

MIGPRO

IMMIGRATION POCKETGUIDE TO HUNGARY

including legislative changes of 2024 and January 2025



2025



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Long-term residence permits

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for third country nationals as of 2024

Discontinued residence permits

- Residence permit for “other” purposes
- Residence permit for gainful activity



Continued residence permits

- EU Blue Card,
- Residence permit for research,
- Residence permit for studies
- Residence permit for job-seeking,
- Residence permit for official purposes,
- Residence permit for internship,
- Residence permit for volunteering,
- White Card,
- Residence permit for medical treatment

New types of residence permits

- Guest Self-Employed Residence Permit,
- Guest investor Residence Permit,
- Residence Permit for Seasonal Work,
- Residence Permit for Employment purposes issued for the implementation of an investment project,
- Residence Permit for Employment Purposes,
- Guest Workers Residence Permit
- Hungarian Card,
- Corporate Card,
- Residence Permit for Intra-Corporate Transfer,
- National Card,
- Residence permit for training purposes,
- Residence permit for the purposes of posting,
- Residence permit for national interest,
- Residence permit for humanitarian reasons.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

FOR OBTAINING ANY TYPE OF LONG-TERM RESIDENCE PERMIT IN HUNGARY

A Third country national is someone who is not a national of an EU/EEA member state. EU/EEA citizens do not require a residence permit to reside in Hungary, but they do have to register with the Nation Directorate General for Alien Policing.

A third-country national may enter or stay in Hungary for a period of more than 90 days within 180 days, if they:

- have a **valid travel document** (passport),
- have the necessary **permit to stay in Hungary, for return or onward travel** (visa),
- provide proof of the **purpose** of their entry and residence,
- have **accommodation** or residence in Hungary,
- have **financial resources** to cover the costs of their accommodation and living for the entire duration of their stay, as well as the cost of their travel,
- are **insured** for the full range of **health care** or can afford to pay for their health care,
- are **not subject to expulsion or ban on entry or residence**, or their entry or residence does not endanger public policy, public safety, national security or public health interests of Hungary,
- are **not subject to an SIS alert**.



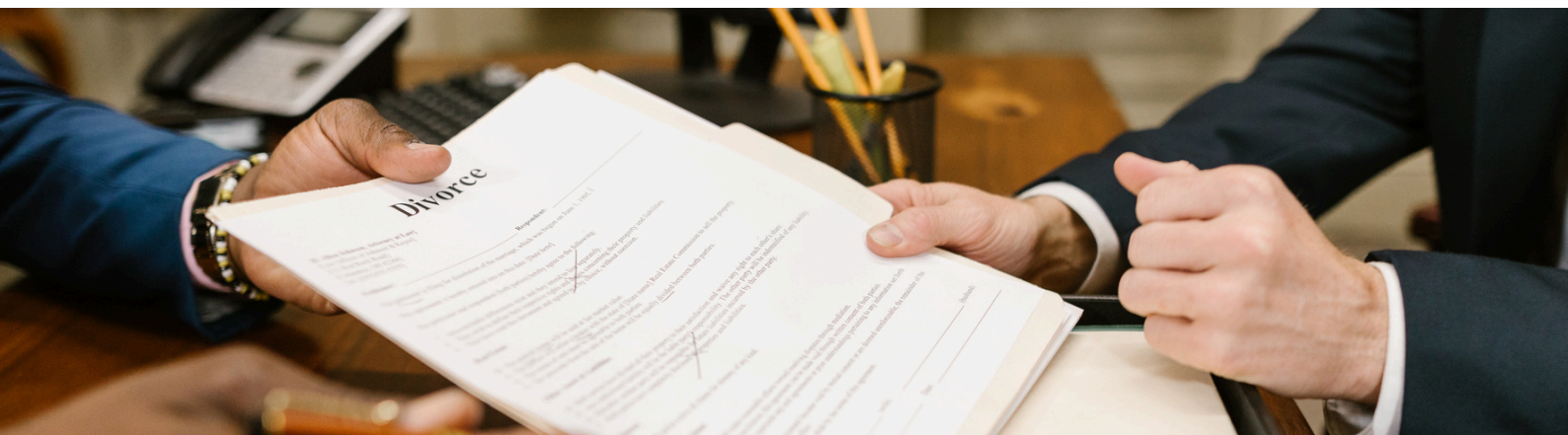
THE IMMIGRATION PROCESS

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THE LEGAL PROCESS TO OBTAIN A RESIDENCE PERMIT IN HUNGARY

Legal representation: Hiring a lawyer is not obligatory but it can be useful in checking your eligibility, reviewing your documents, representing and keeping in contact with the immigration authority, to file an appeal or to request judicial review.

- 1. Document collection:** Collect all necessary documents for the residence permit of your choice. Official documents must be certified/apostilled, and translated to Hungarian by OFFI (<https://www.offi.hu/>).
- 2. Complete the Application form:** based on the documents you enclose, fill out your personal information, add a passport photo and sign.
- 3. Pay the application fee:** You can transfer or pay at the embassy.
- 4. Submit the application:** Nationals of visa-free countries may submit their application via enterhungary.gov.hu, while nationals of non-visa free countries must submit their applications in person in the country of their residence/nationality at a Hungarian embassy.
- 5. Provide biometric data:** If you apply through [enterhungary](https://enterhungary.gov.hu) you are still obliged to appear before the immigration authority in person to provide your photo and fingerprints. If you apply at an embassy in person, they will take these at the spot.
- 6. Additional document request:** The immigration authority has the right to request any additional document.
- 7. Decision:** Upon approval, if you reside outside of Hungary, you will receive a type-D visa to enter Hungary and pick up your residence permit. Upon rejection, you will not be entitled to a residence permit and if you already reside in Hungary, you must leave Hungary.
- 8. Appeal/judicial review:** If your application was rejected, and there is a mistake in the point of law, the facts or there are new pieces of evidence that emerged, you may submit an appeal against the decision. If your appeal is rejected or unsuccessful, you may request a judicial review in Hungary before a court.



GUEST WORKER RESIDENCE PERMITS

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COMMON RULES & ENTITLEMENTS

➤➤➤ NO STATUS CHANGE

Guest Workers may not launch an application for another type of residence permit during the term of their residence in Hungary and after the expiry of the residence permit within Hungary.

➤➤➤ LIMITED EXTENSION & RENEWAL

A residence permit may only be extended for a maximum of 3 years in total. Once the residence permit expires, the residence permit can be renewed from the country of origin, and their time on the residence permit in Hungary restarts.

➤➤➤ NO FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Family reunification is not available for Guest Workers, except for their child born in Hungary.

➤➤➤ NO PERMANENT RESIDENCE

The guest worker cannot be granted a National Residence Card (permanent residence) but only EU Residence Card, if they meet all other criteria.

➤➤➤ SHORTER DEADLINE FOR VOLUNTARY RETURN

The employer must ensure that the guest worker (except seasonal guest workers) leaves Hungary no later than 6 days after the termination of employment in the event of termination of the employment. Otherwise, the employer may be subject to a procedural fine under an aliens policing procedure, from which it will be exempted only if it proves that it acted as is normally expected in the circumstances.

➤➤➤ MAXIMUM QUOTA APPLICABLE

The number of residence permits for guest workers and residence permits for employment purposes may not exceed the number of permits determined annually by the minister responsible for employment.

**GUEST
WORKERS
ARE WORKERS
PERFORMING AN
UNSKILLED OR
UNQUALIFIED
JOB**

Residence permit for working on an investment project

- May be granted to a third country national, who is employed to implement an investment of a strategic partnership with the Hungarian Government, and whose employer has a prior approval for group employment.
- The residence permit may be granted for the duration of the investment project but a maximum of 3 years.

Residence permit for seasonal work

- A residence permit for the purpose of seasonal employment may be granted to a guest worker who wishes to undertake seasonal work.
- This residence permit is valid for 6 months, which may be extended for an additional 6 months (12 months max in total).

GUEST WORKERS

Residence Permit for Guest Work

- May be granted to a third country national to perform actual work under contract for employment relationship, including employment via temporary work agency, and whose employer is registered as a preferential employer or a qualified temporary work agency (i.e. lender of labour force).
- This residence permit is valid for 2 years, which may be extended for an additional 1 year, and which must be renewed after a total of 3 years.

Residence permit for employment purposes

- May be granted to a third country national to perform actual work for or under the direction of others, for remuneration, under a contract for employment relationship.
- This residence permit may not be granted for certain job categories (FEOR) that are not in shortage are excluded.
- This residence permit is valid for 2 years, which may be extended for an additional 1 year, and which must be renewed after a total of 3 years.

As of 1 January 2025, only nationals of Armenia and Georgia, as well as the Philippines may launch a new application for a residence permit for Guest Work and a residence permit for employment purposes.

Nationals of The Philippines, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Vietnam, Brazil, Kyrgyzstan, Venezuela, and Colombia, who hold such a residence permit before 31 December 2024, may extend or renew their residence permit.

Hungarian Card

- May be granted to third country nationals, who are
 - professionals with qualifications in IT, engineering or natural sciences from outside of Hungary,
 - professional sportsperson or professional coach,
 - a performer, or
 - a third-country national who actually works in a film production company registered by the professional authority for cinematographic works under the Motion Picture Act.
- The Hungarian Card entitles the holder to reside in Hungary and at the same time to be employed with higher professional qualifications either within an employment relationship or as an owner or manager of a legal entity established for the purpose of gainful activity.
- The validity period of the Hungarian Card is up to 3 years, which may be extended by up to 3 years at a time, if the third-country national fulfils the conditions of social coexistence set by law.
- Family reunification and access to permanent residence is available.

EU Blue Card

- An EU Blue Card entitles a highly-qualified worker from outside the EU to live and work in an EU country, provided they have higher professional qualifications, such as a university degree, and an employment contract or a binding job offer for at least one year with a high salary compared to the average in the EU country where the job is.
- Annual gross salary must be at least one and a half times the average national salary - except when the lower salary threshold applies (approx. gross HUF 800-900,000)
- The EU Blue Card is valid up to 4 years in Hungary, which may be extended an unlimited amount of times. If the employment contract is shorter, it will be granted for a shorter period.
- During the first 2 years, the EU Blue Card holder may only change jobs with the Immigration Authority's permit, but after 2 years they can freely change jobs.
- The EU Blue Card holder may not move to another EU country with a Blue Card within the first 18 months.
- Family reunification and access to permanent residence is available.



ELIGIBLE NATIONALITIES

**Belarus,
Bosnia-Herzegovina,
Moldova,
Montenegro,
North Macedonia,
Russia
Serbia,
Ukraine**

A National Card may be granted to a third-country national whose purpose of residence is to perform work for or under the direction and/or supervision of others, for remuneration, under employment relationship, including employment through temporary work agency, or who performs actual work as the owner or chief executive of a business organisation, cooperative or other legal entity established for the purpose of gainful activity in addition to the activities within this position.

The National Card entitles the holder to stay in Hungary for a fixed term of more than ninety days within a period of one hundred and eighty days but for up to 2 years. The National Card may be extended for a maximum of 3 years at a time.

If the holder wishes to establish an employment relationship with another employer, an application for extension of the National Card must be submitted.

Upon expiry of the National Card (i.e. in case they lose employment.), the holder must leave on the 6th day of invalidity at the latest,

The National Card serves as a ground for family reunification and is eligible for permanent residence in Hungary.



TRAVEL & WORK

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WORK & HOLIDAY

Nationals of the eligible countries, may qualify for this program, if they fulfill the conditions prescribed by the respective international agreement between Hungary and their country of nationality.

Eligible countries are: Argentina, Australia, Chile, Colombia, Hong Kong, Japan, New-Zealand, South Korea, Taiwan.

A third-country national may be granted a White Card, who has a verified employment relationship (for a minimum salary of EUR3,000 per month) in a country other than Hungary and performs his/her work from Hungary using an advanced digital technology solution, or owns a share in a company with a verified profit in a country other than Hungary and performs his/her work or manages his/her company from Hungary using an advanced digital technology solution but does not undertake work in Hungary and does not own a share in a company.

The White Card does not serve as a ground for family reunification and is not eligible for permanent residence in Hungary.

WHITE CARD



BUSINESS RESIDENCE

GUEST INVESTOR

Residence permit

A residence permit for guest investors may be granted to a third-country national whose entry and stay in Hungary is in national economic interest due to his/her investments realised in Hungary.

Realisation of the following investments shall be considered as national economic interest:

- a) acquisition of an investment fund share of at least EUR 250 000 issued by a real estate fund registered by the Hungarian National Bank,
- b) provision of a financial donation in an amount of at least EUR 1 000 000 and for a purpose of educational, scientific research or artistic creation activities, to a higher education institution maintained by a public trust with a public-service mission.

Please note that if you are a holder of a residence permit in Hungary, and due to your nationality, you are not eligible to enter Hungary without a visa, you will not be able to apply for a residence permit for guest investors. In such a case, you must first apply for a visa for guest investors abroad.

The application must be submitted after the entry with a visa for guest investors or in case of a visa-exemption, within 30 days from the date of the first legal entry into the territory of Hungary. If you are a holder of a residence permit in Hungary, and due to your nationality, you are eligible to enter Hungary without a visa, you can submit your application at any time during your legal stay.

Please also note that you must certify via the platform of Enter Hungary within 6 months after entering Hungary that you have completed the committed investment. Notification thereof is to be completed before submitting the application for the respective residence permit. Certification of the realised investment will be examined by NDGAP.

This residence permit is valid for 10 years, and qualifies its holder for family reunification and permanent residence.



BUSINESS RESIDENCE

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The residence permit for guest self-employment is granted to third-country nationals who wish to pursue independent, gainful activities or act as a chief executive of a business entity. Applicants must not intend to carry out activities beyond this scope (e.g. regular employment) without applying for a different permit.

GUEST SELF-EMPLOYED

Residence permit

The permit is valid for 1 year, extendable for up to 3 years, and can be renewed. The holder of this RP must report to the immigration authority every 3 months on their revenues and state of business.

Family reunification is only possible after the 1st year of this residence permit.

This residence permit is not eligible for a National Residence Card but only an EU Residence Card.

HUNGARIAN CARD

- A Hungarian Card may also be granted to a third-country national,
- who is employed with higher professional qualifications in IT, engineering or natural sciences,
 - as the owner or managing director of a legal entity established for the purpose of gainful activity in Hungary.

The validity period of the Hungarian Card is up to 3 years, which may be extended by up to 3 years at a time, if the third-country national fulfils the conditions of social coexistence set by law.

Family reunification and access to permanent residence (National Residence Card or EU Residence Card) is available.

STUDY

YOU MAY QUALIFY FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION, IF:

- you are the family member, meaning a spouse or minor/dependent child (including adopted and foster children) of a Hungarian citizen, a third country national with a temporary or permanent residence permit, or a refugee or a beneficiary of subsidiary protection.

THE FOLLOWING STATUSES ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION:

- Guest Self-Employed residence permit (within the first 1 year),
- Guest Worker residence permit,
- Residence permit for Employment,
- White Card,
- Residence permit for Study/Training purposes,
- Residence permit for Internship,
- Residence permit for volunteering.

THE FOLLOWING FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION:

- the spouse;
- the direct descendants and those of the spouse who are under the age of 21 years or are dependents;
- the dependent direct relatives in the ascending line and those of the spouse;
- the registered partner (registered before a Hungarian authority or the authority of another EU Member State).



PERMANENT RESIDENCE

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in Hungary



NATIONAL RESIDENCE CARD

The National Residence Card may be granted to third-country nationals who have legally resided in Hungary for at least 3 years or are dependents of long-term residents or Hungarian citizens. It can also be granted to spouses, former Hungarian citizens, or minor children of long-term residents or refugees. The NRC is valid for up to 10 years, with the possibility to extend it for another 10 years. It cannot be granted to those holding certain types of residence permits, such as the RP for guest self-employment, guest workers, or the purpose of employment. From 1 January 2025, passing a Hungarian cultural knowledge exam is also required.

The EU Residence Card may be granted to third-country nationals who have legally resided in Hungary for at least 5 years, or those holding an EU Blue Card with at least 2 years of continuous residence in Hungary and 5 years within the EU. The card is valid for up to 10 years, with the possibility to extend it for another 10 years. It cannot be granted to those who reside in Hungary for studies, seasonal employment, voluntary services, under diplomatic immunity, awaiting a decision on asylum, has tolerated status, or has been granted refugee status, subsidiary protection, or temporary protection. From 1 January 2025, passing a cultural knowledge exam is also required.

EU RESIDENCE CARD

INTERIM RESIDENCE CARD

The Interim Residence Card may be granted to third-country nationals holding an EU Residence Card who wish to stay in Hungary for employment, business, studies, vocational training, or other certified purposes. Family members of such individuals may also apply for this card, which is valid for the same duration. The card is valid for up to 5 years, with the possibility to extend it for another 5 years.

HUNGARIAN CULTURE EXAM

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WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

The Hungarian Culture Exam is legally required if you wish to apply for a **National Residence Card** or an **EU Residence Card**. This means that you have to have successfully passed the Hungarian Culture Exam and hold the certificate of completion by the time you submit your application, and attach to it as a mandatory enclosure.

WHAT IS THE EXAM LIKE?

- The exam is in writing and in Hungarian.
- The exam administered by and is held in the Budapest Metropolitan Government Office (Budapest Főváros Kormányhivatala) at 1138 Budapest, Váci út 174.
- The exam fee is HUF20,000 per exam.
- The examinee has 60 minutes to complete the exam consisting of 12 questions (2 questions from each topic).
- Out of the maximum 30 points, a minimum of 16 points is required to pass the exam.
- You may only attempt the exam 3 times.

HOW CAN YOU APPLY TO TAKE THE EXAM?

- Fill out the application form.
- Transfer the exam fee (**HUF20,000**) to the Hungarian Treasury's (**Magyar Államkincstár**) bank account: **10023002-00299592-00000000** and add your **full name** and "**kulturális ismereti vizsga**" in the comment section.
- Attach the **proof of payment** and the copy of your **passport** to the application form.
- Send the signed application form with the required attachments via e-mail to **kepzes.budapest@bfkh.gov.hu**
- Application form:

<https://kormanyhivatalok.hu/sites/default/files/2025-01/magyar-kulturalis-ismereti-vizsga-jelentkezesi-lap.docx>

Do you need help to prepare?

<https://www.hungariancultureexam.hu/>

CURRICULUM

- Hungary's place in the Carpathian Basin, Europe and in international organisation (UN, Council of Europe, NATO, EU);
- national symbols of Hungary;
- significant historical events in Hungary;
- famous Hungarian artists and writers;
- Hungary's constitutional institutions (Parliament, President of the Republic, Government);
- fundamental rights and obligations;
- daily life in Europe and Hungary.



LEGISLATIVE CHANGES IN 2025

➤➤➤ RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR EMPLOYMENT PURPOSES

As of 1 January 2025, only nationals of Georgia and Armenia are eligible to launch a new application for a guest worker residence permit or a residence permit for employment purposes.

Additionally, those third country nationals, whose country of nationality has a state-recognized organization or office in Hungary, which undertakes to comply with the Hungarian regulations for the entry and residence of third-country nationals in case of non-compliance with the provisions of the legislation or the legal acts of the European Union, the national leaves the territory of Hungary and returns to this country may also apply for a residence permit for guest workers or a residence permit for employment purposes. The minister responsible for foreign policy will list these countries in a notice attached to the Hungarian Gazette, e.g. The Philippines.

This change in the law does not affect persons with applications launched before 31 December 2024, or persons holding a residence permit for guest work or employment purposes to be extended or renewed after 1 January 2025.

This change in the law also does not affect persons holding a residence permit for seasonal work or for the implementation of an investment project.

➤➤➤ GUEST INVESTOR RESIDENCE PERMITS

As of January 2025, the following investments shall be considered as national economic interest: a) the acquisition of investment units of at least EUR 250 000 issued by a real estate fund registered by the National Bank of Hungary, or b) granting a financial donation of at least EUR 1 000 000 to a higher education institution maintained by a public trust/association with a public-service mission, for the purpose of supporting educational, scientific research or artistic activities. Thus, before its entry into force, the possibility to purchase new real estate worth EUR 500,000 as an investment has been abolished.

➤➤➤ PROOF OF CONDITIONS FOR SOCIAL COEXISTENCE

As of January 2025, in the case of an application for a national residence card and in the case of an application for an EU residence card, the conditions for social coexistence must be fulfilled by passing a cultural knowledge exam.


➤➤➤ CHANGES IN ELIGIBILITY FOR TAX BENEFITS

As of January 2025, third country nationals who are not from a neighbouring country of Hungary (i.e. Serbia and Ukraine) are no longer eligible for the following 3 most prominent tax benefits:

- Tax benefit of those under 25
- Tax benefit for the recently married
- Family tax benefit.

Discover how we can help you, your family or business achieve your goals with our legal services.

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 Budapest, Hungary

All information contained in this publication was correct as of January 2025.

This pocketguide only provides a brief overview of immigration options to Hungary. This pocketguide may not be considered as legal advice

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ABOUT US

JOGPRO is a boutique law firm based in BUDapest (Hungary) specialising in business and human rights, providing legal services in immigration, business and e-commerce, employment law, nonprofit law, and real estate.