

OFFICIAL NAME: Republic of Hungary

CAPITAL: Budapest

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT: Unitary Multiparty Republic

AREA: 93,033 Sq Km (35,920 Sq Mi)

ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION 10,245,000



LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY: Hungary is a landlocked country located on the Danube River Basin in Central Europe. Its bound by Slovakia to the north, Ukraine to the northeast, Romania to the east, Croatia and Serbia & Montenegro to the south as well as Slovenia and Austria to the west. Most of the country is flat with the exception of the low mountain ranges of the Bakony, Vertes and Philis Ranges of the Alps, which are located in the north central and northeastern sections of the country as well as to the north and south of Lake Balaton. They also separate the Little Hungarian Plain from the Transdanubian Downlands. The country is drained by the Danube River with its tributaries, the Tisza, Drava and Sava Rivers. To the east of the Danube River, floods are frequent in the Great or Alföld Plains region. Major Cities (pop. est.); Budapest 1,995,700, Debrecen 217,700, Miskolc 189,700, Szeged 178,900, Pecs 172,200 (1994). Land Use; forested 19%, pastures 13%, agricultural-cultivated 54%, other 14% (1993).

CLIMATE: Hungary has a continental climate with considerable differences between summer and winter conditions, and rapid transitions from one season to the other. Spring and early summer are the wettest seasons with rainfall often occurring in heavy downpours. Winters are cold with snow cover lasting for long periods of around 30 to 40 days while the Danube River is also frozen over for long periods. Average annual precipitation is 640 mm (25 inches) while average annual temperature ranges in Budapest are from -4 to 1 degrees Celsius (25 to 34 degrees Fahrenheit) in January to 16 to 28 degrees Celsius (61 to 82 degrees Fahrenheit) in July.

PEOPLE: The principal ethnic majority are the Magyars or Hungarians who account for 97% of the population. The remainder are ethnic minorities of Germans, Slovaks, Romanian Gypsies and other Slav groups.

DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS: Density; 111 persons per sq km (288 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 61.9% urban, 38.1% rural (1990). Sex Distribution; 48.1% male, 51.9% female (1990). Life Expectancy at Birth; 65.1 years male, 73.7 years female (1990). Age Breakdown; 20% under 15, 20% 15 to 29, 23% 30 to 49, 18% 49 to 59, 14% 60 to 74, 5% 75 and over (1991). Birth Rate; 11.8 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 13.7 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; -1.9 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 14.8 per 1,000 live births (1990).

RELIGIONS: Mostly Christians with 64% of the population Roman Catholic while 23% are Protestant and Jews also account for 1% of the population.

LANGUAGES: The official language is Hungarian (Magyar), although English and German are taught in schools as secondary languages.

EDUCATION: Aged 7 or over and having attained: no formal schooling 1.3%, primary 65.5%, secondary 27.1%, higher 6.1% (1984). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 8,269,850 or 98.9% (1984).

MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993: In 1946 Hungary became a republic for the second time since 1918 and a new constitutional law was passed abolishing the monarchy. Under the new government political, economic and social reforms were started but in the 1947 elections the communist party emerged with the majority and formed a coalition with Social Democrats in June 1948, in effect taking control of the government. By 1949 all opposition parties were eliminated and by 1954 all junior coalition partners were abolished. In 1955 Hungary became a member of the UN and on Oct. 23, 1956 widespread anticommunist demonstrations began demanding the reinstatement of Premier Imre Nagy who was deposed in 1955 for his "New Course" right wing social and political policies. Additionally, the demonstrators demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops, although they intervened when clashes broke out between the demonstrators and the Hungarian militia. On Oct. 25, 1956 Nagy became Prime Minister, declaring Hungary a multiparty democracy and the country's neutrality. The revolution ended on Nov. 2, 1956 when the Soviet Army launched a massive offensive resulting in the deaths of 25,000 people in Budapest while another 200,000 fled the country. On June 16 1958 Nagy was executed for treason under the newly installed Soviet puppet government. In 1968 the government adopted a New Economic Mechanism which was later restricted from 1972 to 1977. Also in the same year Hungarian troops participated in the suppression of Czechoslovakia's "Prague Spring" reforms. In 1973 Hungary joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and in 1978 the US returned the nation's prize treasure, the 981 AD crown of St. Stephen. In 1988 to 1989 there were more pro democracy demonstrations which led to the legalization of political parties in Jan. 1989 and in May 1989 border guards began removing the barbed wire barrier along the Austrian border. In early Oct. 1989 Imre Pozsgay secured the governing party's reconstitution effectively turning its back on communism and in Mar. and Apr. 1990 free multiparty elections were held and Prime Minister Jozef Antall formed a new government. In Aug. 1990 the National Assembly elected Arpad Goncz who was once imprisoned as a political prisoner as the country's President. In July 1991 the Soviet forces commander left Hungary officially ending their 47 year old military presence in the country. In Nov. 1991 a new law governing the National Bank came into effect, enabling a considerable degree of

independence for the head of the bank. During 1991 relations between the government and the presidency escalated into conflict over the President's degree of authority and influence over the government. The matter was referred to the country's constitutional court that ruled more in favor of the government. In Dec. 1991 Hungary officially recognized the independence of the former Yugoslav republics of Croatia and Slovenia while the country also pursued closer ties with the West in hope of gaining admission to NATO and the European Union. In 1992 there was considerable debate between political parties over economic reforms and control over the electronic media as well as infighting within some parties. In Aug. 1992 the Deputy President of the ruling coalition Hungarian Democratic Forum party, Istvan Csurka, attacked his party and the President's leadership for not being tough enough on the opposition and for not introducing radical reforms to get rid of the remnants of communism. In Nov. 1992 Russian President Boris Yeltsin visited Hungary and sign and arms deal that included a sophisticated radar system to alert of any possible retaliation from the former Yugoslav republic of Serbia for Hungary's earlier recognition of Croatia and Slovenia. Also during 1992 the Constitutional Court threw out a bill on retrospective accountability against former highly positioned Communists. In Jan. 1993 Prime Minister Antall was re-elected as chairman of the Forum. During 1993 the government and opposition continued their contest for power in preparation for the 1994 elections while the leading Hungarian Democratic Forum forced right-wing radicals out of the party, as a result of Istvan Csurka actions threatening to destabilize the government coalition. Following which Csurka established his own populist-nationalist party, the Hungarian Justice while the government coalition and the opposition campaigned to bring the electronic media under supervision. On Dec. 12, 1993 Prime Minister Antall died and was succeeded by his Interior Minister, Peter Boross. Also in Dec. 1993 both Ameritech Corporation and Deutsche Bundespost Telekom agreed to invest US 437.5 million each to acquire a 30% interest in the state-owned telephone company.

CURRENCY: The official currency is the Forint (Ft) divided into 100 Filler.

ECONOMY: Gross National Product; USD \$34,254,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$21,535,000,000 (1993). Imports; Ft 1,537,000,000,000 (1993). Exports; Ft 1,128,700,000,000 (1994). Tourism Receipts; USD \$1,181,000,000 (1993). Balance of Trade; Ft -317,700,000,000 (1994). Economically Active Population; 4,433,500 or 43.3% of total population (1995). Unemployed; 9.7% (1995).

MAIN TRADING PARTNERS: Its main trading partners are the former USSR, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Austria.

MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS: Bauxite, Cereals, Coal, Fruit and Vegetables, Grapes, Lignite, Livestock, Oil and Natural Gas, Potatoes.

MAJOR INDUSTRIES: Agriculture, Chemicals, Forestry, Iron and Steel, Machinery, Mining, Pharmaceuticals, Precision and Measuring Equipment, Textiles, Transport Equipment, Timber Production.

MAIN EXPORTS: Chemicals, Clothing, Consumer Goods, Food Products, Iron and Steel, Machinery, Motor Vehicles.

TRANSPORT: Railroads; route length 13,489 km (8,382 mi) (1989), passenger-km 11,879,000,000 (7,381,000,000 passenger-mi) (1989), cargo ton-km 19,820,000,000 (13,575,000,000 short ton-mi) (1989). Roads; length 29,832 km (18,537 mi) (1989). Vehicles; cars 1,848,200 (1989), trucks and buses 205,772 (1989). Merchant Marine; vessels 17 (1990), deadweight tonnage 142,756 (1990). Air Transport; passenger-km 1,503,000,000 (934,000,000 passenger-mi) (1990), cargo ton-km 12,275,000 (8,407,000 short ton-mi) (1990).

COMMUNICATIONS: Daily Newspapers; total of 28 with a total circulation of 2,896,000 (1992). Radio; receivers 6,250,000 (1993). Television; receivers 4,261,600 (1993). Telephones; units 1,497,600 (1993).

MILITARY: 70,500 (1995) total active duty personnel with 76.2% army, 0.0% navy and 23.8% air force while military expenditure accounts for 2.0% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).