

University of Szeged
Faculty of Health Care Sciences and Social Studies
Department of Nursing

Handbook for international students

Tartalomjegyzék

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I. Welcome to Hungary!

I.1. General information

Hungary (Hungarian: Magyarország), officially the Republic of Hungary (Magyar Köztársaság), is a landlocked country in the Carpathian Basin in Central Europe, bordered by Austria, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. Its capital is Budapest. Hungary is a member of EU, NATO, OECD, V4 and is a Schengen state. The official language is Hungarian, which is part of the Finno-Ugric family, thus one of the four official languages of the European Union that are not of Indo-European origin.

Hungary is ranked 20th globally (out of 194 countries) on International Living's Quality of Life index (2010) and 6th in an environmental protection index by GW/CAN. Until recently, it was also listed as one of the 15 most popular tourist destinations in the world. The country is home to the largest thermal water cave system and the second largest thermal lake in the world (Lake Hévíz), the largest lake in Central Europe (Lake Balaton), and the largest natural grasslands in Europe (Hortobágy).

Administratively, Hungary is divided into 19 counties. In addition, the capital city, Budapest, is independent of any county government. The counties and the capital are the 20 NUTS third-level units of Hungary.

The counties are further subdivided into 173 subregions, and Budapest is its own subregion. Since 1996, the counties and City of Budapest have been grouped into 7 regions for statistical and development purposes. These seven regions constitute NUTS' second-level units of Hungary.

There are also 23 towns with county rights, sometimes known as "urban counties" in English (although there is no such term in Hungarian). The local authorities of these towns have extended powers, but these towns belong to the territory of the respective county instead of being independent territorial units.

See more in <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungary>

I.2. Weather

Hungary has a Continental climate, with hot summers with low overall humidity levels but frequent rainshowers and frigid to cold snowy winters. Average annual temperature is 9.7 °C (49.5 °F). Temperature extremes are about 42 °C (107.6 °F) in the summer and -29 °C (-20.2 °F) in the winter. Average temperature in the summer is 27 °C (80.6 °F) to 35 °C (95 °F) and in the winter it is 0 °C (32 °F) to -15 °C (5.0 °F). The average yearly rainfall is approximately 600 mm (23.6 in). A small, southern region of the country near Pécs enjoys a reputation for a Mediterranean climate, but in reality it is only slightly warmer than the rest of the country and still receives snow during the winter.

See more in <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungary>

I.3. Language

Hungarian (magyar) is a Uralic language, more specifically a Finno-Ugric language distantly related to Finnish, Estonian and a number of other minority languages spoken in the Baltic states and northern European Russia eastward into central Siberia.

See more in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungarian_language

I.4 Currency

The forint (sign: Ft; code: HUF) is the currency of Hungary. It is divided into 100 fillér, although fillér coins are no longer in circulation. As a member of the European Union, the long term aim of the Hungarian government is to replace the forint with the euro.

Coin denominations are 5,10,20,50,100,200. In banknotes, there are 500,1000,2000,5000,10000,20000 HUF denominations.

For currency exchange, check the Hungarian National Bank website in <http://english.mnb.hu/engine.aspx?page=arfolyamlekerdezés>.

I.5. Timezone

The Hungarian Time zone is CET (UTC+1). During Summertime, it is (DST) CEST (UTC+2).

I.6. Hungarian public holidays and special events

Fixed public holidays

Date	English Name	Remarks
January 1	New Year's Day	
March 15	National Day	"March youths", memorial day of the 1848 Revolution. There are usually speeches and music pieces performed; several people wear a cockade with the national colours (red, white and green).
Moveable	Easter Sunday	Good Friday work-free for Protestants
Moveable	Easter Monday	Men visit women and ask for permission for sprinkling by reciting a little Easter poem, they sprinkle them with some perfume (or sometimes a bucket of cold water in the countryside), and they get eggs (mostly of chocolate) in exchange. Children get chocolate bunnies and eggs (from the Bunny), and sometimes fruits, nuts etc. as well.

		They sometimes have to look for these presents in the garden or in their room. (Living bunnies are not infrequent, either.) Mothers often prepare ham, eggs, and sweetbreads for dinner.
May 1	Labour day; anniversary of the accession to the EU	The countries of the EU are represented with special programmes, bridges are decorated and exhibitions are arranged.
Moveable	Pentecost Sunday	Sunday, 50 days after Easter
Moveable	Pentecost Monday	Monday after Pentecost
August 20	Saint Stephen Day	St. Stephen's Day, Foundation of State, "the day of the new bread" as well. St. Stephen of Hungary (ca. 975 – August 15, 1038), was the first king of Hungary. Celebrated with a half-hour fireworks on the bank of the Danube in the evening, attended by several hundreds of thousands of people.
October 23	National Day	The day of the Republic (since 1989), 1956 Revolution memorial day. Celebrated with speeches and exhibitions.
November 1	All Saints Day, Day of the Dead	It is a day to remember the lost ones. On this day people generally visit all their lost relatives' graves which they decorate with flowers.
December 24 evening, December 25	Christmas	People buy (or make) presents for their relatives and friends in the preceding couple of weeks (so this period is the absolute boom of the year for most stores). Public transport stops operating at about 4 p.m. Families reunite and people prepare their (labelled) presents under the Christmas tree. It is made of a fir which is decorated by one or two people in the family so nobody else can see it before they signal with a little bell for the rest to come in. The family sings Christmas songs together and everyone unwraps their presents. On 25th and the 26th, people usually visit their relatives (e.g. aunts, uncles and grandparents) and exchange presents.
December	Second Day of	

26	Christmas	
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Holidays not endorsed by the state

Date	English Name	Remarks
December 6	Santa Claus, Saint Nicholas Day	Children get various chocolate pieces from the Santa Claus by morning. If they were bad, they might get (birch) rods exclusively or beside their presents.
December 31	New Year's Eve	Young people go partying until morning. Streets are noisy with paper trumpets, hoots and champagne cracks; people often wear masks and throw petards. Those who stay home usually watch the comedies made for this occasion; at midnight they drink champagne and wish each other good luck for the new year. National television channels broadcast the orchestral and choral national anthem at midnight, and then the speech of the current President. After midnight they often use fireworks. With these finished, further comedies and various movies follow. The next day streets are as empty as ever, and people sleep long (or sleep themselves sober).

II. Getting to know Szeged

II.1. General information

Szeged is the fourth largest city of Hungary, the largest city and regional centre of the Southern Great Plain and the capital of Csongrád county. The University of Szeged is one of the two most distinguished universities in Hungary. Szeged is situated near the southern border of Hungary, just to the south of the mouth of the Maros River, on both banks of the Tisza River. Due to the high number of sunshine hours annually, Szeged is often called *City of Sunshine*.

The city of Szeged has 62 kindergartens, 32 elementary schools, 18 high schools and a university, which were established by the unification of the past existing higher education centres.

Szeged is the higher education centre of southern Hungary and has built quite a reputation for itself. Thousands of students study here, many of whom are foreign students from all around the world. The Centre for Biological Research of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, which was built with the help of UNESCO funds, has also been a considerable source of advanced research. Scientists at this laboratory were first in the world to produce artificial heredity material in the year 2000. The building has served as a home to many well known conferences and continues to make contributions to the world of science. The University of Szeged was ranked as the best university of the country on Academic Ranking of World Universities - 2005, and one of the best 100 of Europe.

II.2. Sights of Szeged

- City centre
- Dóm tér ("Cathedral Square") with the Votive Church and the Dömötör Tower (13th century)
- Church of Grey Friars (Gothic, 15th century)
- The Water Tower
- Ferenc Móra Museum
- Reök Palace Museum of Art
- Szeged Synagogue
- Szeged City Hall
- National Theatre of Szeged
- Gróf-palace (1913)
- Minorite Church
- Fekete Haz "Black House" - Museum of Currency

III. University of Szeged

The University of Szeged is one of the two most distinguished universities in Hungary and in Central Europe. It is located in the largest Southern Hungarian city Szeged.

According to the Academic Ranking of World Universities by Shanghai Jiao Tong University (2003, 2004, 2005), it was ranked 203-300th in the complete list (in tie), 80-123rd at the scientific ranking of European universities and first in national ranking. In 2009 it was ranked 303-401 in the complete list, and 126-170 at the scientific ranking of European universities and first to second in national ranking.

The University has 11 faculties:

	<u>College Faculty of</u> <u>Agriculture - MFK</u>	http://www.mfk.u-szeged.hu/english/indexe.html
2	<u>Faculty of Health Care</u> <u>Sciences and Social</u> <u>Studies - ETSZK</u>	http://www.etszk.u-szeged.hu
3	<u>College of Engineering -</u> MK	http://www.szef.u-szeged.hu
4	<u>Faculty of Arts - BTK</u>	http://www.arts.u-szeged.hu/eindex.html
5	<u>Faculty of Economics and</u> <u>Business Administration</u> - GTK	http://www.eco.u-szeged.hu/eng
6	<u>Faculty of Law and Public</u> <u>Administration - ÁJTK</u>	http://www.juris.u-szeged.hu
7	<u>Faculty of Medicine -</u>	http://www.szote.u-szeged.hu/aok/maine.htm

	ÁOK	
8	<u>Faculty of Music</u> (Conservatory) - ZFK	http://www.muzik.u-szeged.hu/indexa.htm
9	<u>Faculty of Pharmacy</u> - GYTK	http://www.pharm.u-szeged.hu/index.php?topic_id=279&link=startpage&language=en
10	<u>Faculty of Sciences</u> - TTK	http://www.sci.u-szeged.hu
11	<u>Gyula Juhász Teacher</u> <u>Training College</u> - JGYTFK	http://www.igytf.u-szeged.hu/en/index.html

See more in <http://www.u-szeged.hu/english/>

III.1 Faculty of Health Care Sciences and Social Studies

The faculty, with a history of more than thirty-years, can rightfully be reputed as one of the most important healthcare professional training centers in our country. At the Faculty of Health Sciences and Social Studies the following courses are offered: BA in nursing and medical attendance, sanitary care and prevention, social work. The following, non-degree courses are also available for study: image diagnostics, intervention assistant and obstetrics. The faculty also offers postgraduate programs.

See more in www.etszk.u-szeged.hu

IV. Studies at Faculty of Health Care Sciences and Social Studies

IV.1 Academic calendar

The academic year in Hungary is from September to June. The first semester lasts from September to December (with 1 week autumn break), and the second is from February to May (with 1 week spring break). From December to January, and from May to June are the exam periods, which are called Winter and Summer exam periods.

For exact dates, see

<http://www.etszk.u-szeged.hu/index.php?b=menu.php&f=hallgatoinknak/index.htm>

IV. 2. Unified Academic System (ETR – Egységes Tanulmányi Rendszer in hungarian)

www.etr.u-szeged.hu

What is ETR?

ETR is an online system which gives you the opportunity to sign up for your courses and exams, to check personal and academic information on you stored currently in the system, and to keep contact with teachers and other students.

It is compulsory to register yourself for your courses and exams otherwise you are not entitled to attend to classes or sit for exams.

For using ETR, see guides in http://www.szote.u-szeged.hu/angoltit/?q=etr_info

IV.3 Student assessment and grading scale

At seminars students are expected to hand in shorter essays related to a given topic, give presentations and write tests. For lectures oral or written final exams take place during the exam

period (either from the middle of December to the end of January or from the middle of May to the end of June).

The grading system used by our university, as well as by other higher education institutions in Hungary is as follows:

Local credits

One local credit is equal to 30 hours of student workload and 30 credits measure the workload of a full-time student during one semester, thus, 1 Hungarian credit corresponds to 1 ECTS credit.

Local grading scale – indicators of quality of performance:

5 jeles excellent, very good

Outstanding with minor errors.

4 jó good

Generally sound work with a number of notable errors.

3 közepes satisfactory

Fair but with significant shortcomings.

2 elégséges pass

Performance meets the minimum criteria.

1 elégtelen fail

Further work is required.

For further information on our grading scheme please visit our Erasmus home page:

www.u-szeged.hu/erasmus (Please click on the link “Grading system”)

IV.4 Student Union

In the University of Szeged, there is a common student union called EHÖK (University Student Union in English). Each 11 faculty has own student unions (Faculty HÖK). The address of the HÖK in our faculty is www.hok.etszk.u.-szeged.hu

IV.5. Study facilities

IV.5.1. THE JÓZSEF ATTILA STUDY AND INFORMATION CENTRE

www.u-szeged.hu/tik

H-6722 Szeged, Ady tér 10.

The “heart and soul” of the university is the József Attila Study and Information Centre the mission of which is to provide an innovative, technologically advanced and comprehensive learning environment. The Centre, always bustling with life, is a unique combination of library and instruction

space, classrooms, the best computing and instructional support for our students and faculty. From Monday to Wednesday various lessons take place in the lecture and seminar rooms of the building and from Thursday to Sunday the Centre is the venue of national and international conferences, university and business meetings, cultural and charitable programmes (concerts, exhibitions), receptions and balls.

General opening hours: Monday-Friday: 08:00-20:00; Saturday: 09:00-16:00.

Library facilities

The University Library has the largest collection in the region of the Southern Great Plain and is one of the most significant scientific libraries of Hungary. It unifies the holdings, services and infrastructure of nearly every faculty, institute and department of our university. In the reading rooms located on four floors (1st floor: Social sciences, 2nd floor: History, 3rd floor: Languages and literature, 4th floor: Natural and life sciences) there are more than 300.000 books arranged thematically as part of a collection of over 1,5 million items. For up-to-date and detailed information on the University Library, its collections and services please visit the following homepage:

www.bibl.u-szeged.hu.

Free WiFi access is provided throughout the area of the university.

IV.5.2. Library of Faculty of Health Care Sciences and Social Studies

The Faculty of Health Care has own library with around 25,000 items from the area of health and social care.

For information about libraries, computer facilities and sport programs, see

<http://www.szote.u-szeged.hu/angoltit/?q=geninfo>

V. Practical information for preparation for studying as an exchange student in Szeged

V.1 Visa, travel insurance

V.1.1. Visa and residence permit

In December 2007 Hungary became a member of the Schengen Area, therefore entry into the territory of the country is governed by the Schengen regulations. *Citizens of EU and EEA member states and of certain non-EU and non-EEA countries may travel to Hungary without visa, however, the Schengen visa and entry regulations are only applicable for a stay not exceeding 90 days.* * If your stay in Hungary exceeds three months, you are required to apply for a residence permit. Applications should be submitted to the Regional Directorate of the Office of Immigration and Nationality within ninety-three days from the time of entry.

The availabilities of the Regional Directorate of the Office of Immigration and Nationality are as follows:

6724 . Szeged, Londoni krt. 15.

Tel.: +36 62 549-140

Fax: +36 62 549-147

www.bmbah.hu

Schengen visa applications should be submitted at the Hungarian Embassy of your country. Visas and residence permits issued by one of the Schengen States are valid also for Hungary. Visas Issued by Hungarian representations abroad and residence permits issued by Hungarian national authorities are valid for the entire Schengen Area.*

For further information about entry conditions please visit the home page of the Hungarian embassy of your country.

* Source: Homepage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Hungary
(www.kulugyminiszterium.hu)

V.1.2. Health Insurance

It is strongly recommended that you get health insurance to cover your study period in Hungary. In the case of students from EU member states medical care is ensured on the basis of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). If you are a non-EU citizen, you should inquire whether there is a bilateral agreement on health care between Hungary and your country.

In the case of an accident or emergency you will receive free treatment provided you have EHIC. However, EHIC entitles you to state-provided medical treatment only and in certain cases you may be required to contribute to the cost of your treatment. Therefore, in addition to the above, you are

also recommended to purchase medical insurance in your home country (in this case you will be requested to pay for your treatment on the spot and your medical expenses will be refunded by your insurance company).

Don't forget to make sure you are insured for the journey from your home country to Szeged as well.

V.2 Travel arrangement

V.2.1. To and from Szeged

If you travel to Hungary by plane, you will arrive to the Budapest Airport. From Budapest, Szeged is about a 170 km journey both by train or bus. From the Budapest Airport (Ferihegy 1 or 2) there are some possibilities to get to Szeged:

- a. Private transport: with Taxi (cab) to Budapest-Ferihegy railway station, then with train to Szeged Railway Station (approximately 2 hours).
- b. Public transport: Take bus 200 in the airport, then get off at „Budapest-Ferihegy 1” station or „Kőbánya-Kispest” station, then then with train to Szeged Railway Station (approximately 2 hours). You can buy bus ticket from ticket machines at the airport entrance, and train ticket also from machines in the railway station or at the ticket office in Kőbánya-Kispest station. The ticket costs approx. 3300 HUF (one way) in 2010. The bus ticket costs around 320 HUF in Budapest.

V.2.2. Szeged City Transport

Public transport in Szeged, Hungary is provided by two companies, SzKT (short for the Hungarian name of Public Transport Company of Szeged) and Tisza Volán. The former company operates trams and trolley buses, while the latter operates buses. SzKT is owned by the city.

Szeged has 42 bus lines, three tram and four trolley bus lines. The city is one of only four Hungarian cities with trams — the others being Budapest, Miskolc and Debrecen — and, alongside Budapest and Debrecen, one of only three with trolley buses.

If you arrive to Szeged by train, you should take tram line 1 to the city centre then the proper bus/trolley/tram depending to your accommodation, or a cab directly to your accommodation. The ticket price in Szeged is 270 HUF (pre-purchased ticket in ticket office or from newspaper stands) or 340 HUF (from drivers). Taxi price depends on how far you travel, an average price from the railway station to the city centre is 1500 HUF.

V.3 Living in Szeged as a student

V.3.1. Cost of living

It depends partly on your own spending habits how much money you will need during your stay in Hungary. In general, living expenses are reasonable in Hungary especially in comparison with Western European countries. The average cost of living in Szeged, including room and board amounts to 80-100.000 HUF per month depending on the type of accommodation you choose. However, we advise you that you may need more money than the above amount in case you plan to buy clothes or get involved in various leisure activities etc.

V.3.2. Banks

Banks are usually open Mon. to Fri., 9.00-16.00, and Sat., till 12.00. You can exchange money at any banks, travel agents and larger post offices. They may offer different deals concerning the rate of exchange and the fees charged, so you are advised to look around in the city before exchanging foreign currency. EuroCard, MasterCard and Visa Electron are the most popular bank/credit cards in Hungary, and you can easily find ATM machines in Szeged to withdraw money from your home account.

V.3.3. Postal services

Main post offices are usually open Mon. to Fri., 8.00-19.00, and Sat., till 12.00 only. Stamps can also be purchased at any tobacconist's. The address of the central post office is:
6720 Szeged, Széchenyi tér 1.

V.3.4. Public transport

There are various forms of public transport available in Szeged. Bus, tram and trolley bus tickets can be purchased at any tobacconist's or newsstand. A day pass gives you unlimited use of public transport for one day. Weekly and monthly passes are also available. Buses, trams and trolley buses run from 5.00-23.00.

While on public transport beware of pickpockets.

V.3.5. Shops

Most shops are open Mon. to Fri., 9.00-18.00, and Sat., 9.00-13.00. Large shopping centres have extended hours of operation or are open non-stop.

Market:

The biggest market in Szeged is in Mars tér by the coach station where you can purchase local produce every day of the week.

Universum Book Shop:

A foreign language book shop in Oskola utca for dictionaries, language books, novels, poetry etc.

Canteens

University canteens (*menza*) offer meals at very reasonable prices. In fact, it might be more affordable to eat there than to cook a meal at home. Students of the University of Szeged usually go to the SZOTE Canteen (Simmelweis u. 4.) or drop into the nearby Irinyi Canteen (Boldogasszony sgt. 4.). Some restaurants like Restaurant Gödör (Tisza Lajos krt. 103.), Restaurant Fesztivál (Dóm tér 1-4.), the self-service restaurant located on the ground floor of Szeged Nagyáruház (Jókai u. 1.) or Boci Tejivó (Milk bar) (Zrínyi u. 2.) also offer dishes at rather favourable prices

VI. FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

1. Will I Get a Student Card?

Yes, you will receive your student card soon after your registration at the relevant faculty of the university. The student card entitles students to numerous discounts at several local shops, to cheaper fares in certain taxis and 50% discount on trains and coaches. Season tickets are valid with student cards only