THE STATE OF HOUSING IN EUROPE – 2025

HUNGARY

	# OF DWELLINGS	% OF TOTAL
Municipally owned housing	95,172	2.4
MRKL Housing Fund	5,577	0.1
Owned by private individuals	3,868,954	96.5
Other	38,838	1.0
Total	**4,008,541**	

SOURCE: Housing Europe estimates based on, Hungarian Central Statistical Office – Population & Housing Census 2022; MRKL.
NOTES: Includes occupied dwellings only. The total number of municipally owned homes–which can be used as a proxy for public housing–equated to 110,033 dwellings. “MRKL” includes all homes that they own; both occupied and unoccupied.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC, COOPERATIVE, AND SOCIAL HOUSING PROVIDERS

In Hungary, affordable housing is mainly provided by municipalities, though their role has diminished over time. Local governments own a small share of the housing stock, which they rent out based on social criteria. This stock has been shrinking since the 1990s due to privatisations, limited investment, and few new constructions.

To help fill this gap, the *MR Közösségi Lakásalap* (MRKL Housing Fund) was established in 2022 by the Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta and the Hungarian Reformed Church Aid. It inherited thousands of properties from earlier state programs that had taken over the homes of households in mortgage distress. Today, MRKL owns around 5,580 dwellings. Together, municipal housing and MRKL form the backbone of Hungary’s limited social rental sector, though both remain small in scale compared to the overall housing needs in the country.

DYNAMICS OF HOUSING SUPPLY

In Hungary, public policy is highly geared towards the provision of homeownership. As such, there are very limited resources available to develop, regenerate, or acquire homes for use as social housing.

Looking just at the municipal sector, while we do not have reliable aggregate figures on new developments each year, recent analysis estimates that from 2021-2023 municipalities built 243 new social housing units and purchased 1,158, while in the same period 2,679 municipal dwellings were sold, and 2,022 were demolished or removed.[1] So, there is a net loss in municipal housing. In many cases, existing municipal homes or developable land must be sold to finance new construction or the redevelopment of existing parts of the public housing stock.

Year	New builds (completed)	Acquisitions	Total New Social Units
2022	-	3	3
2023	-	95	95
2024	-	112	112

SOURCE: MRKL Housing Fund.
NOTES: In 2022, MRKL took control of 6,700 properties. The table presents gross additions (i.e., not accounting for homes that may have been sold) since this initial transfer.

From the point of view of MRKL, they acquired around 6,700 properties in 2022, and have since acquired over 200 additional (mostly second-hand) properties. In 2024, for example, the Fund spent around €5.2 million on acquiring dwellings.
Many of the homes in the MRKL stock require upgrades and repairs. In 2024, around 390 homes saw some upgrades or repairs, while 27 homes saw deep renovations (total budget of c.€1.68m); down from 106 renovations in 2023.

HOUSING NEEDS TODAY

There are no official estimates of the unmet need for housing in Hungary. However, there are a number of independent estimates and data from which we can infer some idea of this need.

For example, Habitat for Humanity has noted that there are 200-300 thousand families “in need of low cost rental housing. Around 50 000 of these families are in severe housing crisis and on the edge of homelessness”.[2] Additionally, a report

1 _ Jelinek, C., Czirfusz, M., and Pósfai, Z. (2025). Social housing and empty spaces landscapes in Hungary. Bratislava: Habitat for Humanity (EMEA).
2 _ See : https://www.habitatforhumanity.org.uk/country/hungary/

from 2025 (on housing inequalities) suggests that 35–40% of the population struggles to afford housing costs (e.g., rent or mortgage payments plus utilities).[3]

In terms of the number of households who are trying to access the existing social housing sector, MRKL currently has 44 households awaiting a housing allocation, while there were 9,752 households on municipal waiting lists in 2023.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN HOUSING

The establishment of the MR Community Housing Fund in October 2021 represents, within the context of the relatively 'constrained' scope of public housing policy in Hungary, an important advancement. For example, the Fund can operate nationally, compared to the locally-focused municipal sector.

The rental fees set by the MRKL are determined to be approximately 30% below market rates. According to the model, the state's role relates primarily to regulation, operating the framework conditions, and providing resources, but it does not have a central role in allocations.

Looking outside of the supports for affordable rental housing, Solar Plus (*Napenergia Plusz*) programme applications have been completed, and more than 21,000 families have received support for the installation of solar panel systems and energy storage units. Payments are progressing steadily.

Meantime, the "Otthon Start" programme was launched in September 2025.[4] It will assist Hungarian citizens planning to purchase their first home. Within the framework of the programme, a mortgage loan of up to 50 million forints (around €125,000) with a fixed 3% interest rate is offered, providing more favourable terms compared to market loans.

POLICY GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC, COOPERATIVE, AND SOCIAL HOUSING

- **Establish new regional housing companies (housing associations) to provide social and affordable housing at scale;**

  It is advised that new regional actors could help to bridge the gap between the national MRKL Housing Fund and individual municipalities, which do not have the knowledge or resources to develop homes in sufficient quantities or to coordinate delivery outside of their immediate area of jurisdiction.

- **A review and modernisation of existing housing law is suggested by MRKL;**

- **Develop a direct procurement platform under state cost control between domestic construction companies and community housing providers, in order to reduce construction and acquisition costs.**

THE EU'S ROLE IN BETTER SUPPORTING THE SECTOR

- **Provision of non-repayable EU funds (e.g., grant financing) for the renovation and construction of affordable forms of rental housing;**

- **MRKL suggests the establishment of a HUF 10 billion (close to €25m) annual 'Community Housing Capital Fund', involving combining favourable domestic funding options with EU financing schemes.**

3 _ Hegedüs, J. and Kepes, K. (2025). National report on housing inequalities – Hungary, Deliverable produced as part of the EU funded (No. 101132540) project: 'ReHousIn: Contextualized pathways to Reduce Housing Inequalities in the green and digital transition'.
4 _ See : https://kormanyhivatalok.hu/hirek/indul-az-otthon-start-program