

**Virtual handbook** (September 2018)

**Foreword**

The purpose of this virtual handbook is to provide foreign government missions i.e. diplomatic and consular missions as well as offices of international Organisations in Hungary with information on how the various privileges and immunities under the Vienna Conventions and various host country agreements are implemented in Hungary, and to offer other useful information to diplomats and other staff members and their families.

This handbook will be web-based only and will not be distributed in a paper version. The handbook is a living document and will be revised continually according to need. Users are advised to check the last updated version on: [www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/](http://www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/)

The Protocol Department will gladly assist you in any way it can with the various matters covered in this handbook. Please note that the handbook is provided for information purposes only, and neither constitutes an authoritative legal statement of any kind nor commits or binds the Hungarian government in any way.

We hope you will find the information both helpful and useful.

István MANNO

Chief of Protocol of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Budapest, October 2016

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## **1. FOREIGN GOVERNMENT MISSIONS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR STAFF IN HUNGARY**

### **1.1 Status of foreign government missions, international organisations and their staff**

The status of foreign government missions, international organisations and their staff in Hungary is governed by the provisions of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (1963), bilateral agreements on consular relations and host country agreements. In addition, some privileges and facilities may be provided on the basis of international practice, in case of reciprocity.

### **1.2 Diplomatic agents**

A diplomatic agent is the head of a mission or a member of the diplomatic staff of the mission. Diplomatic agents should in principle be of the nationality of the sending State, cf. Article 8 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

In general, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade expects a diplomatic agent to be in possession of a valid diplomatic passport, to hold a recognized diplomatic rank, to perform diplomatic functions on a full-time basis and to be on normal rotation.

Article 1 of the Vienna Convention mentions the different categories of members of the staff of the diplomatic missions. The holders of the following ranks are considered to be members of the diplomatic staff as defined in Article 1(d) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations: Apostolic Nuncio, Ambassador (Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary), Minister (Plenipotentiary), Minister Counsellor, Counsellor, First Counsellor, Second Counsellor, First Secretary, Second Secretary, Third Secretary, Attaché and Assistant-Attaché. Furthermore, certain variations on these titles are accepted, e.g. "Defence Attaché" (or "Military", "Naval", or "Air" Attaché), and "Commercial Attaché", "Commercial Counsellor".

A member of the staff of the mission who does not hold one of the diplomatic ranks listed above will, as a general rule, be classified as a member of the administrative and technical staff of the mission or the service staff.

### **1.3 Members of the administrative and technical staff of the mission**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade expects members of the administrative and technical staff of the mission to perform their duties at the mission on a full-time basis and as a general rule to be in possession of an official (service) passport issued by the sending State.

### **1.4 Members of the service staff of the mission**

Article 1(g) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations defines members of the service staff as those who are in the domestic service of the mission. These persons are part of the staff categories (members of the mission), who are posted abroad by their country's Foreign Service, and therefore obtain their permit to stay from the Protocol Department.

Immunity in respect of acts performed in the course of their duties extends to members of the service staff of the mission.

Family members of the service staff of the mission do not enjoy immunities under the Vienna Convention.

### **1.5 Private servants**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has been authorised to issue residence permits to expatriate private servants working in the domestic household of a diplomat who is responsible for the salary, board and lodging at the employer's residence, insurances, holidays, health care, return ticket, etc. The maximum period for the employment may not be longer than the diplomat's residence permit. In any event the employment must come to an end when the diplomat leaves the country.

Private servants do not enjoy privileges and immunities.

### **1.6 Locally recruited staff**

The missions may employ Hungarian nationals or non-Hungarian permanent residents of Hungary as locally recruited staff. The provisions of the Hungarian labour and social laws must be observed whenever a mission recruits local staff. Such staff members who are not privileged staff members and who are nationals of or permanent residents in Hungary do not enjoy privileges and immunities, but the Hungarian authorities must exercise their jurisdiction over such persons in such a manner as not to interfere unduly with the performance of the functions of the mission, cf. Article 38 (2) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

### **1.7 Family members**

There is no definition for the family members in the generally accepted international documents like the 1961 Vienna Convention. As a general rule, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade defines the term "family", for the purposes of the Vienna Conventions, as including:

- a spouse, or a partner, on condition that this status is legally recognised by the sending State, and

- unmarried children under 23 years of age who are not members of some other household and who reside exclusively in the household of and are financially dependent on the parent in question. However, children who are in a physical or mental state that prevents them from taking care of themselves without assistance from the parents are considered dependent with no age limitation. Those between the ages of 23 and 26 will continue to enjoy privileges and immunities on condition that they are attending an accredited institution of higher learning (i.e. university or similar) on a full-time basis in Hungary. In such cases, proof of enrolment must be presented to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

- upon due consideration of their age and dependency on the main emissary, some of the non-immediate relatives such as parents or parents-in-law can be recognised as family members but only for the purposes of the application of the relevant immigration regulations. In this case the Ministry issues a residence permit or I.D. card for them, but no privileges or immunities are granted.

- it is expected that the spouse or partner and minor children hold the same type of passport as the main emissary. However, particular regulations of the sending state on the restriction of the issuance of diplomatic or service passports are duly observed.

According to Article 37(1) of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, with the exception of the nationals of the receiving state those recognised as family members by the receiving state enjoy the same status regardless of their nationality. That means that those family members who are Hungarian nationals do not enjoy immunities from Hungarian jurisdiction. Along with the provisions of the relevant EU law the immigration status of non-EEA citizen family members differs from those with EEA citizenship, but once recognised as a family member he/she may stay as long as the tour of duty of the main emissary lasts.

## **1.8. Immunity**

In certain aspects the term “diplomatic immunity” covers both inviolability and immunity from jurisdiction. Inviolability means that the Hungarian government may not take coercive measures such as the arrest or remand in custody of individuals (Article 29 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations), forced access to or seizure of buildings (Article 30) or seizure of goods and property. Hungarian courts are not competent to try cases where the defendant enjoys immunity under Article 31 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

### **1.8.1 Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the following are inviolable**

In general terms a mission’s premises and its means of transport (Article 22), a mission’s archives, documents and electronically stored data (Article 24), a mission’s official correspondence, the diplomatic bag and the diplomatic courier (Article 27), diplomatic agents (Article 29), members of the administrative and technical staff of the mission and members of their families forming part of their households (Article 37, paragraph 1, and Article 37, paragraph 2), the private residences of diplomatic agents (Article 30) and members of the administrative and technical staff of the mission (Article 37, paragraph 2) as well as their papers, correspondence and property (Article 30, paragraph 2). Property is only inviolable when used by persons enjoying privileges and immunities.

Diplomatic agents and members of their families who pass through Hungary, provided they are travelling to or returning from a post (Article 40).

### **Persons enjoying immunity under international laws:**

According to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the following persons enjoy immunity:

Diplomatic agents (Article 31) and members of their families forming part of their households (Article 37, paragraph 1).

Members of the administrative and technical staff of the mission and members of their families forming part of their households with some restrictions (Article 37, paragraph 2).

Members of the service staff of the mission, when performing acts in the course of their duties (Article 37, paragraph 3).

### **1.8.2 Inviolability and immunity under the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations**

Consular officers, i.e. Consul General, Consul, and Vice-Consul, are divided into two categories, career consular officers and honorary consular officers. The particular status of members of a consular post who are nationals or permanent residents of the receiving State is governed by Article 71 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. Bilateral consular agreements, however, may contain regulations on immunity different from those included in the 1963 Vienna Convention.

### **1.8.3 Status of offices of international Organisations and of their personnel**

Host country agreements between Hungary and different international Organisations having headquarters or other type of offices/centres in Hungary regulate their status along the practice developed by host countries over a longer period of time. Even with some resemblance to generally known status agreements they may differ from each other. Heads of offices and high-ranking officers of the institutions may enjoy a status close to that of a diplomatic agent, while officials generally enjoy immunity only in respect of words spoken or acts performed strictly in their official capacity.

### **1.9 Duty to respect laws and regulations of the receiving state**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade expects all members of missions and consular officers and officials of international Organisations to fully respect Hungarian laws and regulations during their stay in Hungary, cf. Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Members of missions are asked to pay particular attention to Hungarian legislation concerning speed limits, alcohol, driving and parking regulations.

Diplomatic and consular immunity does not relieve diplomatic and consular personnel of the duty to discharge all private financial obligations incurred during their stay in Hungary.

### **1.10 Gainful employment of family members**

Based on treaty provisions or upon reciprocal arrangements, spouses/partners and children of privileged persons may engage in gainful employment in Hungary.

In accordance with Article 31 of the Vienna Convention, immunity from Hungarian civil and administrative jurisdiction will not apply in relation to any professional or commercial activity exercised by dependant family members. Working spouses/partners and children will be liable to pay income tax and social contribution on their salary. Treaties or other bilateral arrangements may themselves limit one person's immunity during the performance

of gainful employment by a family member of a privileged person. Moreover, in accordance with Article 41 of the Vienna Convention, it is the duty of all persons enjoying privileges and immunities to respect the laws and regulations of the receiving State. In case of criminal acts, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade will, therefore, ask the sending State to waive the immunity of a diplomat involved in such activities as provided in Article 32 of the 1961 Vienna Convention. This general rule may also apply in relation to any criminal act performed by dependant family members in relation to any professional or commercial activity.

In order to verify the prevailing rules in any particular case the Mission or the International Organisation must ensure that the Protocol Department is informed about the intention of spouses/partners or children to work in Hungary.

## **2.1 Arrival**

### **2.1.1 Visa requirements**

Members of the diplomatic mission, consular officers and officials of international Organisations based in Hungary and members of their families who are nationals of countries whose nationals are required to present a visa to enter the Schengen area must be in possession of a valid D type official entry visa before arriving in Hungary. The visa application should be submitted to the Hungarian Embassy/Consulate well in advance of the planned arrival in Hungary, accompanied by a verbal note from the sending State containing information regarding the name, rank and function, family members belonging to the household, expected date of entry and commencement of duty, as well as expected duration of the tour of duty. The predecessor's name and rank should also be specified.

Please note that a member of the mission may not enter Hungary for the purpose of taking up his/her duties on an ordinary C type Schengen visit visa. The same applies to accompanying family members.

### **2.1.2 Arrival of members of the mission**

The Protocol Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade should be notified of the arrival of all members of the mission and family members forming part of their household. Notifications of arrival should be sent to the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, together with a duly completed registration form (notification of appointment form – Bejelentőlap) that may be downloaded from [www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/](http://www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/), passport(s), two passport photographs and a specimen signature within five (5) working days of arrival in Hungary. A specimen signature can be affected by children under 15 years of age. The registration form must be signed by the Head of Mission and stamped with the Mission's official stamp.

### **2.1.3 Application for ID cards and Residence Cards. Two types of identity cards are issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to the personnel of missions and offices of international organisations**

TARTÓZKODÁSI ENGEDÉLY (Residence Permit) for non-EEA nationals and

DIPLOMATAIGAZOLVÁNY / KKM IGAZOLVÁNY (Diplomatic ID Card / MFAT ID Card) for EEA and non-EEA nationals – Diplomatic ID Card for diplomats / MFAT ID Card for non-diplomats

(Remark: TISZTELETBELI KONZULI IGAZOLVÁNY / Honorary Consular ID Cards are issued to the honorary consuls.)

Mission staff members who are Hungarian nationals or permanently resident in Hungary are not provided with the above documents as they are expected to hold commonly used Hungarian documents.

#### **Brief general information on ID cards:**

To apply for an ID card the mission must send a verbal note to the Ministry together with a duly completed form – «Application for residence permit and/or ID card- Tartózkodási engedély/ Igazolvány iránti kérelem», two colour passport photos, and a copy of the passport. Download the registration form from [www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/](http://www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/). When an ID card needs to be renewed, a request should be sent to the Section for Diplomatic Relations in the form of a verbal note enclosing a completed form, the expired ID card and a copy of the main page of the applicant's passport.

Loss of an ID card should be reported to the police, which will draft a written report of the loss. A copy of the report is required before a new ID card can be issued. It is recommended that all members of missions and consular officers have their ID cards with them at all times. If they come in contact with a police officer, they should immediately clarify their status by showing their ID card so that the police are able to treat them accordingly.

ID cards issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade cannot be used without the passport of the holder as identity or travel documents outside Hungary. ID cards must be returned to the Protocol Office of the Ministry on departure from Hungary at the end of the tour of duty. Upon request invalidated cards can be returned to the mission members if they wish to keep them in their family archive.

Residence permit (Tartózkodási Engedély) is intended for personnel posted to foreign missions in Hungary and who need a visa to enter Hungary. The card format permit is introduced to secure free Schengen border crossing of accredited personnel at foreign missions in Hungary.

This card is proof that the personnel are accepted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and that they are staying legally in Hungary. The card holds biometrical data such as photo, signature and fingerprints in case of private personnel.

Personnel accepted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are exempted from the requirement to hold any other type of residence permit in Hungary. Holders of this card are entitled to travel freely in the Schengen area. They may stay for up to 90 days in another Schengen country during a 180-day period. A list of the countries belonging to the Schengen area can be found on <https://www.axa-schengen.com/en/countries-schengen-area>

When travelling, holders of this card are expected to present both their residence card and their passport.

It is important that personnel check that the information on the card is identical to that given in their passport. If there are any errors or discrepancies, the mission should report this to the Protocol Office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

#### **2.1.4 Detailed information on the application process**

A residence permit and/or ID is to be issued to the newly arriving members of the mission and their families. The following details can be useful in the application process. Please note that applications are always to be hand delivered to the Protocol Office located in 46 Gyorskocsi Street in the 2<sup>nd</sup> district of Budapest. This office is very close to Building D of the Ministry, which is located in Nagy Imre Square. The number of exclusive parking places is limited in front of the 46 Gyorskocsi Street building.

Documents do not necessarily have to be presented personally by the applicants themselves; they may be delivered to the Protocol Office by a member of the embassy staff during office hours: Tuesday and Thursday between 9 a.m. and 12 noon.

#### **The following items are to be presented when starting the application process:**

- a Verbal Note from the mission announcing the arrival of the new colleague that displays a file number, date, stamp and signature of the head of the mission or the one usually authorized to sign such applications.
- 2 completed “Notification of Appointment of...” (D, A, F, KH, HC, K) forms where every column should be filled appropriately
- 2 duly filled “Application for Residence Permit and /or MFAT ID card” forms
- 4 colour photos, size 4.5 x 3.5 cm, not older than one year. Photocopies are not accepted. The photos should be glued to the application forms.
- 2 good quality copies of the valid passport (cover and all data pages, including the copy of the Hungarian visa, if necessary)

### **Guidelines for biometric ID photos:**

The photo must be (W)35mm x (H)45mm in total, with the head of the subject covering between 29mm and 34mm of the overall height.

In the photo the face must be in focus, have good contrast and accurately reflect the subject's skin tone. The face must be evenly illuminated across all features, with no shadows. Red eye from camera flash and glare or reflections on glasses is not acceptable. The background must be one plain colour with no patterns on it providing good contrast with the hair and facial features.

**Head Position and Facial Expression:** The subject should look directly at the camera with a natural expression. The eyes must be open and the mouth closed with no smile or other emotion present. If both ears are visible, this usually indicates that the subject is front-on to the camera, as required. Eyes must be fully open and not covered or partially covered by hair, head coverings or any other object. Glasses worn must not be causing any kind of reflection or shadow across the eyes or face.

**Headwear:** Hats and other headwear is not permitted unless for religious or medical reasons. Even then, any headwear must not obscure any part of the eyes or face.

**Children:** The same composition rules for adults also apply to photos of children, with a couple of exceptions. Children under 6 years of age do not need to be looking at the camera. No toys or other objects are allowed, and the child must be the only person visible in the printed photo. The child can be supported by a hand, but the hand or other object may not appear in the printed photo.

- the applicant's passport (which is not withheld during the process)
- a good quality copy of the passport covering all data pages, including the copy of the Hungarian visa, if any issued
- in case of a new member of the diplomatic staff please determine his or her ranking order in the diplomatic list of the embassy

Please note that the processing time is 21 days. However, the newly arriving member of the staff enjoys the given status from the date of arrival, so for example his/her application for customs clearance or special licence plates or VAT reimbursement can be processed even during this period.

### **Replacement of an expiring ID:**

The following items are to be presented when applying for a new ID to replace the expiring one (as the validity of the originally issued card cannot be extended)

- a Verbal Note making the request
- 2 properly filled "Application for Residence Permit and /or MFAT ID card"

- 2 colour photos – the same requirements as above
- 2 good quality copies of the valid passport (cover and all data pages, including the copy of the Hungarian visa, if necessary)
- processing time is 21 days

It is strongly advised to approach the Protocol Office with the application not later than one month before the expiry date of the ID.

**Departure:**

The staff members whose tour of duty comes to an end, as well as their family members must be deregistered, and their ID cards must be sent to the Protocol Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Please enclose the filled **deregistration form** and the ID cards with the Verbal Note. The Protocol Office is not able to issue ID cards to the new employee and his/her family members until the departing employee is deregistered and the ID cards are returned.

**Documents to be submitted for deregistration:**

- Verbal Note
- 1 duly filled “Deregistration form”
- MFAT ID card(s)

**Replacing lost or stolen ID cards**

The following items should be submitted:

- Verbal Note
- copy of the Police report
- 2 duly filled “Application for Residence Permit and /or MFAT ID card”
- 2 colour photos glued to the application form. See requirements for biometric photos.)
- 2 good quality copies of the valid passport (cover and all data pages, including the copy of the Hungarian visa, if necessary)

Fillable PDF forms can be downloaded from the MFAT website:

<http://www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/dtwebe/appendices.htm>

**Please note**

The Protocol Office cannot accept any incomplete application forms from which the signatures of the applicant or of the head of the mission or the stamp of the mission or the necessary attachments are missing.

Please assist the process by closely observing the details of application. Beyond the basic personal data all the other small details are necessary for the process. Please read the

compilation of the most common mistakes below and heed the advice of the very staff who process the applications.

- Number of the Verbal Note is missing.
- The size of the photo is inappropriate. Please make sure that the photos are in keeping with the Hungarian standard, i.e. 4.5 cm x 3.5 cm.
- Often old (older than one year) photos are attached to the applications.
- Mother's maiden name is incomplete – please write the whole name, not just the family name.
- Place of birth – fill not only the state, or country but the city/town/village as well.
- Type of visa (if necessary)
- Name and rank of the predecessor and the date when he/she completed his/her tour of duty and left Hungary
- Previous assignments – if any - in Hungary
- Expected date of end of tour of duty
- Address of Hungarian residence: please fill the address where the applicant de facto resides. The address of the Embassy may be printed on the ID Card if it is so requested in the accompanying Verbal Note.
- In case of grown-up children between 23 and 26 years of age please enclose a valid certificate of school attendance for regular students of a Hungarian college or university with the application form. It must contain the grade or the class he or she attends. *The copy of the student card or the certificate of the legal relation of the student cannot substitute the certificate of school attendance.*

Hungarian version: [www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWeb/](http://www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWeb/)

English version: [www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/](http://www.kulugyminiszterium.hu/DTWebe/)

## **2.2 Arrival of a new head of diplomatic mission**

### **2.2.1 Agrément**

The processing time for an application for agrément for a proposed new Head of Mission, cf. Article 4 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, under normal circumstances is six to eight weeks. At certain times processing the request may take somewhat longer.

An application for agrément may be submitted either by the mission accredited to Budapest, or, if so desired, in the proposed Head of Mission's capital. The response is normally delivered through the same channels as those used for the application.

### **2.2.2 Arrival in Hungary of a New Ambassador**

The Diplomatic Protocol Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade must be informed about the arrival of the new Ambassador-designate by means of a *verbal note* from the Embassy concerned.

The Ambassador-designate will be met on arrival in Budapest by a representative of the Protocol Department, provided that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has been notified in advance of the date and hour of the arrival, and the arrival by air or train is scheduled from Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

A Head of Mission arriving to take up his/her position in Budapest and a Head of Mission departing after completing his/her tour of duty is granted the complimentary use of the VIP (Government) Lounge at the Liszt Ferenc International Airport. Only in the above-mentioned cases will the Hungarian party cover the cost of the use of the VIP lounge for the Ambassador (together with members of his/her family) and five members of the Embassy staff.

It is to be noted that requests for courtesy calls by an Ambassador following the presentation of his/her credentials and before his/her final departure from the post have to be communicated by means of a verbal note.

### **2.2.3 Ceremony of the presentation of credentials of a newly arriving ambassador**

Following his/her arrival, the Ambassador-designate – at his/her request – pays courtesy calls to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and presents a copy of his/her Letter of Credence to the Head of the Protocol Department, who acquaints him/her with the procedural details of the ceremony of presenting credentials at Sándor Palace.

The Embassy is to inform the Department in advance of the ceremony on the following:

- names of people who accompany the Ambassador, the number of whom cannot be more than three persons (spouse and/or Embassy diplomats),
- the language the Ambassador wishes to use in the course of his or her audience with the President, though English is usually preferred (An interpreter will be provided by the Hungarian party.)
- the address the Ambassador and his or her delegation wish to depart from and, following the ceremony, intend to return to.

The dress code for the ceremony is dark suit or national costume. It is to be noted that during the presentation of the letters of credence the ambassador-designate and staff may wear no other than state decorations of Hungary.

An official photographer is provided at Sándor Palace. After the presentation of the letters of credence the Protocol Department will send the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary photos of the official photographs taken at the event.

The Hungarian party kindly requests that the esteemed Embassy/Ambassador provide a ribbon with the national colours (approx. 150 cm long and 15-20 cm wide) with or without an inscription for the wreath-laying ceremony 2 or 3 days prior to the event. The wreath will be ordered by the Protocol Department at the behest and expense of the esteemed

Embassy.

The Hungarian party kindly requests that the esteemed Embassy provide the national anthem on a CD and the musical score, as well as a car flag for the ceremony and inform the Protocol Department about the detailed description of their national flag (e.g. Pantone Code) in advance.

1. On the day of the presentation of credentials the Head of the Department or one of his or her deputies calls for the Ambassador and his or her delegation. The motorcade is led by a police lead-up car. The Ambassador travels in the official vehicle with the Head of the Department or one of his or her deputies, while the accompanying members travel in the second vehicle. If needed, additional embassy vehicles can follow.
2. The motorcade arrives at Sándor Palace five minutes prior to the beginning of the ceremony. On arrival the Ambassador is received by the Commander of Budapest Garrison, who briefs him or her on the ceremony of the military honours performed by the Guard of Honour.

The accompanying members line up outside the main entrance with the help of the (deputy) chief of protocol from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The process of the ceremony in front of Sándor Palace:

- Following the trumpet call, the Honour Guards' Platoon salutes and presents arms before the Ambassador. Afterwards, the Commander of Budapest Garrison and the Ambassador walk to the troop flag and stop in line with it.
- The commander of the Honour Guards' Platoon reports to the Ambassador, then the Ambassador turns towards the troop flag and bows.
- Subsequently, the Commander of Budapest Garrison and the Ambassador walk down the red carpet in front of the soldiers of the Honour Guards' Platoon to inspect them.
- The Commander of the Budapest Garrison and the Ambassador halt at the end of the line of the soldiers. The Ambassador turns to face the commander, who will bid him/her farewell by saluting with his sword.
- The Commander of Budapest Garrison and the Ambassador continue down the red carpet walking to the gate of Sándor Palace, where the Ambassador will be received by the Chief of Protocol to the President of the Republic of Hungary, who will escort the Ambassador to the salon where the presentation of credentials takes place.

Once the military honours are performed, the Chief of Protocol of Sándor Palace receives the Ambassador at the entrance of the building.

3. Thereafter, the Ambassador and the delegation enter Sándor Palace. The Ambassador meets the foreign policy staff of the Presidential Palace in the Maria

Theresa Room. In the Maria Theresa Room the Chief of Protocol briefly informs the Ambassador and the delegation about the ceremony in the Hall of Mirrors. Then the Ambassador and the delegation enter the Hall of Mirrors and take up their position (the Ambassador stands in front, members of the delegation line up behind him or her in order of seniority).

4. The President enters the room and stops at a short distance facing the Ambassador, waiting for the Ambassador to speak (there is no Master of Ceremonies). The Ambassador, maintaining his or her position, delivers a few courtesy phrases (2-3 sentences), waits until his or her words are translated into Hungarian, then steps forward (without waiting for the President's answer or invitation to do so) and extends to the President with both hands his or her Letter of Credence and the Letter of Recall of his or her predecessor. The President receives the Letters with both hands, passes them into his left hand and congratulates the Ambassador with a handshake and a few words of welcome. The Ambassador asks for the President's permission to introduce his or her delegation to him. The permission granted, the Ambassador proceeds to present his or her staff members, who remain standing in their original position.

The President invites the Ambassador and one accompanying diplomat to the Blue Salon for a private conversation. The format is 1+2 on the Hungarian side (the President is accompanied by one of his diplomatic advisors and a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade). The interpreter is also present. The other members of the delegation stay behind in the Maria Theresa Room. The President takes leave of the Ambassador in the Blue Salon. After the audience the Ambassador and his or her colleague return to the Maria Theresa Room, where the Ambassador signs the Guest Book. The delegation leaves the palace.

5. The motorcade drives to Heroes' Square. The Commander of the Budapest Garrison meets the delegation and welcomes the Ambassador, giving him or her a short overview of the wreath-laying ceremony.
  - Following the trumpet call, the Honour Guards' Platoon salutes and presents arms before the Ambassador. Afterwards, the Commander escorts the Ambassador to the red carpet, where the Ambassador can take his or her place behind the soldiers bearing the wreath.
  - When the music starts the Ambassador follows the soldiers carrying the wreath. They place the wreath on the monument. There is no stopping at the troop flag.
  - When the soldiers step back, the Ambassador takes a step forward onto the monument and adjusts the ribbon on the wreath.
  - The Ambassador bows as the soldiers salute.
  - When the Ambassador has paid his or her respect this way, the Commander steps forward and escorts the Ambassador back to the commander of the Honour Guards' Platoon, who will bid the Ambassador farewell by saluting with his sword.
  - As a conclusion to the ceremony the Commander escorts the Ambassador

back to the vehicle.

The ceremony over, the Ambassador and his or her party are escorted back to the address previously agreed upon with the Embassy.

### **2.3 Absence of the Head of Mission**

During the absence of the accredited Head of Mission, a *Chargé d’Affaires ad interim* shall act provisionally as head of the mission. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade must be notified of the name of the Chargé d’Affaires a.i. by the Head of Mission before the latter’s departure from the country. If such notification is not possible, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the sending State must notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the receiving State about the appointment of the Chargé d’Affaires a.i. since, under Article 19 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, a Chargé d’Affaires a.i. may not notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about his/her own appointment.

### **2.4 Eligibility for permanent resident status**

Non Hungarian national members of the missions and their family members may apply for permanent resident status in accordance with the general rules on the status of third country nationals enacted in Act II. of 2007. However, the years spent in Hungary as main emissaries or their family members cannot be counted as years for eligibility.

## **3. FINANCIAL, TAXATION AND REAL ESTATE ISSUES**

### **3.1 Financial transactions duty**

The Financial Transaction Duty is a direct tax, which was introduced by Act CXVI of 2012 on Financial Transaction Duty. Due to the regulations of Section 5 of the aforementioned Act, the duty shall be payable by the payment service provider of the paying customer, by the credit institution authorized to pursue currency exchange activities, or by the special services intermediary of currency exchange services, but not by the customers. The missions as customers of the banks and other financial institutions are paying the actual charges for the services of the provider for the different financial transactions and not the transaction duty itself. The amount of these fees depend on each bank’s own financial policy. As these fees are payable to the bank for the services, they are not refundable.

### **3.2 Customs duty, VAT and excise duty**

#### **3.2.1 VAT refund**

VAT & Excise tax are indirect taxes, these exemptions are beyond the scope of the Vienna Convention. In this respect, every country has created its own system and legal provision of practice.

On the basis of reciprocity, Hungary grants value-added-tax and excise tax exemption i.e. VAT & Excise tax exemption, in the form of reimbursement to the diplomatic and consular missions accredited to Hungary and the members of these missions (diplomats, members of the administrative and technical staff), as well as their dependants (if accepted as family members) on goods and services purchased in Hungary.

The legal background of entitlement to tax exemption and that of the reimbursement procedure has been constituted by two Hungarian acts and a decree of the Minister of Finance.

- Act CXXVII of 2007 on VAT;
- Act CXXVII of 2003 on Excise Taxes and Special regulations on the Distributions of Excise Goods;
- Decree of the Minister of Finance PM 11/2010. (II.31.) on the implementation of the enforcement of certain privileges, allowances and exemptions concerning VAT and excise duties.

### **Refund for the missions**

Missions are entitled to VAT&Excise tax reimbursement after their official purchases without limit. However, there are some mandatory specifications in this respect, for example in the case of the services of restaurants and other public catering services. The aforementioned VAT Act specifies that the official purposes “shall be recognized...if at least 10 persons are invited and attending, as verified in writing by the head of the diplomatic mission...” Cf. Section 108 (2) Act CXXVII of 2007.

### **Refund for members of the mission**

According to the present regulation, the members of the Missions and their dependants are equally entitled to reimbursement up to 300 thousand forints/person/year. Please note that in case of the purchase of a car or other high value item the annual 300-thousand-forint ceiling also prevails. This reimbursement limit applies to every member of every mission accredited to Hungary, even to the head of mission’s personal purchases.

### **Excise tax**

In case of reimbursement of the excise tax a quantity limit applies as follows:

<b>diplomatic missions</b>	
fuel	no quantity limit
alcohol products	1500 litres/year of spirits, other alcohol products are not limited
tobacco products	60,000 cigarettes/year, other tobacco products are not limited
<b>members of the diplomatic missions</b>	
fuel	2000 litres/year
alcohol products	150 litres/year of spirits, other alcohol products are

	not limited
tobacco products	25,000 cigarettes/year, other tobacco products are not limited

### **3.3 Real estate**

Based upon the relevant provisions of Act LXXVIII of 1993 diplomatic or consular representations and international organisations may acquire real estate upon previous permission granted by the local government office at capital or county level. Permission are granted only on the basis of reciprocity or by virtue of the provisions of a treaty between Hungary and the other party.

#### **3.4.1 Duty free imports - Customs**

Diplomatic missions resident in Hungary and their staff may import goods for official or personal use free of customs duties. Each unaccompanied incoming shipment should be customs cleared upon presentation of a customs clearance documents (Vámmentesítési kérelem) issued by the Protocol Office. The form is to be completed and signed and stamped by the head of mission or any other authorized person in the mission and filed, countersigned and stamped by the Protocol Office. A copy of waybill or bill of lading should be enclosed listing the items to be cleared.

Before exporting personal belongings a request form for customs clearance (Vámszemle kérelem) is to be filled in the same manner as above.

**3.4.2** Unless otherwise regulated bilaterally the members of the administrative and technical staff of the mission enjoy customs duty exemption on their personal belongings imported within 6 months from their arrival. The same exemption applies for their further import of articles for personal use not exceeding 1 million forints by individual value.

## **4. IMPORT, LICENSING AND USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

### **4.1 Import and purchase of motor vehicles, including motorcycles**

Motor vehicles may be imported free of duty and free of registration fee by the mission, by diplomatic agents, members of the administrative and technical staff and consular officers on condition that the vehicles are imported or purchased exclusively for the official use of the mission or for the personal use of the importer or family members forming part of the household of the person in question. Missions may import and purchase their vehicles fully exempted from paying the 27% VAT but members of the mission and their family members may only use their annual 300-thousand-forint limit for the VAT exemption in the form of reimbursement.

## **4.2 Licence plates**

Issuance of special licence plates is not regulated by the '61 Vienna Convention and it is generally considered a facility provided by the receiving state for the convenience of the diplomatic corps.

From 20 June 2017 diplomatic and consular missions as well as bureaus/centres of international Organisations based in Hungary and their staff are eligible for special licence plates in the unified CD series. Formerly used DT or CK series plates will be phased out by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. The new CD series will clearly identify the mission and the status of the holder. All category of staff members – provided that they are not Hungarian nationals – of the diplomatic/consular missions, international Organisations are granted CD series plates. There is no limit on cars for the official use of the missions and IO's bureaus/centres. Members of the diplomatic staff with a family may obtain an additional CD licence plate beyond the one issued to the main emissary. Other category of personnel may obtain one CD series of licence plates per family.

Special licence plates are issued by the licence bureau in Visegrádi Street upon presentation of countersigned and stamped documentation issued by the Protocol Office.

### **4.2.1 Application for special registration plates - declaration of status change of a vehicle**

The process starts at the Protocol Office where the above-mentioned document "Gépjármű-bejelentő lap" ( i.e. declaration of status change of a vehicle) should be presented. This self-copying four page sheet is available upon request at the Protocol Office.

Missions are expected to complete this form in the following cases:

- import of a vehicle
- purchase of a vehicle in Hungary
- sale of the vehicle or any other change in ownership
- exporting the vehicle to another country
- loss of a licence plate

The application should be duly completed with the data of the vehicle – make, type, engine number, chassis number - and of the owner and former owner or car dealership. Ownership papers with translation, former registration papers, or sales contract/pro forma invoice is expected to be enclosed with the application form that is to be signed by the owner and the head of the mission and duly stamped with the mission's seal.

Motorcycles and other vehicles can also be custom cleared and supplied with special plates in the same process.

#### **4.2.1.2 Retaining of the original vehicle document and registration plates**

Upon the request of the eligible applicant the licence bureau allows him/her to retain the original registration document and registration plates of the vehicle. This process is strongly

advised in cases when the owner of the vehicle wishes to re-export the vehicle after finishing his/her tour of duty in Hungary.

#### **4.2.2 Sale of vehicles with special registration plates (CD)**

No time limit exist for keeping the vehicles registered with special licence plates, i.e. vehicles with special registration number can be sold, exported or otherwise disposed of at any time.

In case of the sale of the above vehicles registration tax is to be paid by the buyer if it has not been paid in Hungary or any other EU country. Usually the seller of the vehicle is not obliged to pay the customs duty and tax. However, cars privately imported from a non-EEC country may fall under different criteria.

Special licence plates should be removed from the cars before they are handed over to a non-eligible person. In case of the export of the vehicle special CD plates should be exchanged to export-CD licence plates. These export-CD licence plates are non-returnable, unlike the CD special registration plates which must be returned to the licensing office enclosed with a completed "Gépjármű-bejelentő lap". The licensing process is free of charge for diplomatic missions, diplomats and members of the administrative and technical staff.

Missions are requested to follow the same process even when the vehicle is transferred to another eligible person including family members. Plates from a driver's previous vehicle can be transferred to a new vehicle in the same process as the vehicle registration documents should contain the data of the new vehicle.

#### **4.3 Driver's licences**

Based on reciprocity all categories of mission staff members may drive in Hungary using their national driver's licences within the validity period of the licence. Driver's licences issued in countries that are not member states of the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic or are non-EEA countries are acceptable only with a certified translation.

Necessary data on the driver's licence:

- a) data suitable for identifying the holder of the document,*
- b) photo and signature of the holder,*
- c) the date and the period of validity of the document,*
- d) the number of the licence,*
- e) the name or the rubber stamp of the issuing authority and*
- f) the title heading "driver's licence" in the national language (languages) of the issuing country, as well as the name of the issuing country and its distinguishing state symbol, provided that the fields and the data contained therein are in Latin characters or are also mentioned in Latin characters*

Those who wish to exchange their licence to a Hungarian one should contact the following office:  
Budapest Főváros Kormányhivatala XIII. Kerületi Hivatala Központi Okmányirodai Főosztály (1133

Budapest, Visegrádi Street 110. / <http://www.kormanyhivatal.hu/hu/budapest/jarasok/bfkh-kozponti-okmanyiroda/> Telephone: +36-1-550-1858).

Upon request the foreign driver's licence can be exchanged to a Hungarian licence within a period of one year starting from the beginning of the applicant's tour of duty in Hungary. The original driver's licence with a certified true translation, as well as a medical certificate of aptitude are required. In the course of the administrative process the original driver's licence shall be withdrawn. In the event of there being no reciprocity with the foreign state issuing the driver's licence, and the licence having been issued in a non-EEA country, or the issuing country not having ratified the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic, the foreign licence is accepted on condition that the holder passes the road test and the highway code test.

#### **4.4 Use of toll roads and parking places**

##### **4.4.1. Toll roads**

Numbered motorways and some other main roads are operated by private companies in Hungary. The use of such roads entails paying road toll, from which not even CD registered cars are exempted.

##### **4.4.2 Parking and parking fees**

While CD registered vehicles (diplomatic vehicles) are generally considered to be inviolable, they may not obstruct traffic or endanger public safety. Diplomatic vehicles are subject to Hungarian parking regulations and their drivers depending on the situation and their status can be held responsible for parking violations. Parking fees are not considered to be fines. Hungarian authorities consider the failure to pay parking fees in the designated parking area not as a traffic offence, but as the non-performance of a civil law contractual obligation. The parking fee is to be considered as the charge of the service obtained, from which Embassies do not enjoy diplomatic immunity.

##### **4.4.2.1 Exclusive free parking in front of missions and head of mission's residence**

In case of reciprocity diplomatic representations may apply for free parking spaces in front of their missions. This type of parking privilege is granted by the Mayor of Budapest.

##### **4.4.3 Obligatory car inspection**

All cars, including cars with diplomatic license plates, must regularly undergo obligatory car inspections. The first obligatory car inspection takes place when the vehicle is first licensed in Hungary and afterwards every second year. An inspection fee is charged.

##### **4.4.4. Third party liability**

The owner of a motor vehicle to be registered in Hungary including diplomatic number plates - is required to present a valid compulsory third party liability insurance to the vehicle

licence office before the vehicle can be registered. This insurance must be kept valid throughout the period of registration.

## **5. AIRPORT FACILITIES AT LISZT FERENC INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, BUDAPEST**

### **5.1 Airport passes**

Each mission may obtain five (5) airport passes through the Protocol Office. This type of pass entitles the holder to enter the transit zone of the airport in order to meet incoming or to see off departing official guests of the mission. Only the holder may use the airport pass. It is not transferable.

### **5.2 VIP lounge**

Due to the contracts in effect between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Budapest Airport Zrt. and the Malév Ground Handling Zrt., the Ministry is in charge of coordination between the Hungarian public administration and in the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Hungary regarding the use/booking of the VIP/government.

Upon request addressed to the Protocol Department in a diplomatic note the use of the VIP (Government) lounges can be arranged. The VIP facilities are provided by a private enterprise so their services are available only at a given fee.

Passengers **10.500 HUF + VAT of 27%** / person / arrival / departure (2018)  
Any other person in the lounge (reception committee) **2.800 HUF + VAT of 27%** / person

Services rendered to the guests cover full-scale administration as follows.

- check-in (inc. luggage)
- passport control
- custom clearance procedure
- security control
- escorting the passengers to the flight / meeting and assisting the passengers (special bus service)
- catering service

Method of payment: cash or credit card or bank transfer

In case of an official visit upon the invitation of the Hungarian party the expense is to be defrayed by the host country.

### **5.3 Parking at the airport**

As a result of a long-term contract between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Budapest Airport Zrt. each embassy is entitled to receive two parking passes that allow free parking for the duration of two hours upon each entry to the parking lot. Those missions already in possession of the two passes cannot obtain additional ones. Within the parking lot

there are designated places for the exclusive use of the airport pass holders. Only a limited number of parking spaces are at the exclusive disposal of the missions. Owing to the tight rules of traffic and security not even diplomatic cars may station directly at the entrance of the departure or arrival halls longer than 5 minutes.

#### **5.4 Security inspections**

According to prevailing EU regulations diplomatic agents or career consular officers travelling as diplomatic couriers are required to complete normal identity and security controls.

Diplomatic agents and career consular officers and their personal hand luggage are subject to normal airport security controls. Diplomatic immunity may not be claimed, since a passenger's admission to the aircraft is entirely subject to the authority of the captain of the aircraft.

### **6. HEALTH SERVICES**

Mission members and their families are exempted from the mandatory health insurance contribution system. This contribution-based state-run health care system provides free health care for its members. Generally it provides services for those who are employed by a Hungarian or Hungary-based employer but staff members of foreign missions may also enter the system. For example, EU countries' nationals may receive services upon EU arrangement but also there is a number of non-EU or EEA countries having bilateral reciprocal arrangements with Hungary. In this case members of foreign missions may receive a health insurance card with a number (the so-called TAJ number) that entitles the holder to use the services of the local health institutions free of charge.

The state insurance policy is managed by [OEP \(Országos Egészség Pénztár\)](#). For detailed information please contact OEP.

There are also private insurance companies, which a foreign national can contribute to but that is additional to the state insurance. The major health insurance companies which a foreign citizen can enrol in are:

- [UNIQA](#)
- [GENERALI PROVIDENCIA](#)
- [AEGON](#)
- [ING](#)
- [ALLIANZ](#)

Beyond the state-run health care system there is a number of privately run medical offices and clinics that provide a number of services but their fees are expected to be paid by the patient on a case by case basis.

## **7. DIPLOMATIC POUCHES**

In accordance with the provisions of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR), Diplomatic pouches must bear “visible external marks of their character” (Cf. Article 27.4) and these pouches, envelopes or bags can only contain diplomatic documents or objects used for diplomatic purposes.

Transporting and/or forwarding diplomatic pouches must meet formal requirements, the courier must have a valid diplomatic passport, diplomatic courier pass and an official document indicating the number of diplomatic pouches assigned to him or her, called bordereau/waybill.

The visible external markings used on the diplomatic pouches, their size, characters, etc. are regulated by each country and what is accepted in that country to reflect that the consignment type is diplomatic. Designated diplomatic pouches shall not be opened or detained.

## **8. MISSIONS’ SECURITY AND COMMUNICATION**

### **8.1 Receptions and other events attracting a considerable number of visitors**

Missions are requested to notify the Ministry on their events when a larger number of visitors are expected, such as national day receptions, festivals, etc. In such cases the police can be on the scene and may help even in directing the traffic. However, additional parking places can only be privately arranged by the mission. It is always expected that the missions try to avoid any inconvenient interference with their neighbours during the event.

### **8.2 Elections – casting of votes**

Nationals of the sending state may cast their votes at the diplomatic or consular missions provided that this is previously agreed upon between the two states by reciprocal arrangements. Prior to a planned election, the diplomatic mission should request in writing the Ministry’s consent to holding elections in Hungary. The verbal note should provide the Ministry with accurate information as to where and when the arrangements for the election are planned to take place.

When the number of voters does not allow the mission to use its own premises, additional premises can be rented in other locations. In both cases the Ministry should be informed well in advance on the casting of votes and the location in order to arrange police presence on the scene.

### **8.3 Demonstrations**

Missions are informed well in advance by the Ministry on demonstrations previously announced by private persons and organisations. This notice usually contains information on

the duration, the number of participants and main message of the demonstration. Police presence is always provided during the event.

#### **8.4 Official communication by radio transmitters**

The use of radio transmitters for official communication by a diplomatic mission requires permission from the competent Hungarian authorities (Cf. Article 27 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations). Missions may, on the basis of reciprocity, be licensed by the Hungarian Telecommunications Authority to install, operate and use radio communications equipment for official communication with the sending State or during visits by VIPs that require special security measures, including the use of radio communications equipment.

#### **8.5 Firearms**

The acquisition, possession and holding of a licence to carry firearms does not fall within the scope of international relations. These questions are solely within the jurisdiction of the receiving State.

In Hungary, Government decree 253/2004(VIII.3.) regulates the possession and use of weapons. In general, it is prohibited by law to carry a weapon (including firearms, knives, stun guns, tear gas, pepper spray, etc.) in public places. The right to possess firearms is strictly limited. All weapons require a licence from the competent police authority.

##### **8.5.1 Possession of weapons for security purposes**

On the basis of a threat assessment, a provisional licence may be issued for professional security staff of the mission or security personnel escorting visiting VIPs and other protected persons. Any application for such a licence should be forwarded to the Protocol Department. Applications for gun licences should include the following data:

- a) name of the security officer/guard*
- b) his/her date and place of birth*
- c) passport/ID number*
- d) all data on the weapon: type, category, manufacturer, calibre mark*
- e) ammunition type and quantity*
- d) name of the protected persons(s)*

##### **8.5.2 Possession of weapons for sport and hunting purposes – European firearms pass**

In Hungary, the provisions of the 2008/51/EC firearms directive prevail, whereby

“The European firearms pass should be regarded as the main document needed by hunters and marksmen for the possession of a firearm during a journey to another Member State.”

Those in possession of a European firearms pass should follow the rules of the directive when entering Hungary, i.e. declare the weapon at the customs and present the pass. All other interested persons holding non-European national firearms licences should first contact the Protocol Department of the Ministry before importing the gun to Hungary.

A firearm acquired for hunting or sport should be handled with great care at all times. Such firearms may only be taken out of the premises of the Mission securely locked in a weapons case or bag. Hand weapons may only be taken to target practice at a shooting range or for participation in competitions. Firearms intended for hunting should be safely stored in a bag or weapons case when travelling.

## **9. PET ANIMALS**

Missions and mission personnel should acquaint themselves with the relevant Hungarian legislation well in advance of bringing in pets, etc.

No diplomatic privileges are extended in connection with the import of animals into Hungary. Pet animals can be imported with the close observation of the pertaining veterinary and other regulations. See details at the following website:

[https://www.nebih.gov.hu/en/specialities/ah\\_awf\\_dir/public\\_data/other/non\\_comm\\_pet\\_movement.html](https://www.nebih.gov.hu/en/specialities/ah_awf_dir/public_data/other/non_comm_pet_movement.html)

## **10. Decorations**

### **10.1 General information about the state decorations of Hungary**

The state decorations of Hungary can be awarded to distinguished Hungarian and foreign citizens in recognition and high appreciation of their outstanding and exceptional achievements, and to those who have pursued exemplary activities in the service of the Hungarian nation promoting the development of Hungary and enriching universal human values.

The state decorations of Hungary are awarded by the President of the Republic, upon the recommendation and with the approval of the Prime Minister; in case of foreign citizens the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade puts forward the initial approval and nomination to the Prime Minister.

The awardees receive the decoration and an official honorary document. The names of the recipients and notification of the awarding – *as a presidential decree* – are formally published in *Magyar Közlöny*, the official state journal of Hungary.

State decorations entail neither monetary reward nor a distinctive (noble) title to the holder.

While the number of the annually awarded state decorations for Hungarian citizens is limited in every grade, the number awarded to foreign citizens is not.

Hungarian citizens – including Hungarian diplomats serving abroad – may accept foreign state awards and honours. Prior consultation or special permission for the acceptance and wearing of the foreign award is not required from the Hungarian authorities concerned. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary, however, must be informed about the purpose or the fact of the actual awarding.

#### **10.2 Grades of the state decorations of Hungary** - *(ranking from the highest in descending order)*

**Magyar Szent István Rend** - *newly established (since January 2012)*

**Order of Saint Stephen of Hungary**

*(awarded in honour of the highest and most exceptional merits achieved in connection with Hungary, outstanding life achievement, as well as significant merit acquired internationally)*

**Magyar Érdemrend nagykeresztje a nyaklánccal és az arany sugaras csillaggal**

**Grand Cross with the Chain and Gold Star of the Order of Merit of Hungary**

*(awarded only to Heads of States, Monarchs)*

**Magyar Érdemrend nagykeresztje (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

*(awarded to high-ranking state dignitaries, such as Prime Minister or Speaker of the Parliament)*

**Magyar Corvin-lánc** - *newly established (since January 2012)*

**Corvin Collar of Hungary**

*(awarded to honour outstanding achievements in the field of Hungarian science and art, for promoting Hungarian education and culture;*

*The decorated persons of such an award form the "Corvin Collar College", and as members of this College, their number cannot exceed fifteen. Further awarding is only possible when a vacancy occurs by the death of a member – the nominated person for the open post needs to be fully supported by the College.)*

**Magyar Becsület Rend** - *newly established (since January 2012)*

**Order of Honour of Hungary**

*(awarded in honour of outstanding activities or acts of heroism in the service of the Hungarian nation)*

**Magyar Érdemrend középkeresztje a csillaggal (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Commander's Cross with the Star of the Order of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

*(generally awarded to Ministers, very exceptionally to foreign Ambassadors)*

**Magyar Érdemrend középkeresztje (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

*(generally awarded to Ministers or State Secretaries, also foreign Ambassadors – Ambassadors completing a minimum of a three-year tour of duty in Hungary can be honoured with state decorations when ambassadorial activity in the bilateral relations is recognized and highly respected. Awarding, however, does not happen automatically in each case.)*

**Magyar Érdemrend tisztikeresztje (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

*(awarded to other high-ranking diplomats, state officials ...)*

**Magyar Érdemrend lovagkeresztje (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

*(awarded to other high-ranking diplomats, state officials ...)*

**Magyar Arany Érdemkereszt (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Gold Cross of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

**Magyar Ezüst Érdemkereszt (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Silver Cross of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

**Magyar Bronz Érdemkereszt (polgári, katonai tagozat)**

**Bronze Cross of Merit of Hungary (civil, military division)**

**11. National holidays of Hungary, official programmes, other diplomatic events**

**11.1 National holidays of Hungary**

The state holidays of Hungary – in accordance with the Fundamental Law of Hungary – are:

- 15<sup>th</sup> March, in memory of the 1848-49 Revolution and War of Independence,
- 20<sup>th</sup> August, in memory of the foundation of the State and Saint Stephen, Founder King of the State of Hungary, and
- 23<sup>rd</sup> October, in memory of the 1956 Revolution and War of Independence.

The official state holiday is 20<sup>th</sup> August.

**11.1.1 Official programmes on the occasion of national holidays**

The esteemed Heads of the Diplomatic Missions in Budapest are, as a general rule, invited to the official events of the national holidays such as the ceremonial hoisting of the Flag of Hungary; commemoration in the Garden of the Hungarian National Museum; graduation ceremony of military officers; cultural programmes, etc.

**11.2 Other diplomatic events, e.g. cercle, annual diplomats' grape harvest, other ad hoc events, cultural programmes, etc.**

Cercle - The President of the Republic of Hungary and spouse receive the New Year's greetings of the Diplomatic Corps every January, followed by a cultural programme and reception. The esteemed Heads of the Diplomatic Missions accredited to Hungary and their spouses are invited to the above event.

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The annual event of the diplomats' grape harvest, organized jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Ministry of Agriculture of Hungary, takes place every autumn in one of Hungary's prominent wine regions.

The Heads of the Diplomatic Missions and the Agricultural Attachés of the Embassies and their spouses are usually invited to this event.

### 11.3 Table of all holidays celebrated in Hungary in 2018

Date	Weekday	Name of Holiday	Type of Holiday
Jan 1	Monday	New Year's Day	Public holiday
Mar 15	Thursday	1848 Revolution Memorial Day	National holiday
Mar 16	Friday	1848 Revolution Memorial Day (Extra holiday)	
Mar 30	Friday	Good Friday	Public holiday
Apr 1	Sunday	Easter Sunday	Public holiday
Apr 2	Monday	Easter Monday	Public holiday
Apr 30	Monday	Labour Day (Extra holiday)	
May 1	Tuesday	Labour Day	Public holiday
May 20	Sunday	Pentecost	Public holiday
May 21	Monday	Pentecost	Public holiday
Aug 20	Monday	St. Stephen's Day	National holiday

<b>Date</b>	<b>Weekday</b>	<b>Name of Holiday</b>	<b>Type of Holiday</b>
<b>Oct 22</b>	Monday	1956 Revolution Memorial Day (Extra holiday)	
<b>Oct 23</b>	Tuesday	1956 Revolution Memorial Day	National holiday
<b>Nov 1</b>	Thursday	All Saints' Day	Public holiday
<b>Nov 2</b>	Friday	All Saints' Day (Extra holiday)	
<b>Dec 24</b>	Monday	Christmas Day (Extra holiday)	
<b>Dec 25</b>	Tuesday	Christmas Day	Public holiday
<b>Dec 26</b>	Wednesday	Boxing Day	Public holiday
<b>Dec 31</b>	Monday	New Year's Day (Extra holiday)	

## 12. Structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary

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<b>Ministerial Commissioner for strategic foreign affairs coordination and Hungarian knowledge transfer facilitation in the region of Caribbean</b> <i>Mr. Balázs Kohut</i>	
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<b>Ministerial Commissioner</b> <i>Mr. Pál András</i>	

### 13. Emergency telephone numbers

The following telephone numbers are to be used in case of emergency:

Fire/rescue                      105

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Police                                107

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Ambulance                        104

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