

# CULTURAL INSIGHTS HUNGARY Magyarország



a culture crash course every other month, sent right to your inbox!

## QUICK FACTS

### Group & Relationship Orientation

Hungarian identity is defined by the group and family. Who you know is as important as what you know. The larger the “network” the more important the person. Relationships are necessary for all social and business interactions and are seen as a key to success.

### Hierarchy

Hungarians typically observe patterns of hierarchy which define roles and reduce uncertainty, but there is skepticism of authority. Credentials, experience, and good manners are respected. Boasting and self-promotion are considered unrefined, whereas more subtle ways of making one’s credentials and achievements known are more acceptable. Education is highly valued as a tool for personal advancement and building a career.

### Certainty, Exceptions and a Pessimistic Outlook

Generally, there is low tolerance for ambiguity and people require detailed explanations before making decisions. Hungarians may be resistant to change. There is a preference for loose application of the rules as certain situations may require creative ways around them based on relationships and other contextual cues. Hungarians see pessimism as wise, while optimism may be interpreted as a somewhat naïve, and indicative of an uninformed worldview. This pessimism offers Hungarians an opportunity to inject humor and irony to ease harsh circumstances.

### Fluid Time

In Hungary punctuality is required, but meetings may not follow the agenda. Deadlines are flexible with possible interruptions. A job done precisely with thorough planning is valued more than meeting perceived arbitrary deadlines.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Founded in 897, Magyarország, or Hungary, is one of the oldest countries in Europe.
- Since 1905, 15 Hungarians have received a Nobel Prize across nearly every category.
- The Hungarian language, unrelated to most European languages, is one of the most unique and complex in Europe.



### WATCH OUT!

Hungarians are known for hospitality and measure that by offering large amounts of food to guests. If you are offered food or a drink, do not decline!



## COMMUNICATION IN HUNGARY

### Formalities & Emotional Expression



In Hungary, observing formality is a sign of a good upbringing. Proper greetings and addressing people by title and last names until a relationship has developed is still common. The Hungarian language “Magyar” has formal and informal ways of addressing people according to level of hierarchy and relationship. A reserved, refined, formal manner is expected before the relationship has developed. Eye contact and formal posture (no hands in pockets) are important because they send a message about respect for oneself and others.

Once the relationship has been established, openly showing anger, affection, disagreement and voicing opinions passionately is accepted and expected. Heightened emotions communicate a passionate commitment to one’s perspective.

### Direct Communication Style & Saying No



Debate is revered and important to finding consensus. Hungarians often freely offer opinions on work issues, a person’s behavior, and appearance. Lengthy discussion of topics is common and allows individuals an opportunity to show intellectual skills. While communication may feel direct, certain messages may be more implicit. Promises and positive statements may be used to re-establish face after arguments. Saying “no” is difficult for Hungarians, who strive to maintain relationships. “Yes” may mean they are considering all the options but have not yet agreed.

## THE DETAILS HUNGARY CULTURAL PROFILE

