

Hungary

Reported ODA: EUR 177 million
0.09 % GNI (↓ from -31.50% in 2023)

Non-inflated ODA: EUR 157 million
0.08 % GNI (↓ from -0.07% in 2023)

Total inflated ODA: EUR 20 million
11.16 % of total



“Two decades of inconsistent engagement in development cooperation and inclusion of civil society”

HAND - Hungarian Association of NGOs for Development and Humanitarian Aid

Main trends

From 2017 onwards, there was a steady increase in Hungarian ODA, in line with the country's development strategy, in which it committed to reach a 0.25% ODA/GNI ratio by 2025. In 2021, it seemed possible that the country would also fulfil its international commitment to the 0.33% ODA/GNI ratio. This trend was reversed in 2022 with a radical decline similar to the previous increase. In nominal terms, Hungarian ODA almost halved from EUR 316 million in 2022 to EUR 163 million in 2024, and the ODA/GNI ratio fell from 0.26% to 0.09%, the rate achieved in the first half of the 2010s. This is despite a visible change in the government's approach to the role of international development after 2017. Efforts to help persecuted Christians and to prevent migration have moved international development up the priority list in Hungarian foreign policy, as indicated by the adoption of the 2020-25 strategy. The COVID epidemic, the Russian-Ukrainian war and inflation, which has hit Hungary particularly hard, seem to have overridden ambitious commitments. If anything, unpredictability is the most constant feature of Hungarian international development, though it would be surprising in the coming years if the trend were to reverse and Hungarian ODA were to reach the 2020-21 highs again. **There may be year-to-year variations and shifting trends in ODA levels, but the fluctuating performance of Hungarian ODA is mainly a reflection of a lack of clear vision and consistent long-term goals.**

Government's relationship with civil society

Over the past 20 years, the Hungarian government's relationship with civil society in the field of international development **has been inconsistent and marked by varying levels of openness.** There were periods when CSOs were invited to consultations and project implementation, followed by years of disengagement, lack of transparency and minimal support. Key strategic documents and decisions were often made without meaningful civil society input, and financial

support for CSOs has been irregular and unpredictable. While there have been positive steps in recent years—such as re-introducing open calls for proposals for CSOs or invitations to events and one-off consultations—these were not embedded in a long-term cooperation framework, thus government–CSO relations reflect a pattern of sporadic engagement rather than sustained partnership. **Ultimately the absence of structured dialogue or co-creation mechanisms with other stakeholders continues to limit the effectiveness of Hungary's development cooperation.**

Recommendations

- **Develop the new international development strategy** through a timely and broadly inclusive stakeholder consultation process.
- **Develop a transparent roadmap to meet the 0.33% ODA/GNI international target for Hungary by 2030**, with annual milestones.
- **Establish a formal and regular multistakeholder dialogue mechanism** including all stakeholders.
- **Increase predictable and transparent funding opportunities** for development CSOs.