

SURVIVAL GUIDE

FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP
STUDENTS OF KÁROLI GÁSPÁR UNIVERSITY
OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN HUNGARY
(KRE)





8 September 2023

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WELCOME TO KÁROLI GÁSPÁR UNIVERSITY (KRE)

Being a student in a foreign and unknown country can be stressful. You may have worries about your studies, financial situation and life in general. As a foreign student you may experience a culture shock, or you may simply miss being away from home. We hope that this guide will help you to settle down as smoothly and quickly as possible.

WHERE TO FIND THE BUILDINGS OF KRE

You should visit the website of the university for the availability of the [faculty buildings](#).

YOUR COORDINATORS AT KRE

You will have several coordinators while you study here, and we are all here to help you getting through the difficulties that can happen in your life.

The working hours of the coordinators are Mon-Thu 08.00-16.30 and Fri 08.00-14.00. It's not typical that they answer the e-mails outside working hours. **Please note that the working hours are not the same as the office hours.** The coordinators do a lot of back-office work when the offices are not open for students.

Working hours: when the coordinators are physically at the university.

Office hours: when the students can visit the coordinators.



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THE COORDINATORS

Rector's Office			
	Ms Szilvia Strack International coordinator	Scholarship related issues	international@kre.hu
Faculty of Theology			
Theology MA	Ms Adél Gazdagné Karácsony Study and Departmental Administrator Registrar's Office	Academic and administrative issues related to Theology MA program	gazdagne.karacsony.adel@kre.hu
Faculty of Law			
European and International Business Law LL.M.	Dr. Andrea Miklósné Zakar Head of Institute	Academic and administrative issues related to the European and International Business Law LL.M. programme.	miklosnezakar.andrea@kre.hu
	Mr Sándor Orovecz International referent	Administrative issues at the European and International Business Law LL.M. programme	orovecz.sandor@kre.hu
	Mr Dávid Égető Administrator Registrar's Office	General administration (registration process, forms and fees), student Ids	egeto.david@kre.hu



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Faculty of Law			
Doctoral School of Law and Political	Dr Péter Nagy Secretary of The Doctoral School	Academic issues related to the Doctoral School of Law and Political Sciences	nagy.peter@kre.hu
	Mr Sandor Kucsera Doctoral School Coordinator	Administrative issues at the Doctoral School of Law and Political Sciences	doktori.ajk@kre.hu
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences			
Psychology BA	Ms Judit Szabó Program coordinator	Administrative issues	szabo.judit1@kre.hu
	Dr. Judit Nagy Vice-Dean for International Affairs	Immigration Office related issues (residence permit, visa etc.)	nagy.judit@kre.hu
	Ms Mónika Szuhai International Administrator Registrar's Office	General administration (registration process, forms and fees), student IDs	szuhai.monika@kre.hu



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Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences			
BA in English and American Studies	Dr. Erzsébet Stróbl Program coordinator, English and American Studies BA programme	Academic issues (decision making and guidance)	english.studies@kre.hu
	Dr. Judit Nagy Vice-Dean for International Affairs	Immigration Office related issues (residence permit, visa etc.)	nagy.judit@kre.hu
	Ms Mónika Szuhai International Administrator Registrar's Office	General administration (registration process, forms and fees), student IDs	szuhai.monika@kre.hu
English Studies MA	Dr. Judit Nagy Program coordinator, Vice-Dean for International Affairs	Academic issues (decision making and guidance), Immigration Office related issues (residence permit, visa etc.)	english.studies@kre.hu
	Ms Mónika Szuhai International Administrator Registrar's Office	General administration (registration process, forms and fees), student IDs	szuhai.monika@kre.hu



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SCHOLARSHIP WEBSITE OF KRE

We have websites for the scholarship students at KRE, where you can find the most important scholarship related information. The websites are updated every time when there is a major change.

[Stipendium Hungaricum Scholarship](#)

[Scholarship for Christian Young People](#)

[Károli Christian Scholarship](#)

[Hungarian Diaspora Scholarship](#)

ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2023/24

[Academic calendar 2023/24 academic year](#)

TRANSFER OPTIONS FROM THE AIRPORT

1. Public transport

- a) [Bus 200E](#) stops at the airport every 10 minutes. It takes you to Kőbánya-Kispest metro station. From here you can travel to the city center with metro line 3. At the airport you can buy a transportation ticket at one of the vending machines for about 2,-EUR. You must buy two tickets. Validate one on the bus at one of the machines and then the other one at the entrance of the metro station. You can use your debit/credit card when you buy the tickets.
- b) [Bus 100E](#) stops at the airport every 30 minutes. It takes you directly to the city center. A single bus ticket is about 6,-EUR.



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2. Taxi

You can take a taxi at the airport. The official taxi company of the airport is Főtaxi. They have a booth in front of the arrival terminal. It is a good and reliable company and the ride to the city center is about 30,-EUR.

3. [Airport shuttle](#)

One ride to the city center is about 6,-EUR/person.

Change some money at the airport as debit/credit cards and foreign currencies are not acceptable on the bus and metro. Don't change too much though as the exchange rates are not very customer friendly at the airport. The taxi and shuttle companies may accept debit/credit cards.

Please note that some scholarship programs don't cover your flight ticket and airport transfer.

ARRIVAL DATE

In 2023 the tuition in the Fall semester starts on 4 September 2023. It would be wise to arrive at the very end of August or very beginning of September. The last possible registration date at the faculty is 29 September 2023. Unfortunately, we cannot accept you as a student if you arrive after this date.

BUDDY PROGRAM

You get a buddy in August, who helps your integration in the everyday life in Hungary. A buddy is a local student of KRE who voluntarily helps incoming students from all over the world. S/he knows the city and the university well, open for foreign cultures and ready to help you during your time in Hungary. The buddy will be your first and personal contact point, you can turn to them with most of your questions.

You will get information on the buddy program in August.



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THINGS THAT YOU MUST DO AFTER ARRIVING IN BUDAPEST

1. study program registration at [faculty](#)
2. scholarship registration in the [International Office](#)
3. picking up the the residence permit at the Immigration Office if you arrive with a D visa
4. opening a Hungarian bank account
5. requesting a tax number
6. getting a student id code

You can fulfill these tasks in any order.

REGISTRATION AT THE FACULTY

Your study program coordinator will send you information on this via e-mail at the end of August. This registration must be done only at the beginning of the first semester of your studies.

REGISTRATION AT THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

Registration in the International Office is **a must at the beginning of each semester**. The International Office will send you information on this via e-mail twice a year, at the end of August and at the end of December. Please note that you have to sign your scholarship agreement in your first year at the first visit and **no scholarship transfer can be done without a signed scholarship agreement**.



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HOW TO PICK UP OR APPLY FOR THE RESIDENCE PERMIT

You must have a valid residence permit allowing you to study in Hungary during the whole period of your studies.

There are two possible scenarios.

- 1. You are entering the Schengen Area with a D-visa and a Non-EU/EEA passport.**
- 2. You are entering the Schengen Area as a tourist and without a visa – Non-EU/EEA passport.**

Scenario 1. You are entering the Schengen Area with a D-visa and a Non-EU/EEA passport.

In this case [you will get the residence permit from the university](#). Please wait for an e-mail from your scholarship coordinator.

Scenario 2. You are entering the Schengen Area as a tourist and without a visa – Non-EU/EEA passport.

In this case you must apply for a residence permit via the [website](#) of the Immigration Office within 30 days of your arrival in Hungary.

HOW TO RENEW YOUR RESIDENCE PERMIT

The application for a new residence permit can be done anytime, but latest 30 days before the expiry date, via the [website](#) of the Immigration Office. For example, if the expiry date of your residence permit is 01.08.2023, then you can apply for a new residence permit anytime up until 01.07.2023.



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HOW TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT IN HUNGARY

You have to have a Hungarian HUF account in any bank in Hungary in order to get any kind of payment e.g., scholarship, accommodation money etc. from the university. The branches of the big banks near the university (the followings are rather examples, and most students have accounts in these banks) are:

CIB Bank: [1094 Budapest, Ferenc körút 15.](#)

Erste Bank: [1082 Budapest, Baross utca 1-3.](#)

OTP Bank: [1085 Budapest, Kálvin tér 12-13.](#)

Please register your bank account number in Neptun and note that the scholarship transfer is not possible if your bank account is not registered in Neptun!!!

HOW TO REQUEST A TAX ID

Only your passport is needed for the tax id application.

Address: [1097 Budapest, Vaskapu u. 33-35.](#), [Website](#)

Office hours

Mon 08.30-18.00, Tue 08.30-12.00, Wed 08.30-18.00, Thu 08.30-12.00, Fri 08.30-11.30

The card will be sent to you several months after the application, but you get the **number immediately when you apply for it.**



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HOW TO APPLY FOR THE PERMANENT STUDENT ID

You have to visit the Document Registering Office (Okmányiroda in Hungarian), where you have to sign the application form and your photo will be taken. You have to identify yourself with your passport.

Address: [1051 Budapest, Erzsébet tér 2-3.](#)

You will receive a NEK-code that you must register in Neptun.

Steps of the registration

1. Go to Neptun/Administration/Student card request/click on "Add new".
2. Register your NEK code (right side of the NEK paper, numbers and letters only).
3. Choose: First application
4. Confirm your permanent address and save.

You can get a temporary student card from the faculty until you get the permanent plastic card, which takes about 2-4 months. Please note that the temporary student card is valid only for 60 days and you must ask for another one if you don't get your permanent id during this period.

When you receive your permanent student card, **please have it validated by picking up a sticker at the faculty. The permanent card is NOT valid without a sticker, and it must be validated each semester.**



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SCHOLARSHIP TRANSFER

Steps that lead to your first scholarship transfer. These can be done in a different order of course.

1. In September, at the beginning of your first semester you sign the scholarship agreement during the scholarship registration. **This must be done only once.**
2. **You register for the scholarship in person during at the International Office.** In the first semester identifying yourself with your passport, later either with your passport or with your residence permit. **This registration must be done at the beginning of each active semester until the end of your active student status. The International Office sends you a reminder on this in August and in December.**
3. You open a HUF account in a Hungarian bank and your bank account number is registered in Neptun.
4. You activate your student status in Neptun.

The first scholarship and accommodation contribution (if applicable) transfer will be done only if all of the above are fulfilled.

If you are a first-year student, you have a chance to get the first scholarship in October but only if you activate your Neptun by 10 September at the latest and your bank account and tax numbers are registered in Neptun by 25 September at the latest.

Registration in person for the scholarship is **a must at the beginning of each semester**. Please note that due to technical issues we are **not be able to transfer** any scholarship and accommodation contribution **in September and in February**.

You receive the **September and October amounts** due to you in a single instalment in **October** and the **February and March amounts** due to you in a single instalment in **March**.

IMPORTANT: the October and March scholarship amounts (and any further amounts due to you in the course of the Fall and Spring semesters) will be transferred **ONLY IF you register for**



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the scholarship in person in the International Office and you activate your Neptun status by the 10th of September/February at the latest.

Should you miss these deadlines for any reason whatsoever, **your scholarship transfer will be delayed by a month**, and you will get the first transfer (including the September, October, November amounts) only in November/ (including the February, March, April amounts) only in April. After the first instalment of each semester, you get the scholarship at the beginning of each month, by the 15th of the given month.

DORMITORY

The International Office sends you the **dormitory application link at the end of June 2023**. The application result comes out at the end of July 2023. The international coordinator will inform you via e-mail about the result of your application. In the info letter you will get a dormitory welcome letter (only if you get a place) that you must read very carefully. Moving in is possible from 01.09.2023 (or later if you don't arrive by that date) but not before.

There is one dormitory where KRE provides places. You can check the dormitory information at the [website of KRE](#).

ACCOMMODATION CONTRIBUTION

Please note that you get 40.000,-HUF accommodation contribution if you don't stay in the dormitory. Please note that this amount is a contribution only as renting a place costs a lot more in Budapest.

Here are some [housing options](#) that you can check out. **Please note that KRE does NOT take any responsibility for your choices.**



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TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION / HOSTELS IN THE CITY

You may arrive at the end of August and even if you get a place in the dormitory, you won't be able to move in before 01.09.2023. You can stay in a hostel for some nights. Please check the following websites for suggestions. Note that we collected these websites via google search and **KRE does NOT take any responsibility for the content of the websites or your choices.**

Hostels near KRE

- [Flow Hostel](#)
- [Lavender Circus](#)
- [The Loft Hostel Budapest](#)
- [Suite Hostel](#)

Booking pages

- [Hostelworld](#)
- [Hostelz](#)

THE APPROXIMATE AMOUNT OF MONEY TO LIVE ON

If you stay in the dormitory, which is paid by the scholarship program, you will need about 150.000-200.000,-HUF/month based on your needs.

If you rent a room, you need the same amount to live on plus the rent. Renting one room costs about 100.000-120.000,-HUF/month + utility (25.000-30.000,-HUF).

All in all you will need about 250.000-320.000,-HUF/month and again based on your needs.

In the first month you will probably spend more money as you have to buy some basic things.



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HEALTH INSURANCE

If you are a Stipendium Hungaricum, Scholarship for Christian Young People or Diaspora Scholarship student, you are entitled to the following two health insurances free of charge.

You are entitled to get both.

If you are a Károli Christian Scholarship student, you can get only the private insurance.

1. Hungarian social security card called TAJ card
2. Private insurance with insurance company Generali

TAJ card (Hungarian social security card)	Generali private insurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have to apply for the card in the International Office. <p>The coordinator visits the health insurance office regularly and applies for your card.</p> <p>All you have to do is present the followings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Letter of Award from Tempus Foundation ✓ copy of your passport ✓ copy of your residence permit (both sides) ✓ copy of your Address card <p>You have to bring the documents in person as you have to sign a form that allows the coordinators to arrange the card for you in the Health Insurance Office.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You get a form that you must fill out, from your scholarship coordinator at the scholarship registration at the beginning of each semester.



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TAJ card (Hungarian social security card)	Generali private insurance
<p>You must have a valid TAJ card in order to get any medical service provided by the Hungarian state. Having only a TAJ number is not enough.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You must have a valid TAJ card if you would like to work in Hungary. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TAJ card can be used FREE of CHARGE at Hungarian hospitals, surgeries and clinics operated by the Hungarian government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can be used in the surgeries and hospitals that the insurance company recommends.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The doctors speak English, but the hospital/surgery staff most probably speaks only Hungarian. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The doctors speak English, but the hospital/surgery staff most probably speaks only Hungarian.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TAJ card covers all health-related costs with no limitation. E.g. surgery, X-ray, plaster bandage, staying in a hospital etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers health issues up to 2 million HUF (during the insurance period).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic dental services (checking, filling, root canal treatment, tartar removal) are FREE of CHARGE at surgeries and clinics operated by the Hungarian government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dentist is NOT COVERED at all!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You get the TAJ card in the International Office once it's ready. It takes about 6 months to get 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your insurance is valid from the following day once you signed the above-mentioned form at



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TAJ card (Hungarian social security card)	Generali private insurance
<p>the TAJ card. The countdown starts on the day when you apply in the International Office.</p>	<p>the International Office, but no earlier than September 1 or February 1.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expiry date of the TAJ card equals to the expiry date of the residence. The expiry date is stamped in the right-hand corner at the bottom of the TAJ card, in Hungarian date order (Date format in Hungary). <p>It's your responsibility to apply for the TAJ card renewal!!!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The insurance is valid from September 1 until January 31 the next year and from February 1 until August 31.
<p>How to get a new TAJ card?</p> <p>Address of the Health Insurance Office: 1139 Budapest, Teve utca 1/a-c</p> <p>Office hours: Mon 08.00-15.00 Tue 08.00-15.00 Wed 08.00-16.30 Thu 08.00-15.00 Fri 08.00-13.00</p> <p>You will get the new card on the spot.</p> <p>You must present the following documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Letter of Award (if you can't find it, please contact Tempus Foundation) ✓ copy of your passport 	<p>How to get the new private insurance?</p> <p>You get a form from the International Office at the registration at the beginning of September and beginning of January.</p>



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TAJ card (Hungarian social security card)	Generali private insurance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ copy of your residence permit (both sides) ✓ copy of your Address card (both sides) ✓ Certificate of Education – (from the faculty) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serbian and Turkish citizens Hungary and Serbia/Turkey have an agreement and you can have a state health insurance in only one of the two countries. In order to apply for the Hungarian one, you must withdraw your Serbian/Turkish insurance. The Serbian/Turkish authorities must confirm this on a form named E104. The form is necessary even if you are not insured in Serbia/Turkey. Of course, you don't have to withdraw the Serbian/Turkish insurance, in which case you will be insured by Generali only. 	



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HOW TO CONTACT A GENERALI DOCTOR IF YOU HAVE A HEALTH PROBLEM

<p>Company name: Szent Kristóf Szakrendelő Nonprofit Kft.</p> <p>Address of the Medical Center 1117 Budapest, Fehérvári út 12.</p> <p>To make an appointment call the English-speaking operator during surgery opening hours at +36 30 859 2657.</p> <p>Reception times: Monday – Friday: 08.00 – 20.00</p>	<p>If you have an urgent medical problem, call the numbers below between 8.00 and 20.00 on workdays.</p> <p>An English-speaking primary care doctor will establish your need and provide you with further information about what to do.</p> <p>Telephone numbers of primary care physicians: +36 30 678 645 or +36 30 815 2218</p>
<p>To register your first appointment, you need to go to the surgery in person to book the appointment. You must present your passport and Generali Health Insurance Card, so your identity can be verified, which may not be done over the phone.</p>	

At other times (in an emergency outside the Medical Center's reception times, at weekends, on bank holidays or at night) out- of-hours medical services/emergency care is provided by Inter-Ambulance Zrt. in an out-of-hours Outpatient Clinic located at 1115 Budapest, Tétényi út 12-16. Telephone: +36 1 203 3615. This is the number you must call in a medical urgency (or emergency), and this is where you can go to receive treatment. (Trauma and emergency medical services are provided in the building of Szent Imre Hospital.)



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TIME FORMAT IN HUNGARY

A 24-hour time format is used in Hungary. 12.00 is always noon and 24.00 or 00.00 is always midnight. We don't use am or pm.

BEING ON TIME

Time is an important and huge issue in Hungary and being late is unacceptable especially in the classroom. Please be careful and always be on time. For example, **09.50 always means 09.50 and not any time after that.** Of course, you can be in the classroom some minutes earlier than the start of the class but never later than that.

HOW TO WRITE AN E-MAIL AND HOW TO ADDRESS THE STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY

Please always use the proper forms when you write a letter. Your letter should look something like this.

“Dear Madam/Sir/Ms Smith//Professor/Coordinator etc.

Here comes the information or question that you would like to share with the person.

Best regards,

Here comes your official full name”

Please do not use the e-mail as if it was a chat line. "Hey" or "Hi" are not proper ways of addressing someone officially. Always **start your e-mail with Dear...**, say **goodbye** at the end and always **sign** your letter.



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WAITING FOR AN ANSWER FOR YOUR E-MAIL

Once you sent an e-mail to a university staff member, please do NOT send them a reminder in less than 48 hours on weekdays and less than 96 hours at the weekends. Remember, each staff member is dealing with hundreds of students and problems at the same time. Please give them time to get around and respond to your e-mail. If you send an e-mail at 11 p.m. in the evening, do not expect a reply by 8 a.m. even in the most optimal case. Always plan and think ahead.

USING FACEBOOK AS A CORRESPONDENCE PLATFORM WITH THE UNIVERSITY STAFF

Please note that Facebook, Snapchat, Viber, WhatsApp etc. are not official platforms of communication with the university staff members. If you need anything from a coordinator or a professor, please send them a letter to their official e-mail address that ends with “kre.hu” instead of sending them private messages via Facebook.

MOBILE PROVIDERS

There are four big mobile service providers in Hungary. You can check their websites for more information.

- [T-mobile](#)
- [Vodafone](#)
- [Yettel](#)



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STUDENT WELFARE

Sometimes having real freedom and being away from home can lead you to making bad decisions. Please take care of yourself and read the following lines very carefully.

ACCOMMODATION

- Always lock the door of your flat / house when leaving and after arriving home.

BEING LONELY AND DEPRESSED

- ✓ Being away from home can be lonely and depressing and it is not always easy making new friends. If you feel sad and lonely you can contact any of the [English-speaking psychologist of KRE](#).

THIEVES / PICKPOCKETS

- Budapest is generally very safe and pickpocketing is not that common, but it can happen. Please never carry your passport with you, have a photo of it in your phone. Residence permit should be good enough identification if needed somewhere.
- Always carry your bag in front of you, especially on the public transport, and never on your back, even if it is a rucksack. Your phone and wallet should never be in the back pocket of your jeans/trousers.
- If you sit down somewhere, make sure that you keep an eye on your stuff rather than put it next to yourself or behind you. It can be stolen in a second. Take care even at the university as anyone can enter the buildings and do not leave your things in an empty classroom if you don't stay there.



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EMERGENCY NUMBERS

General emergency number: 112

Police: 107

Ambulance: 104

Fire service: 105

To call the numbers above is free of charge.

24-hour English-language crime hotline: +36 1 438 8080

English language telephone directory service: 191

International operator: 199

A FEW RELIABLE TAXI COMPANIES (ENGLISH IS SPOKEN)

City Taxi: +36 1 211 1111

Főtaxi: +36 1 222 2222



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PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN HUNGARY

The major grocery stores, shops, shopping centers, market halls and the university buildings (including the library) are closed on the following days.

New Year's Day	January 1
National holiday	March 15
Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Monday	March/April depending on the year
Labour day	May 1
Whit Sunday and Monday	May/June depending on the year
National holiday	August 20
National holiday	October 23
All saint's day	November 1
Christmas day and boxing day	December 25-26

INFORMATION ON THE LEGALISATION PROCEDURE OF DOCUMENTS TO BE USED ABROAD (NOT IN HUNGARY)

Please check the [whole page](#), especially the part about the degree certificates.

"Degree Certificates, Supplements, Attendance certificates, etc.

1. Intermediate legalisation at the [Office of Education](#)
2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
3. Accredited delegation of the target country in Hungary"

Please arrange this as soon as you have your diploma from KRE. You may not need this certificate now, but if you need it anytime in the future, you don't have to arrange it in a hurry.



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WORKING IN HUNGARY

The Career Office of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences issued a publication on student jobs in Budapest. If you are interested in working in Hungary, we highly recommend looking at the small but very informative booklet. The publication can be reached at the [website of KRE](#).

A TO Z - USEFUL THINGS FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

ADDRESS CARD

You must apply for the address certification via the [website of the Immigration Office](#). **Please follow the [instructions of the website](#).**

BANK CARD (DEBIT CARD/CREDIT CARD) VS BANK ACCOUNT NUMBER

You must be careful to whom you give your personal data, most specifically, your debit/credit card number. **This information MUST NOT be given to anyone.** If you give this number to someone, that person can use your card sometimes even without having your CVV code (3 digits), which can be found at the back of your card.

Never give your PIN number to anyone and never carry it together with your debit/credit card. **The bank account number is not the same as the debit/credit card number.**

The card numbers contain 16 digits looking like 1234 5678 1234 5678. The Hungarian bank account numbers contain 16 or 24 digits looking like 12345678-12345678-00000000 or 12345678-12345678 or 12345678-00000000-12345678 depending on the bank.

If you transfer money from your bank account to another bank account or receive money from another bank account, you need to use your bank account number. If you buy anything online, you need your card number and possibly CVV code.

You can always check your bank account number online if you have the application of your bank on your mobile phone.



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CLOTHING AND SECONDHAND SHOPS

Hungary is a country of extremes regarding the weather.

September can be still quite warm during the day (+25-27 Celsius) and the weather gets colder and colder as we enter October and November. November can be cold with temperature under +10 Celsius. Winter months can be really cold. In winter the average temperature is zero to -10 Celsius. In extreme circumstances and at night the temperature can go below -15 Celsius.

We would like to encourage you either to bring warm winter clothes, a coat, scarf, hat, gloves and boots or buy them here. Buying them here is not a problem either as we have a lot of shopping malls with all the major fashion chains.

If you want to save some money try the second hand chains [Háda](#), [Cream](#) and [Humana](#). All have several shops all around Budapest. Alternatively, you can try the Chinese shops that are available all over Budapest, but if you need a lot of different shops at the same place try [Monori Center](#).

DATE FORMAT IN HUNGARY

A yyyy.mm.dd. date format is used in Hungary. For example, 2018.01.08. or 2018. január 8. or 2018. jan. 8.

DISTRICTS OF BUDAPEST

Budapest has 23 districts and the city is divided by the River Danube into Buda and Pest. Buda is hilly, Pest is rather flat and the city center is on the Pest side. KRE is located at the edge of district 9 on the Pest side. The most central and most expensive districts are 5, 6, 7 and 9 and they are all on the Pest side. District 8 is also near the city center, but most parts of it can be dangerous, therefore please avoid this district if you can, except for Corvin-negyed which is at the border of district 8, but it's considered to be safe.



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ELECTRONICS

You may need to buy some electronic stuff after arrival such as an adapter or an internet cable etc. This you can do in the electronic stores that you will definitely find in all the shopping malls. The biggest ones are MediaMarkt and Euronics.

EXCHANGING MONEY

Some grocery stores accept EUR but otherwise you must pay in HUF when you buy something anywhere in the country. There are several legal places in the city and near the university where you can exchange your currency into Hungarian Forint (HUF). You can choose an exchange booth or any bank but never ever accept an offer from somebody on the street. Exchanging money on the street is highly illegal in Hungary.

GROCERY STORES IN THE CITY

There are some big grocery store chains that are worth a visit. Some of them can be found in the city center as well but some of them only in the suburban area. The most known and popular ones are Aldi (there is one at the Market Hall next to the university), Lidl, Spar, Tesco, Auchan.

HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE

Hungarian is said to be complex and difficult but it's useful to learn some basic expressions. Here are some links that can be interesting for you.

[Learn the top 25 Hungarian phrases](#)

[Learn Hungarian - Essentials](#)

[The Hungarian alphabet](#)

[36 useful Hungarian phrases](#)

Prepare yourself as it can be difficult to communicate with people in the shops or on the street. Unfortunately, a lot of Hungarians don't speak English. Even in the cafeteria or in the buffet of the university you can have difficulties if you don't speak some basic Hungarian.



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HUNGARIAN RAILWAYS

[Magyar Államvasutak](#) aka MÁV = Hungarian Railways company

You can check the prices and timetables on the website of the company, and you can buy your ticket online if you wish. Buying the ticket at the cashier at the railway station is also an option of course.

METRIC UNITS

Please note that the metric system is used in Hungary such as liter, centimeter, kilogram etc.

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME

Why is your mum's maiden name so important for the Hungarian authorities?

You probably realized that it is asked on all the official papers like your scholarship application, your rental contract, your scholarship agreement, Neptun etc.

In Hungary the following data can identify you 100%, if they are used together.

- your name
- the place where you were born
- the date when you were born
- your mum' maiden name (the family name and first name she was born with)

NAME ORDER IN HUNGARY

Hungarians use a reverse name order.

Family name first and given name second. Her family name is her dad's family name and like most people in Hungary she doesn't have a middle name.



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PARCEL COMPANIES

[DHL](#)

[UPS](#)

[FedEx](#)

PHARMACY

Prescribed medicines can only be bought in pharmacies (Gyógyszertár or Patika in Hungarian). Pharmacies are usually open on weekdays from 08.00 to 18.00. Some pharmacies are also open on Saturdays. There are at least three pharmacies near the university buildings.

Fővám téri Gyógyszertár, [1056 Budapest, Fővám tér 4.](#)

Szent Máté Gyógyszertár, [1093 Budapest, Vámház krt. 13.](#)

Corvinus Gyógyszertár, [1093 Budapest, Közraktár u. 2/a](#)

POST OFFICE

[Hungarian Postal Service](#)

Nearest post offices, [1056 Budapest, Fővám tér 5.](#) and [1053 Budapest, Múzeum krt. 31-33.](#)

In case you send an important letter and you would like to know if the recipient received it, send it as [registered mail](#). This is a special postal service by which an official record of posting and delivery is obtained for a letter. The post office will provide you an official record ('return receipt') of the fact that your letter has been posted and delivered. You must pay an extra fee for this service, but it will guarantee that you posted the letter.

POSTAL CODES OF BUDAPEST

The 2nd and 3rd numbers of the Budapest postal codes show the district.

For example, the uni's postal code is 1091 and it is in the 9th district.



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PUBLIC TRANSPORT

[Public Transport company of Budapest](#)

[Transportation maps](#)

[Map of the Metro and Suburban Railway network](#)

[Monthly Transportation pass for students](#)

Please make sure that your valid student ID is with you when you use your monthly transportation pass. The [penalty](#) is very high if you are caught using the student pass without a valid student ID. The price of the student pass is very reasonable only 3.450,-HUF/month compared to the full pass which is 9.500,-HUF/month. It can be used unlimited on all kind of transportation in the city like metro, bus, tram, suburban railway (HÉV), trolley etc within the administrative boundaries of Budapest. You can buy the pass at [any ticket vending machine](#). Your Education ID (e.g. 71822563945) must be printed on the pass.

[Single transportation ticket](#)

If you live in the city center, you may don't need the monthly transportation pass, but be careful as you mustn't travel on any public transport vehicle without a valid ticket at least.



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RELIGIOUS PLACES IN BUDAPEST

[Budapest Mosque](#)

[Danube International Church](#)

[Riverside Church Budapest](#)

[Scottish Mission](#)

[St. Margaret's Anglican Church](#)

SHOPPING CENTERS

There are several shopping malls in the city where you can find almost all the big trademarks of the world. The biggest shopping malls are [Westend](#), [Corvin Plaza](#), [Allee](#), [Árkád](#), [KÖKI Terminál](#). The shops are usually open from 10.00 until 21.00 even on Sunday.

SMALLER SHOPS

There are also a lot of small grocery shops around the city that have longer opening hours even 24/7.

SMOKING

Smoking in public buildings, shops, shopping centers, restaurants, pubs etc. and 5 meters within their entrance is strictly forbidden and heavily fined. Smoking on public transportation vehicles and at public transportation stops is also prohibited.



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SPORT

GYM

There are a lot of gyms all around the city and we collected only some of them.

- **Astoria Fitness** – [1052 Budapest, Károly körút 4.](#)
- **Life1 Fitness Corvin** – [1082 Budapest, Futó u. 48-50.](#)
- **Megafitness KÖKI** – [1191 Budapest, Vak Bottyán u. 75/a-c](#), 2nd floor of KÖKI Terminal shopping center
- **Nr1 Fitness** – [1053 Budapest, Kecskeméti u. 14.](#) (near Kálvin tér)
- **Nr1 Fitness** – [1062 Budapest, Aradi u. 8.](#) (near Oktogon)

SWIMMING POOLS

- [Summary of the best swimming pools in Budapest](#)

STATIONERY

Every shopping mall has at least one stationary shop where you can buy pens, pencils, booklets etc.

TOBACCO SHOPS

You can buy cigarettes and any tobacco related products only in the National Tobacco shops called Nemzeti Dohánybolt in Hungarian. These shops have very long opening hours, sometimes 24/7.



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TRANSLATION OFFICE

If you need an official and attested translation of your documents, please contact the [Hungarian Office for Translation and Attestation Ltd.](#)

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Your TAJ card and your Generali private insurance are valid only in Hungary. You are not insured at all as soon as you leave the territory of the country. You are NOT entitled to get the blue EU card unless you have a permanent address in Hungary or in any of the EU countries. I recommend that you buy a travel insurance at any travel agency even if you leave Hungary only for one day. Buying the insurance online is unfortunately not an option for you as all the websites are available only in Hungarian. The most reliable travel insurance companies are Európai Utazási Biztosító (EUB), Allianz, Aegon, Union, UNIQA, Mondial. Take your residence permit, passport and address card with you when you buy the insurance.

WHERE TO BUY THINGS THAT MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER

You probably need a lot of things when you arrive such as iron, ironing-board, drying rack, mugs, cutlery, plates etc. You can buy all these things in stores like [KIKÁ](#), [IKEA](#) or [Möbelix](#). Alternatively you can try the Chinese shops that are available all over Budapest, but if you need a lot of different shops at the same place try [Monori Center](#).

You can join several Facebook groups. These are only examples, and we don't take responsibility for the information provided in these groups. Some of the groups operate only in Hungarian.

[Free Your Stuff Budapest](#)

[Used stuff for free in Budapest](#)

[Used stuff to sale and buy in Budapest](#)

[Used furniture from IKEA](#)

[Second hand from IKEA](#)



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Enjoy your stay in Budapest and at KRE and let us know if you have any questions. 😊

The staff of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church.