

**Embassy of India  
Budapest**

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## **India-Hungary Bilateral Relations**

### **Overview**

Hungary is a landlocked country in the Central Europe, bordering Austria, Croatia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. It is mostly flat, with low mountains in the north and north-east. The north-south flowing Danube and Tisza Rivers divide the country into three large regions. Hungary traces its history back to the Magyars, an alliance of semi-nomadic tribes from southern Russia and the Black Sea coast that arrived in the region in the ninth century. Hungary was part of the Ottoman and then Habsburg empires from the 16th century onwards, emerging as an independent country again after World War I. With a population of around 9.80 million, it is home to Lake Balaton, the largest in central Europe, and to a large number of spa towns and hot springs.

Relations between India and Hungary have been close and friendly, multifaceted and substantive. They have survived the vicissitudes of political and economic changes, particularly in Hungary and reorientation of its foreign policy in the post-cold war period. Hungarians are extremely grateful for India's role in the 1956 uprising in Hungary. India's intervention with the Soviet Union saved the life of Dr. Arpad Goncz who subsequently served as President of Hungary from 1990 to 2000.

India is seen as a country whose ancient culture and spiritual traditions and the academic and scientific excellence specially in the "knowledge sector" is deeply attractive to ordinary Hungarians. Bilateral economic relationship has also been strengthened with investments of approximately US\$ 3.3 billion from India to Hungary. Bilateral trade has crossed 1.2 billion in the year 2023.

### **Bilateral Interactions**

#### **Visits from Hungary**

Minister of Culture and Innovation of Hungary, Mr. Csák János visited India in April 2024 and met with Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra.

Foreign Minister of Hungary, Mr. Peter Szijjarto visited New Delhi to participate in CII-India Europe Business and Sustainability Conclave held on February 21-22, 2024 in New Delhi. He also met External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar and noted the significant advances in political, bilateral trade and investment and education sectors.

Balázs Orban, Political Director of PM Viktor Orbán and MP, attended Raisina Dialogue in India in March 2023.

At the invitation of EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar, Mr. Peter Szijjarto, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary visited India in May 2022 accompanied by a business delegation. At the delegation level talks, the two Ministers exchanged views covering the entire gamut of bilateral relations, including political, economic, cultural ties and also the global economic situation, developments in India-EU relations, Indo-Pacific, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Ukraine. EAM thanked the Hungarian government for facilitating the evacuation of more than 6000 Indian citizens through the Ukraine - Hungary border and for their offer to accommodate evacuated Indian medical students in Hungarian universities. The Ministers noted that bilateral trade was approaching US \$ 1 billion, and Indian investments in Hungary were increasing across sectors. The Hungarian side also signed the International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement.

Foreign Minister Szijjártó co-chaired an India-Hungary Business Forum with Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi, MoS for External Affairs during his visit to India in May 2022 where two commercial agreements were signed. Foreign Minister Szijjártó also met Shri Hardeep Sing Puri, Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs and Petroleum & Natural Gas and discussed cooperation in the energy sector between the two countries.

Mr. Peter Szijjarto had earlier visited India on a three day visit in January 2020 to attend Raisina Dialogue. He visited Mumbai and called on Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra and met with CEO's of some leading Indian companies. In New Delhi, he met Hon'ble Prime Minister and participated in the 5th edition of Raisina Dialogue. Szijjarto and EAM held bilateral talks. He also met Minister of MSME, Mr Nitin Gadkari and Mr Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Railways.

**Prime Minister Viktor Orban** led a 100-member strong delegation including a 80-member business delegation on his visit to Delhi and Mumbai in October 2013. He called on President, Vice President and held delegation level discussion with Prime Minister. MoUs on Traditional Systems of Medicine, Cooperation in the field of Sports, Cooperation in the areas of Defensive Aspects of Microbiological and Radiological Detection and Protection and Cultural Exchange Programme were signed. In addition, Letters of Intent on Revision of Air Services Agreement and Indo-Hungarian Strategic Research Fund were also signed.

### **Visits from India**

An Indian Parliamentary Delegation from Rajya Sabha led by Shri Harivansh, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha visited Hungary from 6 -9 March, 2024 at the invitation of the Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary. During the visit, Deputy Chairman called on Mr. István Jakab, Deputy Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly. Both dignitaries exchanged views on matters of mutual interest including strengthening of parliamentary cooperation and enhancing people-to-people connect. Rajya Sabha delegation also met the Hungarian-Indian Friendship Group chaired by Mr. Péter Cseresnyés. discussed various opportunities to further deepen bilateral relations and emphasised the importance of cultural interactions.

Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture visited Hungary in November, 2023. She delivered a key-note speech at the joint public event organized by Hungarian Institute of International Affairs and Embassy of India on the occasion of celebration of 75 years of diplomatic relations between India and Hungary. Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi held meetings with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Levente Magyar, Minister of Culture and Innovation of Hungary, Mr. Csák János and President of Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs Mr. Zsolt Attila Nemeth and shared views on a wide range of possibilities for collaboration in culture, women empowerment and democracy.

Shri Hardeep Sing Puri, Hon'ble Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs and Petroleum & Natural Gas visited Hungary in February- March 2022 to oversee the evacuation of Indian students from Ukraine under the Operation Ganga. He met with Foreign Minister Szijjarto during the visit and conveyed thanks of the Indian government for the cooperation and facilitation extended by the government of Hungary. He also handed over a letter from PM Modi addressed to PM Viktor Orban.

Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister of Jal Shakti visited Budapest in October 2019 at the invitation of the Hungarian side. He participated in the Budapest Water Summit 2019 and delivered a keynote speech at the Inaugural Session of the Summit. He had meetings with Mr. János Áder, President of Hungary as well as with Ministers of Agriculture, Interior and Foreign Affairs and Trade.

External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Hungary in August 2019. EAM held discussions with Hungary's Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Peter Szijjarto on a wide range of bilateral and multilateral issues. The two Ministers signed a Cultural Exchange Programme between India and Hungary for the period 2019-22. The Hungarian side announced their decision to join the International Solar Alliance. Five main areas of film production, digitalization, water management, solar energy and pharmaceuticals were identified for strengthening cooperation. The two Ministers also agreed to also intensify bilateral interaction in the fields of education, tourism and science. The External Affairs Minister had meetings with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Mr. Mihaly Varga and Chairman of Hungary-India Parliamentary Friendship Group Mr. Peter Cseresnyes. The External Affairs Minister also inaugurated a photo exhibition commemorating the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations at the Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre at the Embassy of India on August 26. The photo exhibition between India and Hungary showcased several historical photographs.

### **Institutional Cooperation Modalities**

**Foreign Office Consultations** – The 9th round of FOC was also held in India in 2012. The 10<sup>th</sup> round of FOCs was held on January 19, 2021 in Budapest.

**Joint Committee on Economic Cooperation:** The Indo-Hungary Joint Committee on Economic cooperation provides the institutional framework for intergovernmental discussions on economic cooperation. The 6<sup>th</sup> Session was held in Budapest on 17-18 October 2022 when the Protocol for cooperation was reviewed and signed.

**Joint Business Council (JBC):** A Joint Business Council of Indian and Hungarian companies was set up in 1979 under an agreement between FICCI and Hungarian Chamber of Commerce to promote direct contacts between business delegations. Last meeting of the JBC was held in Budapest, Hungary, in June 2016.

### **Important Bilateral Treaties and Agreements**

- Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion (2003)
- MoU on IT Cooperation (2003)
- Agreement on Defence Cooperation (2003)
- Agreement on Exemption of Visa Requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports (2003)
- Agreement on cooperation in the field of Health & Medicine (2008)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and allied sectors (2008)
- Letter of Intent on Strategic Research Fund between India and Hungary (2008)
- MoU between Oil and Natural Gas Corp. Ltd. and MOL Hungarian Oil and Gas Plc. for Cooperation in Hydrocarbon Sector (2008)
- Agreement on Social Security between India and Hungary (2010)
- Agreement between Semmelweis University Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Sciences (TF), Hungary and Sport Authority of India (2011)
- MoU on Traditional Systems of Medicine (2013)
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Sports (2013)
- Letter of Intent for Indo-Hungarian Strategic Research Fund (enhanced contribution of Euro 2 million each for 2014-17.
- Education Exchange Programme signed in Budapest on 19 November 2014.
- MOU on Cooperation in the field of Water Management – October 2016
- MOU between the Indian Council of World Affairs and Institute of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary – October 2016.
- MOU between Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences and the University of Debrecen for establishment of European Institute of Ayurvedic Sciences, in October 2017.

- MOU between Eotvos Lorand University(ELTE) of Hungary and Indian Council for Cultural Relations(ICCR, New Delhi for establishment of Hindi Chair at ELTE university in September 2018.
- MoU between Council of EU Chambers of Commerce in India (CEUCCI) and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 26 June 2018 in Budapest
- MoU on Cultural Exchange program for the period 2019-22 between India and Hungary on 26th August 2019.
- Letter of Intent was signed between Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India (ACMA) and Hungarian Automotive Component Manufacturers Association (MAJOSZ) with a view to re-energizing their cooperation on 5 February 2019 in Budapest.
- MoU between WAPCOS and Budapest Waterworks in Budapest on September 12, 2019.
- MoU on Investment Promotion between Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency (HIPA) with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) - 27 May 2022, New Delhi
- MoU between Invest India and Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency (HIPA) at the 5th India-Hungary Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation held on 5-6th March 2018, New Delhi. The MoU was renewed on 27 May 2022, New Delhi and signed as an MoU on Enhancing bilateral Investment Relations.
- MOU for Student, Staff Exchange Program and Master's Program between Semmelweis University, Budapest and St. Joseph Dental College and Hospital, India signed on 01 November 2022
- MOU between Marwadi University, India and the University of Public Service (UPS), Hungary signed on 7th of June 2022

#### **Bilateral visits over the years:**

##### **India to Hungary**

President Zakir Hussain	1958
President V. V. Giri	1970
PM Indira Gandhi	1972
President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed	1976
Speaker B.R.Jakhar	1980
PM Rajiv Gandhi	1988
Speaker Rabi Ray	1991
President S.D.Sharma	1993
Speaker S.Patil	1995
Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Health and Family Welfare	June 2003
Mr Natwar Singh, External Affairs Minister	June 2005
Smt Ambika Soni Minister of Tourism & Culture	October 2006
Mrs. Panabaaka Lakshmi, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare.	September 2007
Shri Anand Sharma, Minister of Commerce and Industry	February 2010

Smt. Meira Kumar, Speaker of Lok Sabha	June 2010
Smt. Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs	November 2010
Shri Ashwani Kumar, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs	May 2011
Shri Vilasrao Deshmukh, Minister for Science and Technology	November 2011
Shri Sachin Pilot, Minister of State for Communications and IT Technology	October 2012
Shri Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs	July 2013
Shri Harish Rawat, Minister of Water Resources	October 2013
Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation	June 2016
Shri M. Hamid Ansari, Vice-President	October 2016
Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister	August 2019
Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Minister of Jal Shakti	October 2019
Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs	March 2022
Smt Lekhi Meenakashi, Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture	November 2023
Shri Harivansh, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha	March 2024

### **Hungary to India**

PM Ferenc Munnich	1962
PM Gyula Kallai	1966
President Pál Losonczi	1969 & 1976
PM Jenő Fock	1974
Speaker Istvan Sarlos	1986
President Dr. Arpad Goncz	1991
Speaker Zoltan Gal	1994
Speaker Janos Ader	1999
PM Peter Medgyessy	2003
Dr. Kinga Goncz, Foreign Minister	November 2006
Dr. Janos Veres, Finance Minister	January 2007

Mr. Istvan Hiller, Minister of Cultural Heritage	October 2007
PM Ferenc Gyurcsány	January 2008
Dr. Ildikó Kovács, National Office for Research and Technology	January 2010
Mr. Peter Balazs, Minister of Foreign Affairs	January 2010
Mr. László Parragh, President of Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	March 2010
Dr. Zsolt Semjén, Deputy Prime Minister, Deputy Speaker of Parliament	May 2012
Dr. János Latorcay, Deputy Speaker of Parliament	May 2012
Mr. László Kövér, Speaker of Parliament	November 2012
Mr. Péter Szijjártó, State Secretary for External Economic Relations	August 2013
Mr. Viktor Orban, Prime Minister	October 2013
Mr. János Martonyi, Minister of Foreign Affairs	November 2013
Dr. Csaba Balogh, Deputy State Secretary for Eastern Opening, MFAT	January 2015
Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs	May 2015
Dr. Laszlo Szabo, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Trade	October 2015
Mr. Istvan Ijgyarto, MOS for Cultural and Science Diplomacy, MFAT	May 2016
Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs	July 2016
Dr. Pana Petra, Deputy State Secretary for Foreign Trade, MFAT	December 2016
Dr. Csaba Balogh, Minister of State for Public Policy, MFAT	October 2017
Mr. Istvan Mikola, Minister of State for Security Policy and International Cooperation, MFAT	November 2017
Mr Peter Sztaray, MoS for Security Policy for Raisina Dialogue	January 2019
Mr. Istvan Joo, Deputy State Secretary for Export Development	November 2019
Mr. Peter Szijjártó Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade	January 2020
Mr Peter Sztaray, MoS for Security Policy for Raisina Dialogue	April 2022
Mr. Peter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade	May 2022
Mr. Istvan Jakab, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly	Feb 2023
Mr. Zsolt Nemeth, MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee	Jan 2024

## Bilateral Commercial & Economic Cooperation

Economic cooperation between India and Hungary has a long history. Cooperation in this field was institutionalized in 1949 with the signing of a Rupee trade agreement, which operated through the negotiation of annual protocols which fixed the products to be traded and the amounts thereof, with the trade being canalized through government agencies. Over 25 collaborations had also been established in India by Hungarian companies. Bilateral trade is increasing on yearly basis and now stands at around USD 1.2 bn, with balance of trade in India's favour.

### Bilateral Trade Figures:

Year	Indian Exports	Indian imports	Total Trade
	(in USD Million)	(in USD Million)	(in USD Million)
2019	489.6	254.5	744.1
2020	478	282.8	760.8
2021	582.5	376.2	958.7
2022	790.7	491	1280.7
2023	780.1	428.8	1208.9

Major Hungarian Exports to India: Machinery and mechanical appliances and parts, electrical machinery and equipment, television image and sound recorders and parts, organic chemicals, optical photographic, cinematographic measuring, checking, precision, medical or surgical instruments and accessories, vehicles and parts, pharmaceutical products, plastics, articles of paper, iron and steel, plastics.

Major Indian Exports to Hungary: Machinery and mechanical appliances and parts, organic chemicals, pharmaceutical products, electrical machinery and equipment, television image and sound recorders and parts, vehicles and parts, footwear, rubber articles, iron and steel, plastics.

**Cooperation in Science and Technology:** Cooperation in S&T is a key focus area in India-Hungary relations. Currently, the bilateral cooperation is being executed through two agreements - between Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and the HAS and between Department of S&T and NIH, Ministry for National Economy. The 11th India-Hungary Joint S&T Committee Meeting [Online] was held on 29 July 2020, hosted by NRDI Office, Hungary. Seven joint projects were identified in the fields of Energy, Environment, Water, Biotech, Agriculture Food, with other four potential project were also discussed.

**Indian Investments in Hungary:** India was the largest greenfield investor in Hungary in 2014 and third largest in 2015. The major Indian presence in Hungary includes Apollo Tyres, Samvardhana Motherson Group (SMG), SMR Automotive, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Orion Electronics Ltd., Sona

BLW and major IT companies TCS, WIPRO, Cognizant and Tech Mahendra. Indian companies in Hungary provide employment to over 10,000 people. There are a small number of first-generation Indians who have also set up businesses.

From Hungary, there is only one significant investment. Richter Gedeon, the Hungarian Pharma major has invested USD 20 million in 51:49 joint venture with an Indian firm Themis Medicare Ltd., for production of intermediates, the entire production is exported to Richter Gedeon, Hungary. Efforts are being made to augment Hungarian investments into India. A small number of Hungarian Water and IT companies seek to establish their businesses in India.

### **Cultural Links**

Indian Cultural Centre in Budapest was formally opened in November 2010 and was renamed Amrita Sher-Gil Cultural Centre on 15 August, 2014. The Centre has been organising regular cultural activities since 2010. In addition, Yoga, Dance, Music and Hindi classes, screening of Indian films are also being held regularly. A bi-monthly 'Amrit' magazine is brought out by the Centre. The Embassy has also organised Indian cultural days in several major cities in Hungary. Bhartiya Samaj has been constituted in 2010 to cater to the cultural needs of the community.

The Ganga-Danube Cultural Festival was launched in June 2016, featuring cultural troupes of a diverse variety of dance performers and artists from India.

In February, 2019, in collaboration with the Embassy, the Magyar Posta issued a commemorative miniature sheet of four stamps on the occasion of the celebration of 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in forty thousand copies.

The 4th Indian Film Festival was organized from 4-10 October, 2018 in Puskin cinema, Budapest and the 5th Indian Film Festival was organised in October 7-13, 2019 with participation of noted film personalities. Mission also organized various webinars and meetings for promotion of Tourism in India. Indian movies were included in the Budapest Classics Film Marathon from 13-18 September 2022 organized in different cinemas in Budapest.

The first International Day of Yoga was celebrated in Budapest on 21st June 2015 showcasing yoga, Indian cultural performances, henna painting, and Indian cuisines, handicrafts. Mission is celebrating the International Day of Yoga every year successfully at various locations in Hungary and main event in prominent location in Budapest. 10<sup>th</sup> IDY was celebrated in different parts of Hungary including in UNICEF. Main event was celebrated at Hero's square in Budapest and a special event was organized on Boat in Danube river on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2024.

### **Scholarships:**

India has provided slots to Hungarian nationals for training under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. The Government of India bears all expenses including return international passage, visa, accommodation etc under this programme. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary also sends its diplomats to attend the courses organised by the Foreign Service Institute of Ministry of External Affairs of India. 44 candidates from Hungary availed the ITEC programme between 2007-2023.

### **Indian Community**

There are about 8700 Indians living in Hungary. Most of them are ICT professionals, while some are working in the manufacturing sector of Indo-Hungarian joint ventures. There are about 1200 Indian students studying in various universities in Budapest, Pecs, Szeged and Debrecen. The



Indian association called the Bharatiya Samaj of Hungary is presently inactive. There are a few other regional associations who are active in celebrating Indian festivals like Navratra, Diwali, Holi etc. There is an Indo-Hungarian Friendship Society which was reconstituted in 2011, which is mainly run by Friends of India comprising Hungarians who have an interest in India and Indologists. From time to time, there is an exchange of research scholars and scientists for a period ranging from three weeks to six months under our exchange programmes. In addition, there are a few Indians who are married to local Hungarians and permanently settled in Hungary. It is widely believed that the number of community members has been steadily increasing.

**July 2024**