



# Reaching the Nations International Church Growth Almanac

Country reports on the LDS Church around the world from a landmark almanac. Includes detailed analysis of history, context, culture, needs, challenges and opportunities for church growth.

## Hungary

Population: 9.92 millions (#90 out of countries)

By David Stewart and Matt Martinich

### Geography

**Area:** 93,028 square km. Landlocked in Central Europe, Hungary borders Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Austria. Most of the landscape is flat with some large hills on the north and the Great Hungarian Plain to the southeast and the Little Hungarian Plain in the west. The Danube and Tisza Rivers run through Hungary and divide it into three regions. The climate is continental with hot summers and cold winters. Lake Balaton in western Hungary is the largest lake in Central Europe. Fertile soils, which cover most the country, provide suitable conditions for widespread agriculture. Most land is covered with grassland, farms or fields with the remainder occupied by forest. Pollution is an environmental issue. Hungary is divided into nineteen administrative counties, twenty-three administrative cities with county rights, and one capital city.

### Peoples

Hungarian: 85.6%

Roma: 3.2%

German: 1.9%

Other/unspecified: 9.3%

Hungarians are classified as Finno-Ugric. Finns and Estonians belong to the same group. The Romani people likely arrived from the Indian-subcontinent during the Middle Ages and have been heavily persecuted and ostracized by others. Other ethnic groups with over 5,000 people include Germans, Slovaks, Croats, Romanians, Ukrainians, Serbs, Greeks, Poles, and Russians. Hungary has experienced negative population growth since the 1980s due to low birth rates.

**Population:** 9,825,704 (July 2018)

**Annual Growth Rate:** -0.26% (2018)

**Fertility Rate:** 1.45 children born per woman (2018)

**Life Expectancy:** 72.6 male, 80.2 female (2018)

**Languages:** Hungarian (99%) other (1%). Hungarian is the official language. Minority languages listed from greatest to fewest speakers include Romani, German, Croatian, Romanian, and Slovak. The most spoken immigrant languages include Ukrainian and Serbian. Only Hungarian has over one million speakers (9.7 million).

**Literacy:** 99.1% (2015)

## History

The Roman Empire included Hungary until the region fell into the control of many neighboring and internal kingdoms and empires to the end of the ninth century. The Huns settled the region and launched attacks in Central and Western Europe for approximately one thousand years. The Hungarian nation emerged prior to most kingdoms in Europe and adopted Christianity in 1000 AD. Following the Great Schism, Hungary remained the easternmost establishment of the Roman Catholic Church. Wars intensified during the following centuries as the Hungarians oppose Ottoman Turk expansion. The creation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the mid-1800s allowed for greater protection from invading forces. The Empire fell following World War I, and Hungary became a communist nation after World War II. Hungary began to limit its ties with the Soviets as early as the mid-1950s through its withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and starting the transition to a free-market economy under Janos Kadar in the late 1960s. The first multi-party elections occurred in 1990 along with transition to a free-market economy. Hungary joined NATO in 1999 and the EU five years later.

## Culture

Hungarians refer to themselves as the “Magyar” and share cultural similarities with surrounding European nations and Central Asians groups. Hungary sits at the crossroads between Eastern and Western Europe and consequently shares identity from both sides but most strongly from the West. Folk music and dance, literature, beverages, embroidery, and pottery are well known traditions and identify Hungarian culture. Geothermal activity has created a bathhouse culture that draws upon native and borrowed traditions from neighboring nations. Alcohol and tobacco consumption rates are high.

## Economy

**GDP per capita:** \$29,600 (2017) [49.5% of U.S.]

**Human Development Index:** 0.838 (2017)

**Corruption Index:** 45 (2017)

GDP per capita is approximately two-thirds of the average for the EU. Hungary has reported economic growth in recent years albeit widespread poverty in rural areas, reliance on Russian imports to meet energy needs, corruption, and labor shortages due to emigration stifle growth. Hungary has a developed economy with the services and industry accounting for approximately 65% and 30% of both the GDP and the workforce, respectively. Agriculture entails only 5% of the workforce and GDP. Primary agricultural products include wheat, corn, sunflower seed, and potatoes. Industries are well diversified and mainly include mining, metallurgy, construction materials, and processed foods. Bauxite, coal and petroleum are the most abundant natural resources. Germany is the largest import/export partner. Approximately 15% of the population lived below the poverty line in 2015.

Levels of corruption are similar to other Central European countries formerly governed by communism. However, Hungary is one of the only nations in the region that has not reported at least some reduction in perceived corruption during the past decade according to Transparency International. Corruption with police may be the most severe due to the amount of freedom law enforcement have in charging and ignoring crime. Many crimes go unreported. Some religious groups have experienced harassment by police.<sup>[1]</sup> In recent years, corruption in tax administration and public procurement have been particularly problematic.<sup>[2]</sup> Transshipment and consumption of illicit substances is a concern.

## Faiths

Christian: 82.7%

Other: 1.0%

Unaffiliated/unspecified: 16.3%

## Christians

## Denominations – Members – Congregations

Catholic – 6,050,000

Calvinist – 1,139,781

Lutheran – 216,165

Greek Catholic – 176,863

Orthodox – 20,000

Jehovah's Witnesses – 21,853 – 295

Seventh Day Adventists – 5,261 – 142

Latter-day Saints – 5,214 – 22

## Religion

The Catholic Church is the largest religious group. Calvinists primarily live in eastern Hungary and form the largest religious group in several locations. Lutherans account for a fraction of the population in western and central areas. Most Greek Catholics reside in the east and include Rusyns (related to Ukrainians), Magyars (Hungarians), and Croats. Most denominations have poor church attendance. Many identify with a religious group due to tradition and family yet personally do not follow religious beliefs and practices. Half the population believes in the existence of God. Only 15% of believers attend Church services weekly.[\[3\]](#)

## Religious Freedom

Religious freedom is honored by the constitution and upheld by the government. Religious groups do not need to register with the government to operate in the country. However, such groups are not able to secure legal rights and privileges only granted to registered religious groups. Religious education in school is mandatory between first and eighth grades. There is ongoing debate regarding registered religious groups which have yet to obtain incorporated church status. Societal and government abuses of religious freedom center on the treatment of religious minorities such as Muslims and Jews.[\[4\]](#)

## Largest Cities

### Urban: 71.4% (2018)

Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Miskolc, Pecs, Győr, Nyíregyháza, Kecskemét, Szekesfehérvár, Szombathely.

All of the ten most populous cities have a congregation of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Zalaegerszeg (population: 57,780) is the eighteenth most populous city in the country and is the most populous city without a congregation or missionaries assigned. Thirty percent (30%) of the national population lives in the ten largest cities.

## Church History

The first Church presence came in the late 1800s and early 1900s as missionaries periodically visited and baptized converts. The first missionaries arrived in 1885 in Budapest and briefly preached. Ferdinand Hintze traveled to Hungary in March of 1888 after a Hungarian convert, Mischa Markow, had joined the Church in the Turkish Mission in Istanbul in February of 1887 and petitioned church leaders to assist in the conversion of Markow's family members in Srpska Crnja. Most missionary efforts were concentrated in cities located in present-day Romania and Hungarian proselytism efforts lasted only five years with little success.[\[5\]](#) Government restrictions and persecution did not allow for a continual missionary presence. Prior to World War I, 106 converts were baptized. Following the war, members either immigrated to the United States or remained in the country and worshiped in the privacy of their homes.[\[6\]](#)

The first Hungarians baptized following World War II were in other nations and returned to their homeland awaiting the Church's

reestablishment. Elder Russell M. Nelson dedicated Hungary for missionary work in April 1987 with one Hungarian member in attendance. Legal recognition from the government was presented to the Church in June 1988. The first convert baptisms took place, and eighty-seven people attended a fireside with Elder Nelson. By 1989, a senior missionary couple and four missionaries were serving in Hungary under the Austria Vienna East Mission.<sup>[7]</sup> Later that year, the number of assigned missionaries increased to eight. The Hungary Budapest Mission was organized in 1990 from the Austria Vienna East Mission and administered Hungary and Romania. At the time, most missionary work was concentrated in Budapest due to its large population, membership base, and widespread interest from Hungarians.<sup>[8]</sup> Hungary remained in the Europe Area when it was divided in 1991.<sup>[9]</sup> The Hungary Budapest Mission administered Romania until the creation of the Romania Bucharest Mission in 1993.<sup>[10]</sup> Seminary and institute began in 1993. Hungary became part of the Europe Central Area in 2000.<sup>[11]</sup> The Church organized its first stake in Hungary in 2006. In 2015, the Church called Jozsef Szabadkai as the first Hungarian native to serve as mission president for the Hungary Budapest Mission.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Membership Growth

### LDS Membership: 5,214 (2017)

The first district conference in Hungary was held in Budapest with fifty-seven in attendance.<sup>[13]</sup> By 1989 the Budapest Branch grew rapidly with 125–150 attending the dedication of the first meetinghouse.<sup>[14]</sup> By early 1990 there were seventy-five members increasing to 600 in 1992.<sup>[15]</sup> Membership totaled 1,400 in 1993, 2,800 in 1997, and 3,448 in 2000.

Annual membership growth rates slowed from 7.0% or higher prior to 2001 to 2-4% for most years between 2003 and 2013. Membership reached 3,942 in 2004, 4,253 in 2006, 4,738 in 2010, 5,050 in 2013, and 5,192 in 2016. The annual number of convert baptisms exceeded 200 a year in the 1990s, ranged from 100-150 for most years between 2000 and 2015, and ranged approximately 50-70 a year in 2016, 2017, and 2018.

In 2017, one in 1,865 was a Latter-day Saint.

## Congregational Growth

### Wards: 5 Branches: 17 (2018)

A congregation was established in the early 1900s but appears to have been discontinued following World War I. The Austria Vienna Mission was created in 1987 and administered to most of Eastern Europe including Hungary.<sup>[16]</sup> Members met in several branches and groups throughout the country, most notably Debrecen and Szeged.<sup>[17]</sup> At the end of the year there were twenty-one branches and two districts in Budapest and Gyor.

By late 2002, the Budapest Hungary District included eight branches (Buda, Dunaújváros, Erd, International, Kecskemet, Kiskunfélegyháza, Pest, and Vac) and the Gyor Hungary District included six branches (Gyor, Papa, Sopron, Szekesfehervar, Szombathely, and Veszprem). Seven mission branches also functioned at this time in Debrecen, Eger, Miskolc, Nyiregyhaza, Pecs, Szeged, and the Hungary Budapest Mission Branch for small groups of members elsewhere. The Church discontinued the Gyor Hungary District and combined many of the units with the district in Budapest to prepare for the first stake to be organized. The Vac Branch was discontinued in the mid-2000s.

In June 2006, the first stake was created in Hungary. The Budapest Hungary Stake included the following five wards and five branches: The Buda, Gyor, Kecskemet, Kiskunfélegyháza, and Pest Wards, and the Budapest (English), Dunaújváros, Erd, Szekesfehervar, and Veszprem Branches.<sup>[18]</sup> All remaining branches reported directly to the mission.

In 2007 and 2008, increased mission outreach began in establishing congregations in other larger cities. Missionaries were first assigned to Bekescsaba, Hodmezovasarhely, Kaposvár, Kiskunfélegyháza, Komló, Orosháza, Szolnok, and Tatabánya. Of these cities only Bekescsaba, Kaposvár, Szolnok, and Tatabánya had their own group or dependent branch church meetings. Additional branches organized in the late 2000s and early 2010s included Kaposvár (2009), Bekescsaba (2009), Szolnok (2010), and Tatabánya (2011).

In June 2009, two districts were created from mission branches. The Miskolc Hungary District included four branches in Debrecen, Eger, Miskolc, and Nyiregyhaza. The Szombathely Hungary District contained three branches in Papa, Sopron, and Szombathely. In 2018, only the Bekescsaba Branch did not pertain to a stake or district.

## Activity and Retention

Several large meetings have been held over the years. In 1996, a nationwide conference was held with about 1,000 in attendance.<sup>[19]</sup> In 1999, the mission office reported that 28% of members were active. In 2000, one hundred members in eastern Hungary attended the groundbreaking of the first meetinghouse in the region.<sup>[20]</sup> 500 attended the first general

conference broadcast to Hungary in 2001.<sup>[21]</sup> Institute outreach programs for fellowshipping young single adults began in the late 2000s in an effort to increase activity and marriages between Church members.<sup>[22]</sup> 660 attended the meeting to create the first stake. In 2007, young single adults in Budapest hosted a young single adult conference for members in Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, and Slovenia.<sup>[23]</sup> The average number of members per congregation increased from 164 in 2000 to 235 in 2008 and 237 in 2017. The increase in this statistic between 2000 and 2008 was only partially due to increases in the number of active members in branches to form wards for the first stake in 2006. Otherwise, increase in this statistic indicates problems with member attrition. In 2009, seventy members were enrolled in seminary and ninety-four enrolled in institute.

Many of the branches and wards have few active members. Szekesfeharvar had forty active members in early 2009. In mid-2009 the Nyiregyhaza Branch only had ten active members, and used to have as many as fifty a few years before. In late 2009, the Miskolc Branch had thirty active members in their own large chapel. The Györ Ward had fifty of its 200 members active. The Eger Branch had less than ten of the ninety members active. The Sopron Branch had around twenty-five active members. The Pecs Branch had over forty active members. Over 600 attended the Budapest Hungary Stake conference in late 2009. The Bekescsaba Branch had less than twenty active members and one active, recently baptized priesthood holder in early 2010. In the late 2010s, returned missionaries reported average sacrament meeting attendance for congregations in Hungary as follows: Pest (90), Buda (85), Kispest (80), Kecskemet (50), Miskolc (50), Györ (45), Pecs (45), Szeged (45), Dunaujvaros (40), Szombathely (40), Veszprem (40), Debrecen (35), Erd (35), Kaposvar (30), Nyiregyhaza (30), Szekesfeharvar (30), Bekescsaba (25), Szolnok (25), Eger (20), Papa (20), Sopron (20), and Tatabanya (20). Estimates for convert retention one year after baptism widely vary, but more reliable reports indicate that as few as 20% of recent converts regularly attend church one year after baptism. Inadequate prebaptismal preparation, weak testimony of the Church, and being offended by a church member or church leader constitute the most commonly cited reasons why inactive members no longer attend church per returned missionary reports.

At present, active membership appears to stand at approximately 1,000, or 20% of total membership.

## **Language Materials**

**Languages with Latter-day Saint Scripture:** Hungarian, German, Croatian, Romanian, Slovakian, Slovenian.

The Church has translated all Church scriptures and most materials into Hungarian and German including the Church Handbook of Instructions, missionary, priesthood, unit, young men, young women, primary, relief society, temple, and audiovisual materials. The Liahona has twelve Hungarian issues produced a year. Croatian and Romanian have all scriptures translated and most Church materials. The Church has translated the Book of Mormon and many Church materials in Slovakian and Slovenian. Plans were announced in 2017 to translate the remainder of Latter-day Saint scriptures into Slovakian and Slovenian.

## **Meetinghouses**

The first meetinghouse was built and dedicated in late 1989 in Budapest.<sup>[24]</sup> By the early 2000s, there were seven Church build meetinghouses.<sup>[25]</sup> Congregations met in twenty-two locations by early 2010, likely over half of which were rented spaces or renovated buildings.

## **Humanitarian and Development Work**

The Church has conducted 122 humanitarian and development projects in Hungary since 1985, including seven community projects in 2017.<sup>[26]</sup>

## **Opportunities, Challenges, and Prospects**

### **Religious Freedom**

The Church has taken greater advantage of religious freedom in Hungary than in many other former communist nations as manifest from the comparably large number of missionaries serving and the large national outreach. Social and government forces typically respect the Church and do not create obstacles for proselytism. The Church experienced problems opening Oroshaza to missionary work in 2008, as police harassed missionaries and who were told they were forbidden to preach in the city. This issue was taken to higher law enforcement authorities and addressed.

### **Cultural Issues**



Significant progress has occurred despite social issues that limit growth. The popularity of alcohol creates obstacles for converts and members to overcome in order to live a lifestyle in harmony with the teachings of the Church. Cigarette consumption is also high and poses challenges for converts to quit smoking and not relapse. It is unclear whether substance abuse has significantly affected member activity rates, but these influences challenge the Church's growth and strength. Many Hungarians have misunderstandings about the Church's doctrines and history. Latter-day Saint missionaries are often confused with other proselytizing, nontraditional groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses. Many view the Church as an American institution and as a result view it negatively or with skepticism. Strong ties to traditional religious groups pose difficulties for some Hungarians to join the Church. Nevertheless, Hungary's ties with the East and West provide a major cultural opportunity for the Church to unify members in Central and Eastern Europe. The Church's strength in Hungary provides an example to members in which centers of strength are few or weak, which has been partially taken advantage of with young single adult conferences for the region.

## National Outreach

The Church has performed impressive outreach with fulltime missionaries in Hungary over the past two decades. The rapid increase of new cities opening for missionary work came partially from the creation of the Budapest Hungary Stake as members became less reliant upon missionaries for leadership and reactivation duties. Nevertheless, the Church continues to strongly rely on full-time missionaries to open additional cities for proselytism. For example, missionaries who served in the early 2010s reported that efforts to open Zalaegerszeg to missionary work were abandoned after six months due to insufficient numbers of full-time missionaries assigned to the mission.

Sixteen of the nineteen administrative counties have a congregation. All cities over 100,000 people have at least one branch or ward. The unreached counties of Nograd, Tolna and Zala rank among the four least populated counties and have a combined population of 680,000, or 7% of the national population. Most counties have only one congregation. Approximately 36% of the population lives in a city with a ward or branch. There are over one hundred cities between 10,000 and 30,000 inhabitants without a congregation or missionaries assigned.

Limited receptivity in the past decade challenges the mission to open new areas when few potential members may join the Church. The opening of new areas with few local members challenges the Church's effectiveness in the placement of missionaries. Some cities have had missionaries withdrawn due to little success, such as Kiskunfelegyhaza. The mission faces challenges in assigning missionaries between the most populous cities with an established Church presence and larger populations versus new areas of the country that often see surges in convert baptisms initially but poor retention over the long run. Nevertheless, the establishment of branches in four additional cities (Bekescsaba, Kaposvar, Szolnok, and Tatabanya) in the late 2000s/early 2010s has resulted in an increase of one-quarter of a million people who now live in a city with an official Church presence. Furthermore, combined active membership in these cities was one hundred in the late 2010s, indicating that if these cities had not opened to missionary work in the late 2000s these individuals would not be active members in the Church in the late 2010s. However, retention problems appear prevalent in all cities with congregations. The possibility of conducting cottage meetings with a few interested individuals and a local member has not been recently explored. Hungarian members will likely need to become much more involved in missionary work to successfully establish congregations in unreached towns and villages. Use of Hungarian Church websites, such as <https://www.mormon.org/hun> and <http://www.jezuskrisztusegyhaza.hu/>, present additional opportunities for effective outreach.

The Mormon Tabernacle Choir visited Hungary in 1991 and created increased awareness about the Church.<sup>[27]</sup> More recently, missionaries frequently use English classes to provide service and find investigators. Even small branches typically have well-attended classes. The small branches in Bekescsaba and Sopron each had over fifty attending in 2010. Few nationwide events seeking to bring the population into greater awareness of the Church have been pursued recently.

Finding missionary apartments can be challenging. Zalaegerszeg was almost opened for missionary work in late 2006, but an apartment was unavailable for missionaries. This instead resulted in the opening of Kaposvar.

## Member Activity and Convert Retention

Societal pressures have likely attributed to poor member activity, as most Christian denominations also suffer from low attendance and activity. Poor activity and convert retention set back the creation of the first stake and challenge stronger Church establishment in the newly created districts and mission branches. Hungary suffers from inactivity and retention problems in areas in and outside of Budapest. Older branches typically had much higher activity a decade ago than currently. These branches tend to have spacious meetinghouses built for a larger Church membership than the few active members.

Attendance at stake conference for the Budapest Hungary Stake appears unchanged since its creation. Little to no improvement in Church attendance has persisted for over a decade, as nationwide member meetings in the late 1990s had as many as 1,000 attending. Despite membership increasing by nearly 2,000 since 2000, the number of congregations excluding dependent units has increased by only one.

Seminary and institute enrollment have historically been much lower for other European nations with similar member sizes. Denmark had a couple hundred fewer members than Hungary in 2009 yet had one hundred more enrolled in seminary and institute. Most of the active members in the former Vac Branch went inactive after the branch was combined with a unit in Budapest to prepare for the first stake. Yet the consolidation of branches in preparation for the organization of the first stake has

resulted in only a portion of the inactivity problems. The greatest setbacks in member activity appear from former mission branches in eastern and western Hungary belonging to the Miskolc Hungary District and Szombathely Hungary District.

Low member activity challenges the Church's continued outreach in Hungary. Outreach demands the involvement of local members while reducing the reliance on fulltime missionaries for local members to fulfill Church responsibilities. Active members in Hungary provide valuable resources in reactivation efforts and the integration of new converts into congregations. In the late 2010s, returned missionaries noted that increases in children born in the Church to Latter-day Saint families has been a significant development that may help provide long-term strength to the Church if these children remain active into adulthood and marry within the Church.

## **Ethnic Issues and Integration**

The ethnic group that poses the greatest difficulty assimilating with congregations is the Roma. Roma have been discriminated against and often live segregated from the rest of the population. This would also temporarily reduce tensions with Hungarian members. Many Roma speak Hungarian as a second language and could be linguistically assimilated into Hungarian-speaking congregations. In 2018, no missionary reports indicate that Roma have joined the Church in Hungary. Other ethnic groups are small and often reside in border regions, creating challenges in outreach due to geographic and linguistic dissimilarities.

## **Language Issues**

The Church has a large body of materials available in Hungarian despite few active members. This allows members and investigators to learn a large amount about the Church and develop greater knowledge and testimony. No materials are available in Roma, which has over 50,000 speakers. The Roma language is heavily fragmented among different European nations and has yet to be standardized. Materials in Roma will be unlikely as the language lacks a literature and only 77% of Romani in Hungary are literate.<sup>[28]</sup> Only those who speak, read, and write Hungarian or English are likely to have outreach. The lack of Roma members throughout Europe presents a challenge in making materials available in the language.

## **Missionary Service**

During most of the 2000s the Hungary Budapest Mission had around one hundred missionaries. In the fall of 2009, the number of missionaries serving dropped into the 70s. The number of missionaries assigned to Hungary has appeared to continue to decrease in the 2010s, likely due to redistribution of limited full-time missionary resources from less productive nations to more productive ones. Hungarian natives regularly serve missions, but not in sufficient numbers to even minimally staff the Church's current missionary infrastructure.

## **Leadership**

The Church greatly benefits from local priesthood leaders who lead nearly all the congregations, even if active members are few. Foreigners or returned missionaries served as branch presidents in only a few small branches in the late 2010s. All members of the first stake presidency were Hungarian, not Church employees, and had careers in sales, management and translation.<sup>[29]</sup> At the Saturday priesthood session prior to the creation of the stake in Budapest, 110 priesthood holders were in attendance. At this time, seven Hungarians from the stake were serving full-time missions. The first Hungarian patriarch was called in late 2009. Missionaries estimated that fewer than 5% of members had their patriarchal blessings before this time. Hungarian missionaries have served in neighboring nations such as Czechia and Romania. Although limited in number, returned missionaries help to build up congregations and establish the Church. The smallest branches of Eger, Papa and Bekescsaba struggle the most to develop local priesthood leadership. Emigration of active members to more developed nations in Central and Western Europe poses challenges for consistently meeting leadership needs.

## **Temple**

Hungary pertains to the Freiberg Germany Temple District and active members regularly attend the temple. In 2009, seven temple trips occurred. Members make sacrifices in time and money to travel to the temple regularly. A future temple in Vienna, Austria or Budapest would not only reduce the time and money required for temple attendance for Hungary but also other neighboring nations.

## **Comparative Growth**

Among the former communist nations of Central and Eastern Europe, five have had stakes established: Albania, Czechia, Hungary, Russia, and Ukraine. However, Hungary was the second nation to have a stake established after Ukraine. Some of the greatest progress for the Church in the past two decades in this region has been in Hungary. The percentage of Church members in Hungary is nearly the same as in Austria and Germany, yet the Church has had a continuous presence in both nations for approximately one century or longer. Among former communist nations, only Albania, Estonia, and Latvia have a higher percentage of Church members than Hungary.

Christian groups experience slowing growth and have small congregations. The Seventh-Day Adventist Church has an average of thirty-seven members per congregation. Adventists have reported a 13% increase in membership during the past decade and slight increases in the number of congregations. Jehovah's Witnesses reported nearly 400 baptisms in 2017. The religious climate has deteriorated as a result of increased materialism and secularism. Many have become increasingly nonreligious.

## Future Prospects

Hungary will continue to be an important nation for the Church's establishment in Central and Eastern Europe due to the number and strength of active members and its geographical location. A future small temple in Budapest may be likely within the foreseeable future. Increasing secularism and disinterest in religion threaten membership and congregational growth. A limited number of converts scattered throughout the country challenge future ambitions for the creation of additional congregations. Cities that seem most likely to open to missionary work include Nagykanizsa, Salgotarjan, Szekszard, and Zalaegerszeg, as these cities are the most populous without a congregation or are in counties without a congregation. Additional districts in the southern part of the country in Pecs and Szeged will become more likely once additional branches are established. A branch may be reopened in Vac and additional, small branches created to reduce travel time and increase outreach in suburban areas of Budapest. Additional groups may be organized in cities with missionaries who travel to nearby cities with congregations for Sunday meetings such as Hodmezovasarhely, Kolmo, and Oroshaza. A lack of converts has contributed to no additional congregations and may continue to challenge ambitions for opening and establishing a permanent Church presence. Furthermore, current growth trends suggest little or no interest by mission and area leadership in outreach expansion given declining receptivity and fewer mission resources allocated to the region. Moreover, the Hungary/Romania Mission now services approximately 31 million people in the two countries and as a result resources have become more limited for the Church to expand outreach in Hungary. Success with the establishment of the Church in additional locations will require initiative and vision from local church leadership.

[1] Kosztolanyi, Gusztav. "Blind Justice—Crime and police corruption in Hungary," *Central Europe Review*, 26 July 1999. <http://www.ce-review.org/99/5/csardas5.html>

[2] "Hungary Corruption Report." *Business Anti-Corruption Portal*. Accessed 26 December 2018. <https://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/hungary/>

[3] "Hungary," *International Religious Freedom Report 2009*, 26 October 2009. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2009/127314.htm>

[4] "Hungary," *International Religious Freedom Report for 2017*. Accessed 26 December 2018. <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm?year=2017&dlid=280914#wrapper>

[5] Mehr, Kahlile. "The Eastern Edge: LDS Missionary Work in Hungarian Lands," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. 1991. Vol. 24, No. 2, p. 27-44. [https://www.dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/Dialogue\\_V24N02\\_29.pdf](https://www.dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/Dialogue_V24N02_29.pdf)

[6] "Hungary," *Facts and Statistics—LDS Newsroom*, retrieved 17 April 2012. <http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/facts-and-statistics/country/hungary/>

[7] Mantell, Henry J. "Unlike earlier British emigrants, this couple headed east, not west," *LDS Church News*, 12 August 1989. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/18911/Unlike-earlier-British-emigrants-this-couple-headed-east-not-west.html>

[8] "Eight new missions announced," *LDS Church News*, 3 March 1990. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/19805/Eight-new-missions-announced.html>

[9] "New areas created in Asia, Europe," *LDS Church News*, 7 September 1991. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/21578/New-areas-created-in-Asia-Europe.html>

[10] "Eight new missions announced," *LDS Church News*, 6 March 1993. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/23130/Eight-new-missions-announced.html>

[11] Lloyd, Scott. "European continent realigned into three new areas," *LDS Church News*, 16 September 2000. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/38475/European-continent—realigned-into-three-new-areas.html>

[12] "New mission presidents," *LDS Church News*. 17 January 2015. <https://www.thechurchnews.com/archive/2015-01-17/new-mission-presidents-42033>

[13] Van Orden, Dell. "Church granted legal recognition in Hungary," *LDS Church News*, 2 July 1988. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/18196/Church-granted-legal-recognition-in-Hungary.html>

[14] "Meetinghouse dedicated in Hungary," *LDS Church News*, 11 November 1989. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/19244/Meetinghouse-dedicated-in-Hungary.html>

[15] Pickup, David MW. "Stake in Hungary Eastern Europe's 2nd," *LDS Church News*, 10 June 2006. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/49059/Stake-in-Hungary-Eastern-Europes-2nd.html>

[16] "He patterns his life after mottoes found in scriptures," *LDS Church News*, 27 May 1989. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/18764/He-patterns-his-life-after-mottoes-found-in-scriptures.html>



[17] "Meetinghouse dedicated in Hungary," LDS Church News, 11 November 1989.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/19244/Meetinghouse-dedicated-in-Hungary.html>

[18] "New stake presidents," LDS Church News, 26 August 2006.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/49368/New-stake-presidents.html>

[19] Stallings, Carol Turnbow; Hendrix, Cmdr. Bill. "Elder Holland visits Hungary, Bosnia," LDS Church News, 24 August 1996.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/27174/Elder-Holland-visits-Hungary-Bosnia.html>

[20] "Hungary to gain new meetinghouse in remote area," LDS Church News, 4 November 2000.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/38833/Hungary-to-gain-new-meetinghouse-in-remote-area.html>

[21] "Hungarian members view conference," LDS Church News, 26 May 2001.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/39927/Hungarian-members-view-conference.html>

[22] "A key to Europe," LDS Church News, 2 September 2006. <http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/49379/A-key-to-Europe.html>

[23] "Seven-country conference," LDS Church News, 11 August 2007.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/50936/Seven-country-conference.html>

[24] "Meetinghouse dedicated in Hungary," LDS Church News, 11 November 1989.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/19244/Meetinghouse-dedicated-in-Hungary.html>

[25] "Hungary to gain new meetinghouse in remote area," LDS Church News, 4 November 2000.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/38833/Hungary-to-gain-new-meetinghouse-in-remote-area.html>

[26] "Where We Work," LDS Charities. Accessed 26 December 2018. "Approved Scripture Translation Projects," lds.org, 9 October 2017. [https://www.lds.org/bc/content/ldsorg/church/news/2017/10/09/15159\\_000\\_letter.pdf?lang=eng](https://www.lds.org/bc/content/ldsorg/church/news/2017/10/09/15159_000_letter.pdf?lang=eng)

[27] "Historic tour planned for 1991," LDS Church News, 9 June 1990.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/19861/Historic-tour-planned-for-1991.html>

[28] Taherzadeh, Yaz. "In Hungary, empowering Roma mothers to break the cycle of illiteracy," One Country: The Online Newsletter of the Baha'i International Community, 18 (2), July-September 2006.  
[http://www.onecountry.org/e182/e18201as\\_Roma\\_Mothers\\_Project.htm](http://www.onecountry.org/e182/e18201as_Roma_Mothers_Project.htm)

[29] "New stake presidents," LDS Church News, 26 August 2006.  
<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/49368/New-stake-presidents.html>