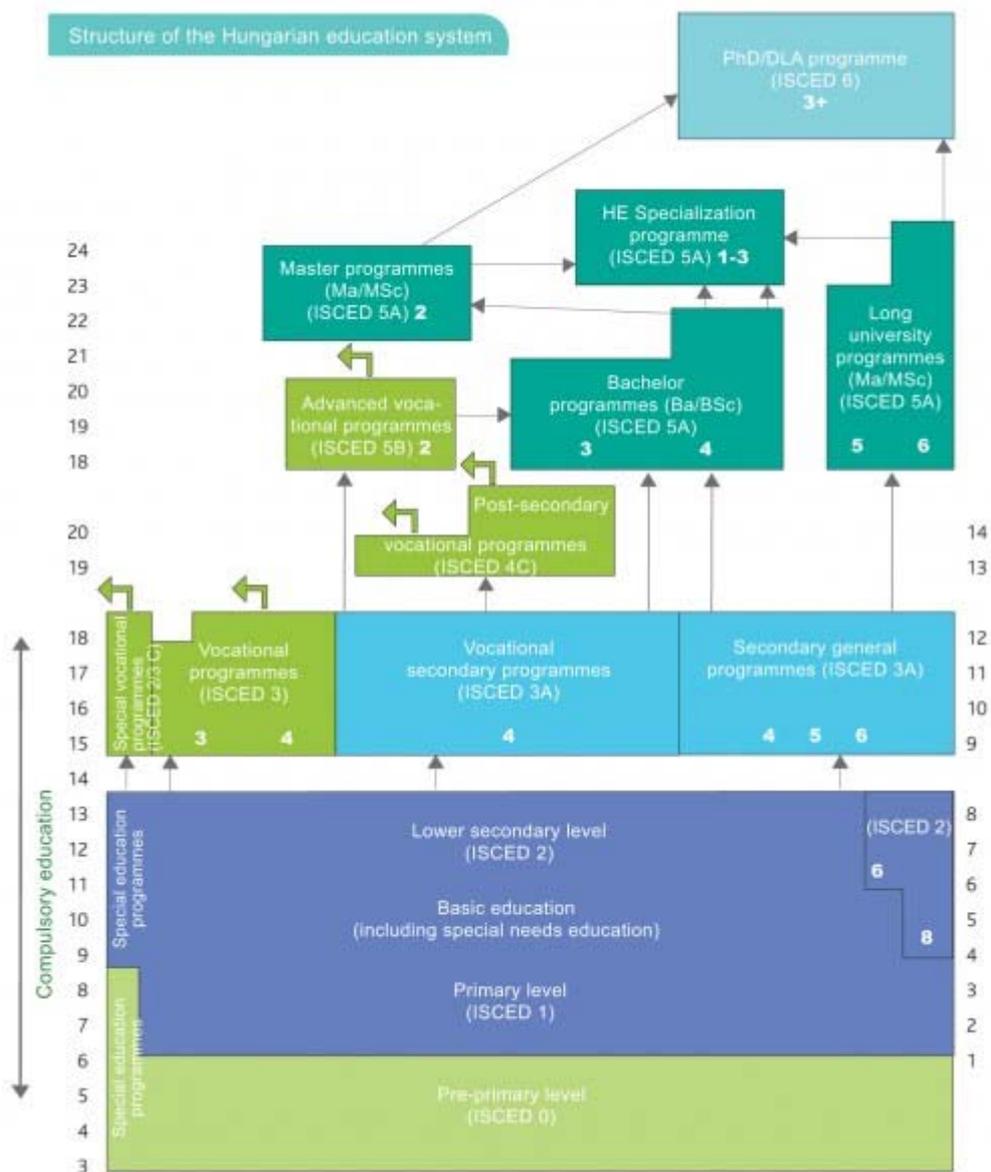


Studying in Hungary

The Education System in Hungary



Source: The System of Education in Hungary
Ministry of Human Resources

Pre-primary education (ISCED 0 – 1)

Compulsory pre-primary education in Hungary begins with the kindergarten at the age of 3. Pre-primary education is meant for children from 3 to 7 years of age, the final year of pre-primary education prepares children for primary school.

Primary education (ISCED 1 + 2)

In Hungary primary school (*általános iskola*) education lasts for eight years and is divided into two stages of four years each. Children attend primary schools until the age of 14, after which they choose a secondary school. For both primary and secondary school teachers, the National Core Curriculum provides a framework to form their syllabi. The text of the current National Core Curriculum is part of the *Government Decree 110/2012. (VI. 4.)* on the issuing, introduction and implementation of the National Core Curriculum (effective from 1 September 2013).

Secondary education (ISCED 2-3)

In secondary education students have the opportunity to choose from the following secondary school programmes:

- vocational programmes and special vocational programmes (*szakiskolai és speciális szakiskolai programok*) (ISCED 3)
- secondary general programmes (*gimnáziumi programok*) (ISCED 2 + 3)
- vocational secondary programmes (*szakközépiskolai programok*) (ISCED 3)

The division of the twelve-year general education may vary: it can be divided either into 8 years of primary education + 4 years of secondary education, or 4 years of primary education + 8 years of secondary education, or 6 years of primary education + 6 years of secondary education. Some secondary school language programmes (bilingual or language specialised classes) may have an extra preparation year. On the basis of their received points, students gain admission to secondary schools after a central secondary school entrance exam and at the oral / oral + written entrance exam taken at the schools respectively. Compulsory education lasts until the age of 16; students attending state schools are not subject to tuition fees. Secondary schools have diverse curricula.

The final secondary-school examination (*érettségi vizsga*) takes place in four compulsory subjects (Mathematics, Hungarian Literature and Grammar, History and Foreign Language) and at least one elective (Foreign Languages, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, Biology, etc.). Approximately 70% of secondary school graduates are admitted to higher education institutions. Final examinations can be taken at two levels: medium (obligatory) or advanced level. By passing the advanced level examinations students obtain extra points to their university entrance.

Post secondary vocational programs (ISCED 4)

Two-year advanced vocational programmes are available after graduating from secondary education. These programmes are offered cooperating with secondary vocational schools for students holding a secondary school leaving certificate. During their training, students gain credit points. A maximum of 60 credit points gained in advanced vocational education may be recognised in first cycle university or college education.

Higher Education in Hungary

Hungary has a well-respected higher education system comprising of public and private universities and colleges which offer a broad array of courses. According to the Academic Ranking of World Universities – the Shanghai list, two Hungarian universities, the Eötvös Loránd University and the University of Szeged are among the best universities of Central Europe. In the recent decade Hungary has become the most popular destination for international students in all of Central Europe. Every academic year several hundreds of international students begin their university studies in one of the prestigious Hungarian universities. The number of foreign students is increasing with a yearly average of 4% and the major Hungarian universities are becoming more and more popular among international students.

Hungary has a dual higher education system comprising of 19 state universities, 9 state colleges, 21 religious institutions (colleges / universities), 13 and private and foundation school. *Act CCIV of 2011 on Higher Education* governs the higher education system of Hungary.

Full text of Act CCIV of 2011 on Higher Education:

http://english.szolfportal.hu/images/prospective_student/act_cciv_of_2011_on_higher_education.pdf

Hungarian higher education roots back to more than 600 years of academic excellence. The first university was founded in Pécs, located in the southern region of Hungary, in 1367.

Hungary signed the Bologna Declaration in 1999; the Bologna Process was implemented to those who started their university education in September 2006. From the academic year 2006/2007, all students entering higher education in Hungary have been studying in a two-cycle system that consists of courses leading to a Bachelor and later on to a Master's degree. The primary objective of the Bologna Process was to establish the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

The key targets are as follows:

- **a system of academic degrees that are easy to recognise and compare** including the introduction of a shared diploma supplement to improve transparency;
- **a system based essentially on two cycles:** a first cycle geared to the labour market and lasting at least three years, and a second cycle (Master) conditional on the completion of the first cycle;
- **a system of accumulation and transfer of credits** of the ECTS type used in the Erasmus exchange scheme;
- **mobility of students, teachers and researchers:** elimination of all obstacles to freedom of movement;
- **cooperation** with regard to quality assurance;
- **the European dimension in higher education:** increase the number of modules and teaching and study areas where the content, guidance or organisation has a European dimension;
- **developing the European dimension** in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of Member States;
- **encouraging mobility of students and teachers**, by encouraging inter alia, the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;
- **promoting cooperation** between educational establishments;
- **exchange of information and experience** on issues common to the education systems of Member States.

The previous act on higher education aimed at realising the objectives of the Bologna Process and was adopted in December 2004. The act created a new three-cycle based structure introducing separate Bachelor, Master and doctoral studies. Some programmes, such as medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary studies, architecture, law and certain arts, crafts and design related study programmes, retained the single-cycle structure lasting 5-6 years. Courses may be full-time, correspondence or distance learning courses.

First cycle programmes last 6-8 semesters and students are required to gain 180-240 credit points. The Bachelor degree is the prerequisite of the Master degree

programmes that last 2-4 semesters and students need to collect additional 60-120 credit points. The third-cycle doctoral studies (PhD) may follow any Master's qualification.

The final examination includes:

- preparation and defence of the thesis (diploma work),
- written and oral examinations as specified in the qualification requirements,
- specific practical examinations in certain branches of study.

Conditions of admittance for final examination:

- fulfilment of examination and other study requirements specified in their curriculum(Graduation Certificate – Abszolutórium),
- acquisition of the required number of credits,
- certification of the acquisition of the foreign language skills prescribed by the institution).

The final examination is to be taken in front of a board of examiners. In addition to the chairman, this board shall have at least two more members. At least one member of the examining board has to be an external expert. The method and the mode of assessment of the final examination shall determined by the regulations of the universities respectively. On the basis of the successful final examination, higher educational institutions issue a diploma for the student.

The admission criterion to PhD courses is a university (egyetemi) degree, or a Master degree. In order to be entitled to participate in doctoral studies students shall hold a type "C" intermediate state accredited foreign language exam and shall undergo the entry procedure including a written dissertation plan and an interview at the chosen institution. Further entry requirements can be set by the institutions. Doctoral study programmes comprise of two modules: the teaching module is composed of a course lasting 6 semesters, during which PhD students gain 180 credit points, and a written thesis supported by scientific publications. Applicants are required to pass two oral doctoral exams and defend their thesis in front of a committee consisting of outstanding experts of their professional field. In accordance with the national regulation, PhD students shall have two, type "C", intermediate, state accredited foreign language exams.

Students finish their studies in university or college-level education as well as in postgraduate specialisation training with a final examination (State Board Examination – Államvizsga in case of Bachelor and Master Degrees). The final examination assesses the acquisition of knowledge (skills) required in order to obtain

the higher education certificate. Candidates have to demonstrate their ability to apply the knowledge gained.

The State Board Examination should be taken within some years following the award of the Graduation Certificate, the length of this period is determined by the individual faculties. Students who fail to fulfil this requirement will be deleted from the official list of students.

Persons with a higher education qualification obtained in Hungary shall use the following English titles abroad, with an indication of their line of studies:

- college qualification - Bachelor (abbr. BA, BSc.),
- university qualification - Master (abbr. MA, MSc.),
- doctoral (PhD) title - Doctor of Philosophy (abbr. PhD),
- master qualification - Doctor of Liberal Arts (abbr. DLA).

Accreditation and quality assurance

Standards of higher education and its quality endorsement are based on the operation of the **Hungarian Accreditation Committee**. The approval of this body is necessary to introduce a new course/programme at any state or private-run higher education institution.

Credit system and the system of assessment

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) was introduced in Hungarian legislation in September 2003 and it is the only credit system existing in the country. The ECTS was developed within the framework of European higher educational cooperation and mobility programmes for the mutual recognition of study periods spent in Europe. In Hungary ECTS was initially implemented in the academic year 2003/04. One credit point corresponds to 30 hours of student workload. The students are assessed on the basis of five grades: excellent (5), good (4), fair (3), pass (2), and fail (1) or on a three-level classification: excellent, satisfactory, fail.

Hungarian grades and their ECTS equivalents:

Hungarian grading	ECTS equivalent
5 - excellent	A - excellent
4 - (very) good	B - (very) good
3 - satisfactory	C - satisfactory
2 - passed	D/E - passed
1 - failed	FX/F - failed
N - no credit	N - no credit

Academic year

The academic year consists of two terms, the spring (February - June) and the autumn (September – January) term. Both semesters include a 15-week study period for lectures, seminars and practice and a 6-week examination period. Exams are concentrated in the 6-week exam period but students have assignments and tests during the 15-week study period prior to their exams.

Students have classes at an average of 25-40 hours weekly depending on their study field. At the beginning of each semester students are required to sign up for their courses while at the end of the time of lectures they shall sign up for the exams. However, international degree programmes may run to a special academic calendar.

The curricular week lasts five days (Monday to Friday). Saturdays are officially non-teaching days, but students may enter the building (may study in the library, may use the IT labs, or may use the institution’s cultural and sport facilities). The same holds for the summer holiday.

As a general rule university lectures and seminars are 90 minutes long but there might be differences at the various programmes.

Academic year breaks:

- Autumn: end of October
- Winter: end of December
- Spring: Easter week

Detailed description of the Hungarian Education System:

http://english.tpf.hu/document.php?doc_name=angol/Magyar_oktatasi_rendszer_en.pdf and <http://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Hungary:Overview>

For more details on education in the EU 2020 Strategy:

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Hungary:Education_in_the_Europe_2020_Strategy

Administration at the Universities

The Student Coordination Office (*Tanulmányi Osztály*) of each university department deals with students' administrative matters, the office:

- organizes the registration of students,
- collects course records and theses,
- registers applications for state exams,
- collects exam fees and issues the attendance certificates necessary for residence permits,
- arranges other administrative matters.

International students always have an English or German speaking co-ordinator / international office assigned to their programme.

Foreign language programmes

Several Hungarian colleges and universities offer foreign language (mainly English and German) degree programmes. The number of international students studying at Hungarian universities increases every year. Due to the Bologna Process student mobility has become a crucial issue in the European Union. More and more scholarships are offered at the various European universities with the aim of boosting student mobility. On the basis of the research conducted by the *National Higher Education Information Centre (FELVI)*, approximately one-third of international students in Hungary study in different medical and health science fields such as general medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary science, kinesiology and psychology.

The majority of international students come from European countries (Cyprus, Germany, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia and Sweden) and from the countries of the Middle East.

The most popular Bachelor programs are the ones in technology. Most students study at programs of civil engineering, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering. In information technology programmes, most international students study software engineering, while among economics programs, those in economics and management are chosen by most, among health science programmes, most international students attend nursing and patient care programmes.

Competence in Hungarian language is not a criterion, with the exception of courses provided completely or partly in Hungarian.

Most international students participate in the courses offered by the largest and oldest universities of the country, namely Semmelweis University (Budapest), the Corvinus University of Budapest (Budapest), the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (Budapest). The most popular universities in the countryside are the University of Debrecen, the University of Pécs and the University of Szeged.

A list of the foreign language academic programmes is available on the regularly updated website of the National Higher Education Information Centre:

http://www.felvi.hu/for_foreigners/academic

The major universities usually have several agencies and contractors on each continent dealing with admission issues. They can provide future students with information on the admission criteria, entrance exams, preparatory courses and others. Before applying it is useful to check whether the chosen university has an agency / contractor in the home country.

Entrance exams are held in several countries, not only in Hungary.

University preparatory courses

Students interested in continuing their higher education studies in Hungary have the opportunity to participate in preparatory courses at the major universities. More information is always to be found on the official website of the respective universities.

University tuitions

International students taking part in foreign language programmes (English, German or French) are subject to tuition fee. Tuition fees vary largely, depending on the study programme and the institution. More information on the tuition fees can be found on the website of the individual university/college or on the website of the National Higher Education Information Centre:

http://www.felvi.hu/for_foreigners

Admission requirements

The precondition for admission to colleges and universities is either a Hungarian secondary school leaving certificate (*Érettségi bizonyítvány*), or its foreign equivalent, or a degree obtained in higher education. Students can apply through the Hungarian university application system or directly to the university.

From the school year of 2005/2006 a new type of school-leaving examination was introduced. The secondary school leaving examination also functions as an entrance exam (at standard and advanced level). The higher education institution determines the grade requirements of the secondary school leaving examination and the necessary level of secondary school performance.

How to apply?

International applicants should generally submit the following documents:

- photocopies of certificates of their highest qualification,
- if the candidate has not yet obtained a secondary school leaving certificate, school reports for the last two years including all graded results,
- curriculum vitae in English and / or in the language of education,
- medical certificate,
- two recent passport-size photographs ,
- letters of recommendation (e.g. from school),
- at certain universities, certification of language competence (TOEFL Test),
- a photocopy of their passport with personal data.

Citizens of the European Union and the European Economic Area (Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein) member states do not need a student visa to enter to Hungary. Citizens from third countries accepted by a Hungarian higher education institution are required to obtain a **student visa** (from the Hungarian Embassy or Consulate of their residence before entering the country). The **D5** is a multiple entry student visa, which entitles you to enter and leave Hungary as many times as you want until it is valid. During the first year of your stay in Hungary your student visa will have to be replaced by a residence permit. While applying for the visa, students must have a passport valid for at least 18 months, but preferably valid until the end of their entire study. To receive a student visa, it is necessary to present the "*Letter of Acceptance*" from the university.

On entering the country, it is necessary to apply for a residence permit from the Hungarian Police Authorities for Foreign Citizens within 14 days.

For further information visit the website of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs: (<http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs>)

Police information for visitors to Hungary:

http://www.archive.police.hu/data/cms908872/safety_in_hungary_brochure_final_web_en.pdf

Major university cities and universities in Hungary

Budapest

Budapest is the capital city of Hungary and the country's major political, cultural, commercial, industrial and transportation centre. This fascinating, busy city is also the home of many state, denominational and foundation universities. With a population of approximately two million people, Budapest is the most densely populated Hungarian city.

More information: http://www.budapestinfo.hu/home_en.html

The **Eötvös Loránd University** or ELTE, established in 1635, is one of the oldest and the largest universities in Hungary. Eötvös Loránd University offers degree programmes at undergraduate (BA/BSc), graduate (MA/MSc) as well as post graduate (PhD) levels. A wide range of programmes and courses – either full-time or part time – are available in English and other foreign languages.

More information: <http://www.elte.hu/en>

Founded in 1769, **Semmelweis University** is the oldest medical school in Hungary. Its six faculties offer a wide range of courses from undergraduate to doctorate level in three languages: Hungarian, English and German.

More information: <http://english.sote.hu/>

The **Corvinus University of Budapest** offers courses taught in English, German and French. Faculty of Business Administration International Study Programs has developed courses taught in English to enable students to receive Bachelor or Master degrees. As a result of the development of the German programme, it has become a double-degree program with the University of Passau.

More information: <http://portal.uni-corvinus.hu/?id=44509>

The **Budapest University of Technology and Economics** offers engineering courses in English, German and French in B.Sc, M.Sc. and Ph.D. levels.

More information: <http://english.www.bme.hu/>

Szeged

Fascinating streets, beautiful squares and the shore of the Tisza are perfect scenery for the unforgettable schooldays in Szeged. Szeged is often referred to as the Sun City since the city has the highest annual level of sunny hours. Szeged is rich in cultural programmes, festivals, let alone its lively weekdays with the cosy pubs and clubs designed especially for students.

More information: <http://tip.szegedvaros.hu/start.php>

The **University of Szeged** was founded in Cluj (Kolozsvár) in Romania in 1872 and was moved to Szeged in 1921. The university offers courses in dentistry, pharmacy in English, and general medicine in both in English and German (first two years). There also foreign language degree programmes provided by the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economics.

More information: <http://www.u-szeged.hu/english/>

Pécs

Narrow streets, Mediterranean atmosphere with some monuments of the Turkish occupation surrounded with the slopes of Mecsek. Pécs is a city offering several higher education programmes together with a vivid cultural life. What is more, you have to travel just a little and you find yourself on one of the most significant wine producing areas.

More information: <http://en.pecs.hu/>

The **University of Pécs** is the oldest university in Hungary dating back to 1367. The University offers several foreign language programmes ranging from architecture to sports management. There are also German language programmes available at the University.

More information: <http://english.pte.hu/>

Debrecen

Wide streets, spacious squares, the Reformation Cathedral - situated in the North of the Hungarian Great Plain, Debrecen is the second biggest city in Hungary and is often called the "Calvinist Rome". It has been the home town of several famous poets, and also the second home for lots of students. The Hortobágy National Park, where you can find the biggest "puszta" with its special flora and fauna, is only a stone's throw away from the city.

More information: <http://eng.debrecen.hu/>

The **University of Debrecen** is one of the major research facilities in Europe. The University of Debrecen offers numerous degree programmes in English on preparatory, undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level, within the following

fields: Agriculture, Arts and Humanities, Business, Information Technology, Medical Studies as well as in Science and Engineering.

More information: <http://www.unideb.hu/portal/en>

Miskolc

The city lies at the meeting point of different geographical regions – east from the Bükk mountains, in the valley of the river Sajó, and the streams Hejő and Szinva. The University of Miskolc is one of the newest universities of Hungary as it was established in the 1949. The university, the campus and the sport facilities are surrounded by a large park in a nice surrounding.

More information: <http://www.miskolc.hu/en>

The **University of Miskolc** is among the newer universities of Hungary; it was founded in 1949 and built according to the American campus model. The University offers degree programmes in Engineering, Law and Sciences.

More information: http://oldwww.uni-miskolc.hu/e_index.php

The complete list of all foreign language programmes is available at the website of the National Higher Education Information Centre (FELVI):
http://www.felvi.hu/for_foreigners/academic

Scholarships in Hungary

Hungary through the Balassi Institute, the Hungarian Scholarship Board (HSB) Office offers scholarships for foreign students and lecturers in higher education institutions as well as research fellows who intend to gain further professional experience in Hungarian higher education institutions or research institutes.

Scholarships can be applied in two different ways: Work plans and bilateral agreements & Scholarship Pool. HSB scholarships are valid only for studies and research purposes in Hungary. Scholarship-holders must stay in Hungary during the entire period of their studies or research.

Study Subject(s): Scholarships offered by the HSB allow for studies or research in any field of arts or sciences at an accredited Hungarian higher education institution or research institute to be determined in advance.

Course Level: undergraduate, postgraduate, PhD, postdoctoral, research

More information and available scholarships:

<http://www.scholarship.hu/Englishsite/Generalinformation/tabid/185/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Hungarian universities actively participate in the EU's Erasmus Programme. Each year a growing number of Erasmus students arrive to participate in a university semester in Hungary. **More information:** <http://esn.hu/>

Studying Hungarian

International students have the opportunity to study Hungarian both during or prior to their university studies. The major universities offer Hungarian language courses for international students.

Hungarian language courses at universities:

University of Pécs, International Studies Centre
H-7633 Pécs, Szántó Kovács János u. 1/B.
Telephone: +36 72 251 500
Web: <http://english.pte.hu/>

University of Szeged
H-6725 Szeged, Tisza Lajos krt. 103.
Telephone: +36 62 420 894
Web: <http://www.u-szeged.hu/english/>

University of Debrecen, Summer School
H-4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1.
Telephone: +36 52 532 594
Web: <http://www.unideb.hu/portal/en>

Eötvös Loránd University
H-1056 Budapest, Szerb u. 21-23.
Telephone: +36 1 411 6500
Web: <http://www.elte.hu/en>

The **Balassi Institute** in Budapest organises intensive preparatory courses in Hungarian language for prospective students.

More information: <http://www.balassiintezet.hu/en/hungarian-language-courses/>

Balassi Institute

Mailing address: 1519 Budapest, Pf. 385.

Address: H-1016 Budapest, Somlói út 51.

Telephone: +36 1 381 5100

E-mail : bbi@bbi.hu

Web: www.bbi.hu

Online sources for learning Hungarian:

<http://www.magyarora.com/english/index.html>

<http://www.hungarotips.com/hungarian/>

http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Hungarian/Lesson_1

<http://www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/a/d/adr10/hungarian.html>

<http://www.letslearnhungarian.net/>

Further information on educational issues

Ministry of Human Resources: <http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-human-resources>

Hungarian Accreditation Committee:

<http://www.mab.hu/joomla/index.php?lang=en>

Hungarian Equivalence and Information Centre: www.naric.hu

National Higher Education Information Centre:

http://www.felvi.hu/for_foreigners

Tempus Public Foundation

(Lifelong Learning Programme National Agency): www.tka.hu, www.tpf.hu

National Institute of Public Education: <http://www.ofi.hu/national-institute-of>

Hungarian Scholarship Board: www.scholarship.hu

PLOTEUS Portal: <http://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/>

Euroguidance Hungary: www.euroguidance.hu

Study in Hungary www.studyinhungary.hu

Emergency Medical Treatment

General emergency number: 112 (free)

Ambulance: 104 (free)

In case of emergency, first aid and emergency treatment is free of charge for everybody staying in the territory of Hungary. Further medical treatment depends on the person's insurance. There is no visit fee.

National Health Insurance Fund - Országos Egészségbiztosítási Pénztár (OEP)

Address: 1139 Budapest

Váci út 73/A

Phone: (+36 1) 350 2001

Web: www.oep.hu

Medical Insurance in Hungary

Residents of the European Union member states:

The medical care of the European Union residents is ensured in Hungary on the basis of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

The EHIC entitles EU citizens to reduced medical costs on the territory of the European Union, Switzerland and the European Economic Area. The quickest and easiest way to get an EHIC is to apply online; the card is valid for 3 to 5 years and patient will be treated on the same basis as the citizens living in the visited country.

Residents of Non-EU countries:

Non-EU member states residents will be treated on the basis of the various bilateral socio-political or medical-care agreements.

- **Socio-political agreements:**
with Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia.

Citizens of these countries are provided with emergency care and treatment free of charge in Hungary. The treatment is limited to emergency health care.

- **Medical-care cooperation agreements:**
with Jordan, Kuwait, Angola, Iraq, Mongolia, South Korea, Ukraine.

Citizens of these countries are entitled to thorough medical treatment including emergency health care. In case of medical help they are required to produce a proof of identity, passport in the first place, proving that they are entitled to such service by law.

For further information, consult the website of the National Health Insurance Fund: <http://www.oep.hu/oepdok/fajlok/e.pdf> (also available in German and French)

Accommodation

There are numerous alternatives for accommodation in the university cities ranging from dormitories to private apartments. Students' dormitories are the cheapest and they are usually located on campus. Renting a flat is the most expensive in the capital, about HUF 90 000- 110 000 plus overheads, in the countryside it is usually HUF 70 000 – 90 000, plus overheads.

Students may have difficulties finding a flat on arrival so it is advisable to contact a real estate agent or agency in the chosen city well in advance.

Some useful links:

- CasaSwap - free international housing network: <http://www.casaswap.com/>
- MellowMood – selected list of accommodations in Budapest: <http://www.mellowmood.hu/en>
- SRS - Student Rent Solutions in Budapest: <http://www.srs-budapest.hu/>
- Rent Hungarian Properties – rentable properties all over the country: <http://housing.justlanded.com/en/Hungary/For-Rent/1/>
- Rent a flat in Szeged – <http://www.szegedrent.hu/>
- Student Service – international students' service in Pécs: <http://www.studentservice.hu/aboutus.php>

Embassies and consulates

Most countries operate embassies and/or consulates in Hungary, the list of all embassies is available at: <http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-in/hungary>

Tips & tricks – things to know before arrival

On the basis of the feedback received from international students already studying in Hungarian higher education institutions, students highly appreciated the level of education in Hungary. Many of them follow the footsteps of some friends and relatives who graduated in Hungary and now work as successful professionals on their fields. However, upon arriving in an entirely unknown country, prospective students might face some unexpected difficulties.

- The greatest fear of each international student arriving in Hungary is the language barrier. Hungarian is extremely difficult and does not resemble any of the most commonly spoken languages in Europe. It is advisable to contact some international students at the university before arrival so they could help to get along during the first days. At most universities first-year students and students taking part in preparatory courses are assigned to a “mentor”, a higher-year student who will provide them assistance in school matters.
- Education in Hungary might be different from the one international students are used to in their own countries. Schooldays might be longer, vital exams are concentrated in the exam period which might be more stressful and difficult to get used to. The number of oral exams is high compared to the Western European average. At some university courses, particularly medicine and dentistry, attendance is compulsory not only at seminars and practices but also at lecture. It is important to keep in mind since one might risk losing the chance to take the exam and gain credit points in a given subject.
- It might be helpful to collect information on apartments, regular rents and contact a real estate agent beforehand so unexpected inconveniences might be avoided. Most real estate agencies are on the Internet and they publish a wide selection of available apartments with photos.
- Those who are non-EU or non-EEA citizens might face some difficulties at the immigration office when applying for a residence permit. Regulations are strict and all requirements have to be met in order to receive a permit.

Applicant shall have all the necessary documents and it is useful if they have a Hungarian speaking assistance when arranging the residence permit.

- Faculties having a higher number of students from abroad usually have international students associations comprising of international students studying at the university. They can provide prospective students with first-hand information.

Useful websites:

- **Study in Europe** (http://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/index_en.html) – official website of the European Commission dealing with studying in the member states. It includes replies to frequently asked questions, such as:
 - application to the higher education institutions of the member states;
 - BA, MA, PhD programmes available in the member states;
 - glossary with the explanation of higher education related terms (e.g. accreditation, credit transfer);
 - scholarship and grant opportunities;
 - detailed description of the education systems.
- **Study in Europe** (<http://www.studyineurope.eu/>) – additional useful information on higher education studies in the European Union:
 - application deadlines in the member states, direct link to the higher education information centres of the member states;
 - detailed description and comparison of tuition fees in the member states;
 - grading systems and assessment in the European higher education institutions;
 - information on staying in the member states (residence permit, accommodation, insurance, etc.);
 - sample budget for an average month;
 - grade point converter enabling to check the equivalent of the national points.
- Additional information on studying, voluntary work and scholarships can be found on the **Your Europe** website at: http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/education/index_en.htm.