

A short guide to archaeological work in Hungary

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How archaeology is organised in Hungary.....

Hungarian heritage law gives automatic protection to all buried deposits and buildings predating 1711 (the end date of the War of Independence by Ferenc Rákóczi II). In urban sites building remains are protected up to 1900. Development that might affect protected deposits requires a dispensation from the heritage protection authorities. Excavation can only be undertaken by the registered organisations (accredited museums, universities with archaeology departments, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and some private companies). There is a designated office for archaeological evaluation, the Foster Centre.

There are many amateur local history groups in Hungary, but no amateur archaeology groups such as exist in the UK.

Visa: Hungary is currently in the EU and therefore EU and EEA citizens can work Hungary without needing a work visa. It is necessary however to register with the immigration office where you will a residence permit, a tax card and your NI number. Visas are required by non-EU/EEA applicants.

Living and working in Hungary: Hungary has an average standard of living and a strong national identity. Taxes are moderately high, but the prices are lower than in the UK. There is generally an average crime rate and a high level of social responsibility. Drug use and drink driving are strongly discouraged and Hungarian law applies zero tolerance.

Finding somewhere to live: Accommodation can be cheap for folk seeking short term accommodation. Most museums pay an allowance to cover accommodation whilst staff are in the field, but this does not normally apply to locally based housing or accommodation whilst undertaking post-ex work. Field 'housing' allowance will normally cover the cost of hostel style accommodation or equivalent.

Digging season: Due to the continental weather, most archaeological field work is limited to the period between March and November. A small number of excavations and post-ex jobs carry on through the winter months.

Job adverts: The archaeology museums normally advertise in March and April for the following field season. Occasionally projects might last for the whole season (c20 weeks), but more likely for a few weeks, sometimes just a few days. Short and fixed term contracts predominate. Excavation jobs are advertised on the archaeology museum web sites, on the governmental job service and adverts usually circulated via Facebook groups, as well. It is normal to send CVs, application forms are not in use. In your CV you should give details of qualification and experience of site and post-ex work (normally measured in years). Job adverts are in Hungarian. There are a number of Facebook pages where notice of job adverts are circulated. Advertisers do not normally reply to unsuccessful applicants. In most cases (except for some specialist work) you need to speak Hungarian in order to be employed.

Archaeological work website: No

Qualifications: Most Hungarian field archaeology jobs require a Master's degree or higher in archaeology for working as an archaeologist (régész) or a Bachelor's degree for working as a technician (régésztechnikus) but sometimes students are also employed as technicians or volunteers. It is very unusual for someone with a non-archaeological degree to be working in archaeology. Specialist roles do exist in Hungarian archaeology in growing numbers. This could be seen as both a benefit and a hindrance for applicants coming from abroad. A number of specialists, to my knowledge, have managed to establish themselves through being in the right place at the right time. As in the UK some specialisms are more employable than others. A driving licence is normally required for supervisory posts.

Languages: About 20 per cent of the population speak English in Hungary, competence in Hungarian is normally required.

Excavation methodology: Every museums use different methodology and field recording system. A combination of feature based and stratigraphic excavation methodology is used. Experience of all of these methods/techniques is desirable

Pay: Wages in archaeology are low (compared to the UK), but living costs generally level out the differences. Pay is based on a combination of qualification and experience. Staff are normally expected to source the accommodation themselves.

Professional body: Association of Hungarian Archaeologists (Magyar Régész Szövetség)

Web sites:

Association of Hungarian Archaeologists (Magyar Régész Szövetség) - <http://regesztet.org.hu/> (**only in Hungarian**)

Foster Centre - <http://www.forsterkozpont.hu/regesztet> (**only in Hungarian**)

Hungarian National Museum, Budapest - <http://hnm.hu/en>

Budapest History Museum - <http://www.btm.hu/eng/>

Eötvös Lóránt University Institute of Archaeological Sciences - <http://regesztet.elte.hu/>

Hungarian Academy of Sciences Research Centre for the Humanities Institute of Archaeology - <http://ri.btk.mta.hu/en/>

Matrica Museum, Százhalombatta - <http://www.matricamuzeum.hu/knowledgebase/scientific-life/researches>

Facebook groups:

Régészet - <https://www.facebook.com/regesztet/>

Archeosztáda - a régészet útján - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/60533070215/>

Magyar Régész Szövetség - <https://www.facebook.com/Magyar-R%C3%A9g%C3%A9sz-Sz%C3%B6vets%C3%A9g-Association-of-Hungarian-Archaeologists-310573022306082/>

Rég-ész blog - <https://www.facebook.com/regeszblog/?fref=nf>