

Visa free entry

Citizens of EU- and EEA-member states so as citizens of the following states¹ may travel to Hungary without a visa. Family members of citizens of EEA Member States may also travel to Hungary without a visa if they received a residence card issued for family members of EEA citizens or a residence permit issued by any Schengen Member State.

Entry conditions for foreigners under visa obligation

The Schengen visa and entry regulations are only applicable for a stay not exceeding 90 days. Rules for a long stay over 90 days may be laid down by the national law of the concerned member states. **The rules of Schengen visa issuing at the diplomatic posts of the various states are generally identical, visa fees are uniform.**

It is important to note that a visa is only a preliminary permission for entry, which does not authorise its bearer automatically to enter the country. The traveller **may be requested to provide proof of the existence of the conditions of his entry and stay** in Hungary and if he is not able to fulfil this, he may be returned from the border.

Exceptions from the general visa procedure may be given on the basis of visa facilitation agreements. The European Union has entered into such an agreement with Russia and as from 1 January 2008 similar agreements are expected to enter into force with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine.

Significant changes subsequent to Hungary's Schengen-membership

- **visas and residence permits issued by one of the Schengen States are valid also for Hungary,** on the other hand
- **visas issued by Hungarian representations abroad and residence permits issued by Hungarian national authorities are also valid for the entire Schengen Area.**

From 21 December 2007 24 states, 22 of the 27 member states of the European Union (these are the following: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) as well as Norway and Iceland are part of the Schengen Area. Whereas several members of the European Union, i.e. Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland, Romania and the United Kingdom still do not participate in the Schengen cooperation.

Primary rules for the issue of Schengen visa

Types of Schengen visa

¹ Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Croatia, Guatemala, Holy See, Honduras, Hong Kong (the exemption applies only to holders of a "Hong Kong Special Administrative Region"), Iceland, Israel, Japan, Macao (the exemption applies only to holders of a "Regio Administrativa Especial de Macau" passport), Malaysia, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Salvador, San Marino, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela.

- Airport transit visa (A): authorises the bearer to enter the international zone of the airport and to remain there until the time of the departure of the flight to the destination country. Only nationals of the following states are liable to apply for an airport transit visa ²
- Transit visa (B): authorises the bearer to a single, double or multiple transits, not exceeding 5 days at a time.
- Short stay visa (C): authorises the bearer to a single, double or multiple entries and, in case of an uninterrupted stay, to a stay of maximum 90 days, while in case of an interrupted stay, to a stay of altogether maximum 90 days within the 6 months counted from the date of the first entry.

Attention!

In case you have to transfer in Ferihegy 1 Airport or your flight arrives to Ferihegy 1 and your transfer flight departs from Ferihegy 2 (and *vice versa*), being in possession of a transit visa is necessary.

Where to submit visa applications?

Schengen visa applications have to be submitted at the representation of the country which is the main destination of the visit. (If interstate travel with stays of approximately the same duration is concerned the deciding factor is the first destination i.e. the country of entry.)

According to the Schengen regulations applicants having Hungary as the main destination can submit their visa applications at the Hungarian representation.

Border guards are not liable to accept Schengen visas issued by an other Schengen Member State for foreign nationals having Hungary as their main destination if those cannot justify why their visa was not provided by a Hungarian consulate. The same procedure applies for the entry into an other Member State if the foreign national has a visa issued by any of the Hungarian consulates.

Hungary, oriented by the routine of the Schengen member States, **enters into representation agreements with other Member States**. The **essential** element of these agreements is that **Hungarian visa can be requested in countries without Hungarian foreign representation**. The consulate of the country representing Hungary will issue visas for entering Hungary according to the common Schengen visa policy as if issuing visas for entering their respective country.

(The procedure of entering into representation agreements is under way. Depending on the signing of these agreements we will publish the representation list on this homepage.) (*LINK: list of representation agreements*)

According to the Schengen rules **border posts** generally **will not issue visas in the future either**, except for family members of EEA citizens and under extraordinary circumstances for nationals of other countries (e.g. entry with a purpose of attending the funeral service of a deceased family member, when it can be proved that there has not been any possibility to apply for a visa beforehand).

Who can submit a visa application?

The general rule is that the foreign representation has the competence to process the applications of the following persons:

² Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Zaire – Democratic Republic of the Congo

- Nationals of the receiving country
- Persons staying in the receiving country legitimately and continuously
- Persons with no Hungarian foreign representation in their country.

The persons listed above can submit a visa application in the following ways:

- The client can submit personally his own or his family member's visa application
- In case of organised tourist trips, an accredited travel agency may submit the visa application
- In case of group travel, the application may be submitted by a representative sufficiently authorised.

Attention!

1. **The authorisation is only valid for submitting the application and for collecting the visa issued, however the application form has to be signed by every traveller personally.**
2. In countries with vast territory or where there is no Hungarian foreign representation competent to issue visas or where Hungary is not represented by an other Schengen Member Stat, the honorary consuls are also entitled to receive visa applications with the purpose of transferring them.
3. The consulate may receive visa applications at the earliest 3 months before the beginning of the visit.

The documents needed for visa applications

I. General requirements:

- Valid passport the validity of which has to exceed that of the requested visa by at least 3 months;
- 1 passport-size **colour photo** (not older than 6 months);
- a wholly and legibly completed, signed application form:
 - o the application form may be acquired free of charge at the consular departments of the foreign representations or downloaded from the website of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (www.mfa.gov.hu). Schengen application forms are uniform therefore any application form issued by one of the Schengen Member States is eligible for applying for a Hungarian visa.
- a **health** insurance (a travel insurance providing cover for at least 30000 €for financing urgent health services and homeward transportation due to medical reasons valid for the whole period of stay and for the territory of every Schengen State);
- a certificate certifying lawful stay, if the applicant is not a citizen of the receiving country.

To fulfil the requirements of the visa application, the applicant, besides meeting these general requirements, shall also supply a **certificate of the financial coverage of his expenses**, and a **certificate of the purpose of the visit**.

II. The financial coverage of the expenses shall be certified with one of the following documents:

- an original income certificate of the employer or
- a bank account statement on the account turnover during the last three months or
- a pension slip or

- a certificate of registration in the case of an individual entrepreneur or one-man firm or
- a valid ticket, a certificate of a reserved and prepaid journey, accommodation or
- in the case of minors, a declaration by the legal representative on the coverage of the costs and on the existence of the financial coverage or
- a letter of invitation issued and endorsed by the Office of Immigration and Nationality.

III. The purpose of the entry shall be certified with the following documents:

When applying for a transit visa:

- a valid ticket certifying the purpose of the visit; or the certification of a vehicle of transport used and appropriately insured by the foreigner,
- a visa to the destination country, if necessary.

When applying for a short stay visa:

- In case of a tourist visit: the certificate of the travel agency; or in case of an individual visit: the prepaid reservation of accommodation.
- In case of an entry with an educational or other scientific or professional training purpose: the certificate of the receiving institution, the certificate of the expected place of accommodation in Hungary
- In case of an entry for visitation: the letter of invitation issued and endorsed by the Office of Immigration and Nationality or the letter of invitation in the form of a public notarial document and a photocopy of the personal identification document/passport of the inviting party in Hungary.
- For the purpose of the cultivation of family relations: the documents related to the entry with a visiting purpose or the certificate given by the applicant on the existence of the family relations, and his declaration presenting the purpose of the entry and stay, signed in full awareness of his criminal liability. The declaration shall extend to cover the degree of the family relation, giving the name, address and phone number of the family member.
- In case of an entry for business purposes: in case of the existence of a business partner in Hungary: a letter of invitation from the business partner, the certification of the existence of commercial-business relations; or the certificate of the local chamber of commerce on the existence of business relations, and the certification of the address of the expected place of accommodation in Hungary.
- In case of an entry with the purpose of medical treatment: the certificate of the receiving health institution, including reference to the fact that the expected coverage of the medical treatment is available, and other certification of the coverage of the medical treatment, as well as the certification of the address of the expected place of accommodation in Hungary.
- In case of carriers: the certification or request of the carrier firm.
- For the purpose of visiting the grave of a deceased relative buried in the territory of the Republic of Hungary: a document certifying the existence of the grave and the degree of relationship.
- In case of other purposes of entry (regular shopping, entertainment, etc.) not listed in any of the above categories: a declaration presenting the purpose of the entry and stay, made in full awareness of the person's criminal liability.

- | | | |
|----|--|--------|
| 1. | Application for an airport transit visa, transit visa or short-term entry visa | 60 EUR |
| 2. | Application for an extended stay visa | 60 EUR |
| 3. | Application for extended-stay visa for the purpose of seasonal work | 40 EUR |

Visas issued for free of charge

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| - children under the age of 14 and entered into the passport of the parent: | free of charge |
| - family members of EEA citizens: | free of charge |
| - children under the age of 6, travelling with their own passports | free of charge |
| - members of children's groups consisting of more than 5 children | free of charge |

Further exceptions

Further exceptions may be given on the basis of bilateral visa facilitation agreements contracted by the European Communities. For detailed information concerning these agreements please contact the competent Hungarian foreign representations in or accredited to the respective countries. The affected countries are Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine.

Attention!

1. The visa fee shall be paid when the application is submitted.
2. The consulate does not charge any further fees other than the above for issuing a visa.
3. **If the application for a visa is refused, the fee will not be reimbursed.**

Control and decision upon visa applications

Decision upon visa applications falls within the cognisance of the consuls, neither administrators in Hungary nor local administrators abroad may adjudge applications.

In order to control visa applications the consul

- consults in every case the entry ban list (SIS)
- inspects former visa issues for the applicant
- is liable to consult with competent authorities of other Member States in particular cases
- may consult with the Office of Immigration and Nationality and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- may consult with foreign representations of other Schengen States
- may order the personal appearance of the applicant
- may request the presentation of further documents or certificates in addition to the ones already attached to the application.

According to law decision upon the visa application must not exceed 30 days.

Rejection of the visa application

In case of entry ban or doubts concerning the application the consulate will refuse the visa application. Presentation of counterfeit documents is a reason for refusal.

Notification on the reason for refusal can be obtained at the consulate only by the applicant in person. At the applicant's request the notification can be issued in written form as well.

In case of refusal the consulate will not reimburse the visa fee.

There is no legal remedy against the rejection of an application, however, a complaint concerning the procedure can be lodged. Complaints will be examined in the first instance by the head of the consulate, in the second instance by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In case of refusal **at any time a new application may be submitted** if the visa fee is repayed by the applicant.

Long stay

Regulations on a stay exceeding 90 days fall within the competence of national authorities, therefore there is no uniform routine among the Schengen member States. Foreign nationals requesting to enter Hungary with a purpose of a long stay may submit **a long stay visa application**. In case of successful application, s/he will get a visa authorizing him or her to a single entry for receiving a residence permit and at longest to stay for 30 days in Hungary. Depending on the purpose of entry, the following documents are needed for the application for residence permit:

In case of a visa for the purpose of paid activity:

- a work permit,
- a contract of employment,
- a document certifying occupancy in Hungary, and
- a certificate on how the person will make a living until he receives his first salary (bank account statement, employer's certificate that he will pay an advance to the person, etc.)

or,

- a certificate on the character of the gainful activity (the articles of association),
- the resolution on the court registration of the enterprise,
- a document certifying occupancy in Hungary,
- a certificate on the acquisition of the qualification necessary for filling the position,
- a declaration, certificate on the (expected) yearly income,
- a certificate of the amount of money at the person's disposal in Hungary,
- the simplified balance sheet of the previous year (for a firm already operating),
- a certificate that the firm has no public debt (for a firm already operating),
- if the firm has Hungarian employees: their employment contracts,
- in case of a new enterprise: a brief business plan.

In case of a visa for educational purposes:

- a certificate of school attendance,
- a document certifying occupancy in Hungary (the document certifying accommodation in a student hostel or the tenancy contract with a duplicate of the title deed), and

- the documents certifying subsistence in Hungary (bank account statement; or the declaration of the parents that they assume coverage of all costs of the stay in Hungary; or the document certifying the scholarship).
- Attestation of the school that the applicant is exempt from the payment of school fees or that he/she has already paid the tuition fees.

In case of a visa for family reunification:

- a document certifying occupancy in Hungary,
- a document certifying subsistence in Hungary,
- a marriage certificate / birth certificate, and
- a copy of the passport of the Hungarian relative.

In case of a visa for visit:

- an official letter of invitation or an invitation included in a notarial document,
- a certificate of the average income of the inviting party,
- a duplicate of the title deed, and
- a copy of the passport or the personal identification document of the inviting party.

In case of a visa for medical treatment:

- the name and address of the health institution providing the treatment,
- a certificate of the character and the expected duration of the medical treatment,
- a certificate of the financial coverage for the medical treatment and the stay in Hungary,
- the certification of occupancy in Hungary provided that the applicant does not stay in the medical institution,
- in case of a minor child or a family member in need of help: the certification of the accommodation and the subsistence of the accompanying person.

In case of a visa for research:

- contract with an accredited research institute
- if the researcher does not dispose of sufficient financial means, a written commitment of the research organisation to refund expenses incurred concerning the expulsion of the researcher in case of a stay exceeding the authorized period of stay.

In case of a visa for voluntary work:

contract with a Hungarian receiving institution, organisation (church, library, town hall, etc.)