

Visa-experience of 2008 SUN participants

Some of our former participants have offered to share their visa experiences from various countries of the former Soviet Union, Africa, Asia, South America, etc. with prospective participants. These are individual stories and impressions, which may or may not describe accurately the visa application process in a particular country. However, you may find some useful tips in the comments below.

[Alla](#) from Ukraine:

"My main advice: one should arrange the visa interview with the Hungarian Embassy in Kyiv no later than three weeks before the date of their arrival in Hungary. In June it took 17 days for the Embassy to put a visa stamp in passports after interviews. Another important problem – one may possibly spend a few days queuing in front of the Embassy to get in (as it happened in my case). Participants who don't live in Kiev and have no place to stay at should know about it. My positive experience – when I faced problems with queuing in front of the Embassy, I contacted the General Consul by e-mail (it is available on official site of the Embassy) and he immediately replied and provided assistance."

Mari from Georgia:

"Hungary only has an honorary consulate in Georgia that sends visa applications to an office in Kyiv for processing the documents and issuing the visas. So instead of the declared three weeks maximum, the process took about 1.5-2 months, which was very distracting, since I had another travel scheduled at that time and needed my passport. The consulate said they were not even able to provide me with the information when I'd get my passport back, whether in time for the other travel or not, so I had to pay a considerable sum to get a new passport (we are allowed to have multiple copies) in the last moment, just a day before my departure."

Nino from Georgia:

"I had no problems whatsoever, even though the consulate is in Kiev and not in Tbilisi. I sent in the paperwork 4 weeks before and had my visa 10-12 days before the departure date."

FYI: a Hungarian Embassy started operating in Tbilisi. Its temporary address is: Office No. 22, 4th Floor, 19. Gamreleki str. Tbilisi, 0160 Tel: 995 32 242549, e-mail: hunembtbs@gmail.com.

Web: www.mfa.gov.hu/emb/tbilisi

Askar from Kyrgyzstan:

"It's very complicated for Kyrgyz fellows to get visa in Almaty. I had to go from Bishkek to Almaty two times very early in the morning by taxi, which cost about 90\$. The embassy in Almaty receives application papers until 11.30 only."

Damir from Kyrgyzstan:

"I had no problems at all in obtaining a visa! So, you can advise future fellows from our region that Hungarian Embassy in Kazakhstan operates very well and places no obstacles to get a Hungarian Visa."

[Mayis](#) from Armenia:

"Concerning visa problem: I'd emphasize the point, that Hungary does not have an embassy in Yerevan/Armenia that is why in order to get visa one should send documents either to Moscow or Kiev. Both cases need long time for visa preparation and create discomfort before the flight. Therefore a prospective participant from Armenia should keep in mind to send documents around 4 weeks in advance. "

[Anna](#) from Armenia:

"I had a lot of difficulties during the process of getting the visa. First of all, there is no Hungarian embassy in Armenia, so I had to send my passport and documents to Hungarian

Embassy in Moscow. I gave my documents to respected travel agency in my country 'Levon travel'. It took me 1 month to get my passport back. It was very stressful."

Knarik from Armenia:

"I must say that as there is no Hungarian Embassy in Armenia, usually the passport and invitation for the training will have to be forwarded to the Embassy of Hungary in Moscow. Some agencies will do that work instead of you, for example Armenia Travel + M agency."

Kirti from Nepal:

"There is no Hungarian Embassy in Nepal, and the applicant has to appear in person at the Embassy in Delhi, and the Embassy takes a lot of time for decision. I would be happy to guide any successful applicant from my country, if and as needed."

Saad from Pakistan:

"I did not encounter any problem in getting my Schengen visa from the Hungarian embassy in Islamabad. While the staff here was good, submitting complete documentation in time is really important. My only recommendation for the future candidates will be to talk to the embassy for finding out all the requirements and submitting application with complete documentation and within the suggested timeframe. Sometimes, different countries have different documentation and timing requirements. Coming from Pakistan, I thought it may be difficult but it was not. In fact Schengen visa is a big facility as it eases travel with the whole region and no transit visas are required. "

Umar from Pakistan:

"All I would like to suggest is to ask the participants to apply for the visa at least six weeks before the course starts. It usually takes five weeks for a Schengen visa if you come from a developing country."

Maja from Macedonia:

"I did not have any problems in my visa procedure at the Hungarian Embassy in Skopje. They asked for a confirmation of the place I work at, your invitation letter, and the confirmation from the CEU residence hall as well as a confirmation of a roundtrip ticket to Budapest. The procedure lasted one week. The visa was free of charge."

Mohammad from Bangladesh:

"There is no Hungarian consulate office in Bangladesh and nearest one is in New Delhi (India). All the information can be collected from their website. I was trying to send my application by postage but unfortunately the postal services and the international couriers do not carry the original passport. One can launch application by him/herself or by nominating someone with proper authorization letter. Authorization arrangement must be finalized by contacting the embassy with email or phone (must talk with visa officer not the operator) what I did in my case. The embassy is very much efficient in responding email inquiries. If all the documents are in good condition, they usually take one/two days to deliver the visa."

Fuad from Indonesia:

"The most important and determinant thing in getting visa that should be presented here is the invitation letter from CEU in which also mentioned about the scholarship, transportation and accommodation. We need also to complete with travel insurance. The essence of getting approval of visa is the certainty of the purpose and guarantee to any person to enter such a country and will come back in an exact time."

Sonny from Indonesia:

"Just for a common suggestion, an applicant should apply his/her visa at least 2 weeks before his/her departure. Another issue, I've got only 12 days for the duration of stay, while I proposed 15 days since I had a plan to have 1 day prior to the starting date, 1 day after the

course and 1 day stop over in Amsterdam. The embassy will give the duration of stay only as the course schedule. Fortunately, I have no problem when I was leaving in Amsterdam."

[Hazel](#) from Indonesia:

"Each participant has to contact the consulate right away and to arrange the documents following the sequence and requirements posted in the consulate's web site. The Hungarian website is very efficient and the consulate staff responds to questions very quickly. "

[Mohammad](#) from Iran:

"I had applied for the visa at the Embassy of Hungary in Tehran/Iran for 20 days (6 days extending the course dates), because I had decided to visit other countries using the Schengen visa. Unfortunately, my visa was issued only for the dates indicated in my notification letter."

[Jason](#) from Colombia:

"Regarding the visa process, I have had a positive experience. However, it is really important to start the process as soon as the participant has the letter of confirmation. In countries such as Colombia, in which there are no Embassies of Hungary but a Consulate, the process could take so long time and could be more expensive (around 250 Euros), due to delivering services to the nearest Embassy. It is also important to take into account that if participants want to spend more time in Hungary or in Schengen area for tourism purposes, they should ask specifically for the exact time they will spend there after the summer course and demonstrate enough financial resources for the trip or accommodation (around 100 Euros/day)."

[Ana Maria](#) from Colombia:

"There is no Hungarian Embassy in Colombia, so the applicant must give in documents required to apply in the Consulate and then the Consulate sends those documents along with the passport to the nearest Embassy, located in Brazil, then the Embassy sends back the documents with the approval. All these processes take quite long, so in order to get visa on time you must apply at least a month in advance. Additionally given the fact that it is summer, flight ticket prices are quite high, so in order to get a cheap flight you must buy the ticket several days before the date of departure, which means another month in advance, to get a good price."

[Li](#) from Shanghai, China:

1. Don't be afraid, because all of Hungary officials in Hungary Consulate are kind.
2. Express your motivation clearly. E.g. I would like to go to Budapest for a summer school.
3. Make sure that you will be back to your own country as soon as you finished your course in Budapest. (In my case, my company issued a visa letter for me)
4. Insurance covering any emergency expenditure in Budapest (I gained the insurance from AIG which cost me around RMB 450)

The Hungary Consulate will return your passport with visa around one week later after the visa interview. During this one week, please wait and don't try to give a call for enquiry. Good things are worth waiting for."

[Sebastian](#) from Tanzania:

"I didn't encounter any problem to get a Hungarian visa from Nairobi; probably because it was not my first time."

[Mugunga](#) from Rwanda:

"My personal experience concerning visa issue is very complex and difficult, as Hungarian Embassies and Consulates do not accept cash for visa payment only international money transfer or international cheques; they are very hard to be used by individuals as they may not have access to international transfer systems."

Ansu from Sierra Leone:

"For participants from Africa, it is good to apply for the visa well beforehand from a neighboring country like Ivory Coast or Senegal where there is a Hungarian Consul. The documentations including the participants' passport could be sent to the consul and the visa will be issued and DHL-ed back to the participant. The route of going to the UK is very time consuming and it is very difficult to get UK visa in Africa especially when you do not have a travel history. "

[Yitayal](#) from Ethiopia:

"There is no Hungarian Embassy in Ethiopia; it is the Austrian Embassy that issues short-term Visa to Hungary. It was a mess for me since this information was not available."

[Julian](#) from South Africa:

"I did not really have any difficulty; I was perhaps surprised at how much information the consulate required before giving a visa. One thing I did find is that the consulate was willing to exempt me from paying the visa fee on the basis that I am here to do research. I wasn't sure that this exemption would be applicable, but they did not object when I raised it - this may be useful for future participants coming from developing countries."