

Country Profile - Hungary

Job market

What are my chances of getting a job?

Like many European countries, Hungary is experiencing some economic difficulties and the government has introduced austerity measures. Although Hungary's economy is recovering, unemployment remains at around 10% and competition for jobs is high. There is still a need for workers with specialist skills, however. In recent years, Hungary has attracted a large number of international companies, which offer opportunities for graduates. Teaching English is another possibility if you are suitably qualified.

- **Typical problems encountered:** graduates may face competition from qualified local professionals, particularly for middle-management jobs.
- **How to improve your chances:** consider working for a multinational company with offices in Hungary. It may then be possible to transfer to Hungary once you are in post.
- **Language requirements:** Hungarian is the official language and knowledge of Hungarian is a definite advantage when seeking a job. English and German are widely spoken in Hungary, particularly among the younger population. There are a number of Hungarian language schools in Budapest and other main towns, including the [Balassi Institute](#) and [International House Budapest](#). In the UK, use the [National Careers Service - Course Search](#) to find Hungarian language courses available at local education institutions.

Where can I work?

- **Major industries:** mining, metallurgy, textiles, chemicals (pharmaceuticals in particular), construction, processed foods, motor vehicle manufacturing, agriculture.
- **Recent growth areas:** retail, services, telecommunications, finance, machinery, pharmaceutical industry.
- **Major companies:** SPAR, Tesco, Unilever and Vodafone all have operations in Hungary. Other key international employers include Deutsche Bank, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, General Motors, Hewlett-Packard, KPMG, Motorola, Philips Electronics, Shell, T-Mobile and Deutschland GmbH.
- **Search for more companies:** [Kompass](#) is a worldwide business directory searchable by country and product/service. The [British Chamber of Commerce in Hungary](#) provides information about member companies with a presence in the country. [Europages](#) also provides company listings.
- **Major cities:** Budapest (capital and largest), Debrecen, Szeged and Miskolc.

What's it like working in Hungary?

- **Average working hours:** working hours and employment conditions generally mirror those in Western Europe and are defined in the Hungarian Labour Code. Full-time working hours are generally eight hours a day or 40 hours a week. There is an

element of flexibility in some employment areas, although rules are in place to ensure that working hours do not exceed 12 hours a day or 60 hours a week.

- **Holidays:** holiday leave in Hungary is determined by age, although employers may offer more than the minimum. Holiday entitlement ranges from 20-30 days, and increases as you get older. In addition, there are ten public holidays, including Christian festivals and Hungary's National Day (23 October).
 - **Tax rates:** personal income tax is generally 16%. Your employer also deducts an additional amount from your gross salary for pension insurance (10%), health insurance (6%) and labour market contributions (1.5%), which is paid directly to the National Customs and Tax Authority (NAV).
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Applying for jobs

If you are working for a company with operations in Hungary, a transfer might be the easiest route in. Another approach is to seek out international companies operating in Hungary and visit their websites to find specific jobs, training or internship opportunities. Sending speculative applications to a local office may be successful.

CVs or application forms are usual when applying for jobs. Most international companies will use more or less the same recruitment procedures as they do for posts in the UK and other countries. When following up a personal recommendation, less formal approaches, such as an email or telephone call, may be appropriate.

The CV format tends to be similar to a UK CV and is a maximum of two pages long. Hungarian employers look for a well-structured and focused CV that emphasises your education and professional/work experience. Include details of language and IT skills. The working abroad section of [Eurograduate - The European Graduate Career Guide](#) has further information and an example of a Hungarian CV.

The [Hungarian Public Employment Service](#) has offices throughout the country and provides information on jobseeking and vacancies. See the 'Living and Working in Hungary' publication on their website for more information on how to apply for jobs.

There are usually two interviews, although this varies depending on the type and level of job you are applying for. Interviews for UK graduates seeking managerial positions are often conducted in English, although part of the interview may be held in Hungarian.

Both international and Hungarian companies use psychometric tests and assessment centres as part of the selection process.

Will my UK qualifications be recognised?

Many employers will look for directly relevant degree subjects or internationally recognised professional qualifications. Information about how your qualifications translate

to the Hungarian system may be found on the [Hungarian Equivalence and Information Centre \(HEIC\)](#) and [ENIC-NARIC](#) websites.

The [UK National Europass Centre \(UK NEC\)](#) website also provides information on how to make your skills and qualifications understood in other European countries, including Hungary.

Do I still need to pay UK tax and National Insurance?

If you are planning to live and work in Hungary, check your UK tax and National Insurance position with [HM Revenue & Customs \(HMRC\)](#) to ensure that you are not losing any UK pension rights.

Vacancy sources

Job websites

- [CV Online Hungary](#) - some vacancies in English.
- [EURES - European Job Mobility Portal](#) - provides job vacancies and a CV-posting service for jobseekers, as well as information on living and working conditions and labour markets in Hungary.
- [Jobline - Hungary](#)
- [Jobpilot - Hungary](#)
- [Monster \(Hungary\)](#)
- [Multijob](#)
- [Profession Hungary](#) - some vacancies in English.
- websites of multinational companies with operations/offices in Hungary.

Recruitment agencies

- Search the [Hungarian Yellow Pages](#) for contact details of recruitment agencies operating in Hungary (mostly in Budapest).
- Some UK-based employment agencies deal with international vacancies or have branches abroad, including in Hungary. Check the [Recruitment and Employment Confederation \(REC\)](#) consultancy finder for a list of member agencies and then contact the agency to see if they have jobs in Hungary.
- Visit the [International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies \(CIETT\)](#) website for details of their European members.

Newspapers

- [Budapest Business Journal](#) - contains information on business activities and industry in Hungary.

- [The Budapest Sun](#) - has a 'jobseekers and jobs available' section in the classifieds.
- [The Budapest Times](#)
- [Népszabadság](#) - includes job vacancies (in Hungarian).

Other Hungarian newspapers may be found via the [Kidon Media-Link](#).

Other sources

- Careers and job fairs are attended by both multinational and large Hungarian companies. Careers fairs may be held by universities, for example the [Central European University Business School](#).
- [Corvinus University of Budapest](#) and [Budapest University of Technology and Economics \(BME\)](#) also offer careers services, which have links with employers and details of vacancies, as do several other institutions.
- Useful addresses and contacts for health professionals that want to work and study in Hungary can be found at [Medics Travel](#).

Hidden vacancies

Networking is an important way of finding work in Hungary so it may be worth undertaking an internship or period of study in Hungary first in order to build up a list of personal contacts. University careers services, for example at the Central European University Business School, Corvinus University of Budapest and Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME), may be able to put you in touch with employers.

Speculative applications are accepted in Hungary. As with any speculative application, you will need to do your research thoroughly. If you are interested in working for a multinational company with an office/base in Hungary, it may be worth applying directly to them.

Work experience

Work placements and internships

Useful resources include:

- [IAESTE \(The International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience\)](#) - arranges summer placements for science and engineering students in a range of countries, including Hungary;
- multinational companies with offices in Hungary (usually Budapest) - may advertise placements on their website and may also consider speculative applications.

Exchange programmes

- [AIESEC \(Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales\)](#) provides an international exchange programme for students and recent graduates. They offer voluntary and paid work placements in professional organisations, schools and charities in a range of countries, including Hungary.
- Your university may be involved in the [Leonardo da Vinci Programme](#), through which vocational training exchanges and work placements are arranged with partner organisations in other countries, including Hungary. Contact your university's international office or your careers service for more information.

Teaching schemes

For English language teaching experience, visit [British Council Teacher Recruitment](#). You must have a recognised TEFL, TESOL or other teaching qualification to teach in Hungary.

Opportunities to teach English in Hungary may also be available from [TEFL.com](#) and [ESL Base](#).

Volunteering

- Volunteering is a good way to gain experience and to learn more about Hungarian society and culture and will improve your language skills. The [Youth in Action](#) programme, for example, is funded by the European Commission and provides young people with a variety of opportunities to experience Europe. [The European Voluntary Service \(EVS\)](#) is part of this programme and offers young people (18-30) the opportunity to volunteer in a range of countries, including Hungary, for a period of 2 to 12 months.
- It is also possible to find volunteering opportunities via a range of volunteering websites, for example [Volunteer Abroad](#) and [WorldWide Volunteering \(WWV\)](#).

Gap year opportunities

To choose a reputable organisation offering gap years in Hungary, seek advice from your university careers service or check whether the company is registered with [Air Travel Organisers' Licensing \(ATOL\)](#) or other similar organisations. Some companies will also offer services such as a 24-hour emergency helpline. See [Your Gap Year](#) for more information on planning a gap year, including information on jobs, voluntary opportunities and specialist gap year programmes.

Postgraduate study

How does the higher education system work?

Hungary's higher education system comprises 70 institutions, including universities and colleges that are financed by the state, church or by private organisations. Higher education institutions are concentrated in Budapest.

The degree structure in Hungary is based on three cycles. All main fields of study follow this structure, except for medicine, pharmacy, dental and veterinary studies, architecture, law and certain crafts, arts and design-related study programmes. These have a long single-cycle structure of five to six years.

Bachelors (BA and BSc) degrees constitute the first cycle of higher education and take between six and eight semesters (three to four years) to complete. The Masters degree programme (MA/MSc) constitutes the second cycle of higher education. The duration of study is between two and four semesters (one to two years). A three-year Doctoral study programme following on from a Masters or equivalent qualification is also available.

Further information about studying in Hungary is available from the [National Higher Education Information Centre \(Felvi\)](#), the [Tempus Public Foundation](#) and [Study Hungary](#).

What courses are available?

Universities offer Bachelors, Masters and PhD programmes, while colleges offer Bachelors degrees. Courses can be full time, part time or by distance learning. Speaking Hungarian is not essential as many universities and colleges offer a variety of courses in English. Subjects taught in English include medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, engineering, economics, natural sciences, humanities, arts and music.

Where can I study?

For a list of academic programmes, as well as language options and study locations in Hungary, see the [National Higher Education Information Centre \(Felvi\) - List of Academic Programmes](#).

Applying for postgraduate study

Credit points for courses completed in another European country are accepted by Hungarian colleges and universities.

Applications are made directly to your chosen higher education establishment. Visit individual websites for details of entry requirements and closing dates, and speak to admissions departments for more advice. The [Study Hungary](#) website also has information on university entry requirements, fees and costs.

International students wishing to take up a full degree course in Hungary should contact the [National Higher Education Information Centre \(Felvi\)](#) for more advice on admission requirements to universities in Hungary.

Fees and scholarships

Tuition fees vary between institutions. Visit individual university websites for details.

[Corvinus University of Budapest](#) estimates that international students need around €450 - €750 a month to cover all expenses. Accommodation costs around €250 - €400 a month, depending on the size and location of the flat and the number of students sharing. Living costs, including food and transport, are around €200 - €400 a month, with an additional €50 - €100 needed each semester for study-related expenses such as books and student ID.

The [Balassi Institute - Hungarian Scholarship Board \(HSB\) Office](#) provides details of university and research scholarships. Target groups include undergraduate and postgraduate students, with a special emphasis on Doctoral candidates, academics, scientists, tutors and researchers. It typically offers university and research scholarships for an academic year and summer school scholarships.

Check individual university websites for details of other possible sources of funding and scholarships.

Are there any exchange programmes?

UK students on undergraduate degree programmes or postgraduate Masters and some PhD programmes may be interested in spending time studying in Hungary through the [Erasmus](#) scheme. This programme covers all subject areas, but check with your institution's Erasmus coordinator first (usually based in the international office) to see which countries they have links with and in what subjects.

Will my qualification be recognised in the UK?

As part of the [European Higher Education Area \(EHEA\)](#), a Hungarian postgraduate course should be directly comparable to the UK equivalent. Full details on comparing international qualifications are also available from the [UK NARIC \(National Recognition Information Centre for the United Kingdom\)](#), which gives information and advice on vocational, academic and professional qualifications from over 180 countries.

Visa and travel information

Visa requirements and applications

Most EU nationals do not need a visa or work permit but citizens of non-EU countries may be required to have these documents. If, however, you wish to stay in Hungary for longer than 90 days, you must register with the nearest regional Immigration Office. You should also contact the [Embassy of Hungary in London](#) for further information about applying for a residence permit.

If you are not a UK national, contact the Hungarian embassy in the country where you are currently residing (a list of Hungarian embassies is available at [Embassies Worldwide](#)) about how to obtain visas and work permits. If you are living in the UK, go to the [Hungarian Embassy](#).

Non-EU nationals will need to apply for a student visa in order to study in Hungary. To apply you will need a certificate of enrolment from the institution you will be studying at and evidence of your accommodation in Hungary. Check with the Hungarian Embassy for details.

Help in an emergency

You might also find it helpful to contact your ministry of foreign affairs (or your own embassy if you are not living in your home country) to ask whether there are any issues to be taken into account when considering working in Hungary.

If things go wrong in Hungary, British nationals can call on the support of the [British Embassy Hungary](#). The Embassy can also, in certain circumstances, help EU or Commonwealth nationals whose country does not have a local diplomatic or consular office.

The emergency contact numbers in Hungary are:

- 112 - emergency (general);
- 107 - police;
- 104 - ambulance;
- 105 - fire department.

Travel advice

It is important to check with the [Embassy of Hungary in London](#) or the [Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary](#) for up-to-date information.

Find the latest travel advice and a traveller's checklist on the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office \(FCO\)](#) website.

Country overview

Geography

- **Full country name:** Hungary
- **Population:** 9.9 million (The World Factbook, 2012 est.)
- **Border countries:** Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Romania, Austria, Ukraine and Slovakia
- **Climate:** generally cold winters and warm summers with no great variations in weather and climate within the country. See [BBC Weather Country Guides: Hungary](#) for further details.
- **Terrain:** mostly flat with only small areas in the north and west rising above 600 metres. The main rivers are the Danube and the Tisza.
- **Natural hazards:** no significant natural hazards.

Living in Hungary

- **Cost of living:** generally much lower than the EU average, particularly in rural areas. Around 33% of the total personal expenditure of Hungarian households is assigned to food, and around 40-50% to utilities. Renting a house costs even more, with as much as 50-60% of personal expenditure going on rent. For more information, see 'Living and working in Hungary' on the [EURES Job Search](#) website.
- **Internet domain:** .hu
- **Health:** you should take out comprehensive medical insurance and obtain a [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#) before leaving the UK. Seek medical advice before travelling about tick-related diseases, such as tick-borne encephalitis, especially if you intend to visit areas that are forested, grassy or beside lakes.
- **Laws and customs:** carry your passport at all times as you must be able to show some form of identification if requested, for example by the police. A photocopy is not acceptable. Hungarian laws on the possession and use of drugs are strict.

Economy and finance

- **Currency:** Hungarian Forint (HUF)
- **Type of economy:** market economy
- **Health of economy:** Hungary's economy suffered as a result of the global financial crisis, although it started to recover in 2010, largely due to a rise in exports. The Hungarian government asked the EU and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a new loan in 2011. The EU has requested that the government reduce its budget deficit to less than 3% of gross domestic product (GDP). Over 80% of Hungary's GDP is generated by the private sector. Unemployment is still significant and economic growth is likely to be slow (The World Factbook, 2012).
- **Unemployment rate:** 10.7% (Eurostat, 2012)
- **Main exports:** machinery and transport equipment, food products, chemicals, fuels and electricity.

Culture

- **People:** Hungarian 92.3%, Roma 1.9%, other or unknown 5.8% (The World Factbook, 2012)
- **Major religion:** Christianity

- **History:** See [BBC Timeline: Hungary](#).

Politics

- **Type of government:** parliamentary democracy
- **Major political parties:** Fidesz-Hungarian Civil Alliance (Fidesz), the Christian People's Democratic Party (KDNP), Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP), The Movement for Better Hungary (Jobbik) and Politics Can Be Different (LMP).

More information

- [Embassy of Hungary in London](#)
- [BBC Country Profile - Hungary](#)
- [The World Factbook](#)
- [XE Universal Currency Converter](#)

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