



# Hungary

## BIAS-MOTIVATED VIOLENCE

In January, the Szentendre District Court fined a woman 375,000 forints (around €1,000) for a homophobic attack on a gay teacher. The incident happened in February 2023, when a cleaner at the teacher's rural school refused to clean his classroom, reportedly for prejudiced reasons. Later that day, the cleaner returned with his mother, who shouted homophobic insults and threats in front of students and staff, saying they would not allow him to teach their children and threatening to have him dismissed by the mayor. Police initially treated the case only as defamation and discontinued proceedings, but following intervention by Háttér Society, the victim's legal representative, it was reclassified as a hate crime. The court eventually rejected mediation, stressing the seriousness of the act, its prejudiced motive, and the fact that it occurred in a school setting before minors and colleagues.

## EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In mid-March, Hungary's ruling Fidesz party submitted a set of amendments curtailing LGBTI rights and restricting civil liberties.

The first set of amendments targeted the Fundamental Law (National Constitution).

First, it modified Article L) to emphasise that "Human beings shall be male or female." (See also under Legal Gender Recognition) Second, to underpin the amendment to the Act on the Right of Assembly banning LGBTI-themed assemblies (See under Freedom of Assembly), it modified Article XVI (1) to underscore that the right of children to "physical, mental, and moral development" should take precedence over other rights except for the right to life.

Together with the constitutional amendments, gender identity was removed from the list of protected characteristics in the Equal Treatment Act. The list of protected grounds remains open, with "any other characteristic" potentially covering gender identity as well.

In April, the constitutional amendments were approved by Parliament with 140 votes in favor and 21 against.

In March, MP from the Our Homeland Movement Előd Novák announced plans to introduce a new bill aimed at prohibiting the display of rainbow flags on public buildings. The proposal argues that Hungarian law requires all users of the national coat of arms and flag to respect their authority and dignity, while the rainbow flag allegedly "offends the beliefs and feelings of the majority," creates scandal, and is displayed "against local public will" in highly visible locations. The bill was put on the agenda of the Parliament with supporting votes from the governing Fidesz and KDNP MPs, its discussion is pending in Parliament.

## FAMILY

In June, Hungary's Constitutional Court ruled that same-sex couples married abroad must be recognised as registered partners within Hungary, setting a deadline of October 31 for Parliament to enact the necessary piece of legislation. The case originated from a constitutional complaint lodged by an Hungarian-German couple, whose foreign marriage had been treated by Hungarian authorities as non-existent and was not recognised either as marriage or as a registered partnership. They argued that this lack of recognition violated their right to human dignity and respect for private and family life under the Fundamental Law, and was inconsistent with relevant European Court of Human Rights and Court of Justice of the European Union case-law. While same-sex marriage remains prohibited in Hungary, registered partnerships have been available since 2009. A 2016 draft law also stipulated that same-sex marriages contracted abroad should be treated as registered partnerships domestically. However, because the provision was eventually removed from the bill presented to the Parliament, it was never approved. No legislation implementing the Constitutional Court's decision has been tabled.

## FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

In February, in his State of the Nation speech, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán declared that "the Pride organisers should not bother preparing this year's parade," citing the need to "protect children." Pride organisers immediately condemned the move, insisting Hungary's Fundamental Law still guarantees freedom of assembly and expression.

Soon after, MPs of the governing majority submitted a set of amendments, including a [bill](#) to amend Hungary's 2018 Assembly Act and the Fifteenth Amendment to the Fundamental Law (See also under Equality and Non-Discrimination). The amendment to the Assembly Act was rushed through the Parliament in a day, and it expanded the list of circumstances under which police may prohibit assemblies, adding that an assembly should be banned if it "violates the prohibition set forth in Section 6/A of Act XXXI of 1997 on the protection of children and guardianship administration (hereinafter: Child Protection Act) or that displays a substantial element of the content prohibited under Section 6/A of the Child Protection Act." Section 6/A of the Child Protection Act prohibits making available to minors content that – among others – "depicts sexuality for its own sake, or promotes deviation from the self-identity corresponding to the sex at birth, gender reassignment, and homosexuality."

The amendment to the Assembly Act was criticized by [civil society organisations](#), the [Commissioner for Human Rights](#) of the Council of Europe, [embassies in Budapest](#), and [the UN Human Rights spokesperson](#). Nonetheless, in March, Hungary became the first European Union country to [outlaw](#) LGBTI-themed assemblies, after parliament amended the Assembly Act and the Misdemeanour Act allowing fines to be imposed on both organisers and participants. Police were also [empowered](#) to use facial recognition technology to identify attendees. In response to the amendment of the Assembly Act, widespread protests [broke out](#) across the Hungarian capital. Budapest Mayor Gergely Karácsony also [vowed](#) to resist the ban, framing it as an attack not only on LGBTI rights but on freedom of assembly itself. In April, thousands of Hungarians [gathered](#) on Budapest's central Erzsébet Bridge to protest the reform.

Mid-May, civil society organisations notified the police of four small assemblies planned for IDAHOT and, since none of them was banned, a small [rainbow march](#) took place in the center of Budapest.

On May 24, the same group of civil society organisations [notified](#) the Budapest Police of a bigger LGBTI-themed march planned for June 1st. On May 26, the Police [banned](#) the assembly under new Section 13/A of the Assembly Act, arguing

that it resembled the "previously established Pride schedule and forms of expression". The ban drew [criticism](#) from the European Commissioner for Justice, who urged Hungary to uphold the right to peaceful assembly and confirmed that the European Commission was scrutinising the law. On May 29, the CSOs [petitioned](#) the Supreme Court (Kúria) to review the ban, arguing that the Police had not properly established the facts, had failed to give adequate reasons, and had wrongly found a conflict between the right to peaceful assembly and children's rights. In its May 31 judgment, the Court [quashed](#) the ban and ordered a repeat procedure, holding that a ban under Section 13/A is only possible if a violation of Section 6/A of the Child Protection Act is properly established. The court said the Police must fully clarify the facts and give a reasoned decision, and indicated that the "reasonably assumed" existence of grounds for a ban must be based on factual conclusions.

In the repeat procedure, on the morning of June 1st, just hours before the planned event, the Police [acknowledged](#) the march. The organisers then decided that, given the length and timing of the legal proceedings, the march could not be held "meaningfully and responsibly" that day and postponed it to June 28. The Police treated the new date as a new notification and banned the event.

The CSOs sought judicial review once more. In its June 11 judgment, the Court again quashed the Police decision and ordered a repeat procedure. It held that the Police had still not proved that the march would violate Section 6/A of the Child Protection Act. In the next repeat procedure, the Police again met the CSOs and issued a new ban. In its reasoning, the Police compared the date, time and route of the planned march with public calls for the 30th Budapest Pride. The CSOs challenged this ban as well, on 16 June. In its June 20 judgment, the Court rejected their petition and [upheld](#) the ban, making it final. The court ruled that the declared purpose of the march – to express support for the rights of transgender people to change their gender and name – raised "reasonable doubts" about compliance with the Act on Assembly and Protection of Children, which bans demonstrations deemed to promote homosexuality or gender reassignment.

Immediately after receiving the Court's ruling, the CSOs notified the Police of a new march, planned for June 28, this time explicitly to protest the unjustified restriction of freedom of assembly in breach of the Fundamental Law, the European Convention on Human Rights and the EU Charter. On the evening of June 21, the Police banned this demonstration as well. They recognised that the organisers had cooperated and that the declared aim did not, on its own, trigger Section 13/A. However, they relied on statements and actions linked to the Budapest Pride, and argued that acknowledging this march could allow Pride organisers to circumvent the legal consequences of holding a banned assembly. The CSOs sought [judicial review](#) and on June 27 judgment, the Court quashed the ban and ordered another repeat procedure.

On June 28, the Police again banned the march, this time explicitly applying the probability standard set by the Court and relying on "contextual facts": the organisers' previous involvement in Pride, the lack of a public call for their own event compared with prominent Pride announcements, and references to domestic and foreign participants coming for Pride. Budapest Mayor Gergely Karácsony announced that, despite the legislative ban, the city would host the demonstration as a municipal event. On the eve of the parade, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán [said](#) police would not intend to break up the march but warned of possible legal consequences because the parade did not receive permission from the authorities. Despite the authorities' prohibition, on the day of the event organisers [reported](#) an unprecedented turnout, with between 200,000 and 470,000 participants – the largest in the history of the march. The demonstration was heavily [monitored](#) by security forces. Numerous police camera vans were deployed across the city, and according to independent MP Ákos Hadházy, facial recognition technology was actively used to track participants. Controversy emerged quickly after the march. An individual [lodged](#) a complaint with police over a drag performance that took place during the parade, alleging that children were present while drag queens performed. On 7 June 2025, the police [announced](#) that no fines would be imposed against the participants. In December, the Budapest police concluded their [investigation](#) into the organisation of Budapest Pride, resulting in a proposed

indictment against Mayor Gergely Karácsony. Karácsony publicly described the charges as absurd, emphasizing that while the municipality does not have the general right to assemble, it retains the authority to organize events in its own public spaces.

On September 4, the director of the local Diverse Youth Network [submitted](#) a notification to the Pécs Police for the organisation of a march seeking to defend the legal equality of sexual and gender minorities, to protest against the arbitrary restriction of the freedom of assembly, to remember LGBTI people murdered during the Holocaust. On September 5, the police [banned](#) the assembly on the basis of Section 13/A of the Assembly Act in conjunction with Article XVI(1) of the Fundamental Law. The organiser challenged the ban, but on September 14 the Supreme Court [dismissed](#) the appeal, finding that the police had reasonably concluded that the notification aimed to hold an assembly prohibited by law. Ahead of the event, human rights organisations publicly warned that, because the march had been banned, the organiser could face criminal liability and even imprisonment if Pécs Pride took place regardless. Despite the ban, Pécs Pride was [held](#) on October 4, and [reports](#) described the event as more peaceful and more positively received than in previous years. Shortly afterwards, however, criminal proceedings were initiated against the organiser, and on October 28 he was questioned by police as a suspect. In November, the Baranya County Police Headquarters [closed](#) the investigation into the organisation of Pécs Pride, with civil society organisations criticising the handling of the case and noting that certain [propaganda newspapers](#) were informed of the proposed indictment before the organiser himself and his lawyer.

In November, a Hungarian human rights defender, submitted an [application](#) to the European Court of Human Rights (ECTHR) following the prohibition of an assembly he planned to organise in Budapest. The prohibition was issued under amendments to Hungary's Fundamental Law and the Assembly Act, which linked so-called child protection considerations to restrictions on public activities by LGBTI persons. Police authorities invoked these provisions to prevent the event, reasoning that

Léderer's sexual orientation, being publicly known, made his participation as a speaker subject to the statutory restriction under the 2021 Propaganda Act. The Kúria subsequently upheld the ban. The complaint submitted to the ECtHR contends that the ban was discriminatory and unlawfully restricted his freedoms of expression and assembly, as well as his right to privacy.

## FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

In May, Hungary's governing majority introduced the Bill on the Transparency of Public Life. Emerging in the context of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's announced "spring cleaning," the bill fits into a broader pattern of stigmatizing and threatening actors who challenge Hungary's democratic backsliding. The proposal enables the government to compile a blacklist of organisations if they are deemed to threaten Hungary's sovereignty by receiving foreign funds or engaging in activities that allegedly influence public life in ways considered hostile to the values outlined in the Fundamental Law. Once blacklisted, the affected organisations would face severe operational restrictions. Their access to foreign resources would be suspended pending investigation by the Tax Authority, their ability to obtain domestic funding would be hindered by administrative barriers, and the cumulative effect could lead to their effective dissolution. According to the amendment introduced by the governing majority, the bill would enter into force 15 days after promulgation, and the government could immediately issue a decree naming blacklisted entities, enabling the rapid deprivation of their financial resources.

Human rights organisations have called on the European Commission to respond urgently, warning that the bill, combined with previous "sovereignty protection" legislation currently challenged before the Court of Justice of the European Union, would erase remaining safeguards for democratic institutions and fundamental rights in Hungary. On June 4 Fidesz announced to postpone the vote on the bill and return to its discussion in the fall. No such discussion took place by the end of the year, the bill is still pending in Parliament.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In January, Hungary's Supreme Court rejected a government office's request for review in a case against the Lira bookstore in Kecskemét, which had sold the book 'Evening Tales for Rebel Girls'. Under the Orbán government's 2021 "child protection" law minors' access to content on sexuality and gender diversity is restricted, and the implementing legislation prescribes (Packaging Decree) that books depicting LGBTI characters must be sealed in foil and cannot be sold in proximity to schools or religious institutions. Lower courts had already ruled that the book did not intentionally promote deviation from birth-assigned gender identity but the government office appealed, seeking to annul those judgments. The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal, stating that disagreement with a final judgment did not in itself justify legal remedy, and that no legal issue of principle had been demonstrated. In September, a Budapest court requested a preliminary ruling on the restrictions introduced by the Packaging Decree (C-638/25).

In June, European Union Advocate General Tamara Čapeta issued an advisory opinion in case C-769/22 Commission v Hungary, declaring that Hungary had crossed several "red lines" of EU fundamental values, including equality, human dignity, and respect for fundamental rights, in its treatment of LGBTI people. The opinion addressed the European Commission's challenge to Hungary's 2021 "child protection" law, which, while framed as a measure to protect minors and crack down on paedophile crimes, prohibits access to LGBTI content for those under 18. Čapeta considered the Commission's appeal to be "well-founded on all grounds," finding that the law interferes with the prohibition of discrimination based on sex and sexual orientation, the right to private and family life, freedom of expression and information, and the right to human dignity under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán rejected the Advocate General's conclusions, calling them "shameful." He accused Brussels of prioritising "the freedom to spread sexual propaganda" over the protection of children, insisting that Hungary does not forbid LGBTI people from gathering or

expressing themselves, but drawing a distinction between public Pride events and what he portrayed as genuine expressions of free speech.

In late March, six opposition deputies in Hungary were hit with [sanctions](#) after staging a protest against the newly passed amendment to the Assembly Act. The lawmakers set off smoke bombs inside the chamber to denounce the amendment, which prohibits assemblies deemed to "promote homosexuality" (See more under Freedom of Assembly). As punishment, the deputies were denied access to the parliament building, effectively suspending them from parliamentary activity for 12 days.

In June, the Pázmány Péter Catholic University opened an [ethics case](#) against three psychology lecturers after they published an article ahead of Budapest Pride arguing that every relationship built on love is equal, discussing the exclusion of gay people and rainbow families ahead of Budapest Pride. The piece argued that children's wellbeing depends on a loving family environment, not the gender of their parents. The authors also criticised political measures justified as child-protection, pointing out that scientific studies consistently show no developmental differences between children raised by same-sex couples and those raised by heterosexual parents. The outcome is still pending, but if the committee concludes that a serious violation occurred, the lecturers could face dismissal. The disciplinary procedure ended with a warning issued by the University. All three lecturers [decided to leave](#) their position at the University. In June, a fourth professor at the same university was [dismissed](#) after criticising the institution for allegedly withholding a publication bonus. He claimed that the bonus had been denied because the article concerned the role of religion in shaping attitudes towards gay people. The professor subsequently initiated legal proceedings challenging his dismissal.

## INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

In late March, the European Parliament's AI Act expert and monitor [warned](#) that Hungary's plan to use AI-powered facial recognition to identify and fine participants in Budapest Pride would breach EU law. The Hungarian Parliament had just voted to ban

the march (See also under Freedom of Assembly), threatening violators with fines of 200,000 forints and allowing the use of digital biometric surveillance to track those who defied the ban. In April, the European Commission officially [announced](#) it would review the legal compliance of such legislative changes, especially in relation to any potential violation of European rules on artificial intelligence, which prohibit real-time and remote biometric identification systems, such as facial recognition in public spaces.

In late March, 21 European countries and Australia issued a [joint diplomatic statement](#) condemning Hungary's decision to ban the annual Pride parade. The embassies stressed that the new legislation adopted by the Hungarian Parliament "results in restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression."

In April, the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, Michael O'Flaherty, [urged](#) Hungary's National Assembly to amend its law on the right of assembly, which effectively prohibits events such as Pride marches. In a letter addressed to Assembly President László Kövér, O'Flaherty warned that banning peaceful events promoting LGBTI equality violates the right to freedom of assembly.

In April, several Members of the European Parliament [announced](#) they would attend the Budapest Pride march in June, despite a new law passed by Viktor Orbán's government banning such events (See also under Freedom of Assembly). Speaking during a plenary session of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Hungarian MEP Csaba Molnár described the ban as a "homophobic measure" disguised as child protection and urged colleagues to join: "We will go to Pride this year too, come and participate too." In June, EU Commissioner for Equality Hadja Lahbib also [expressed](#) her willingness to attend Budapest Pride.

In April, Human Rights Watch [condemned](#) Hungary's newly adopted constitutional amendments restricting the right of assembly, calling them further evidence of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's dismantling of democracy and the rule of law (See also under Freedom of Assembly).

In May, a group of Members of the European Parliament sent a [letter](#) urging Brussels to freeze all EU funding for Hungary in response to what they described as "further alarming regression" on democracy, rule of law, and fundamental freedoms. Simultaneously, twenty European Union countries have put out a [joint statement](#) accusing Hungary of violating the fundamental values of the European Union by passing laws that target LGBTI people.

In June, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen [urged](#) the Hungarian authorities to lift the ban on Budapest Pride. "Our Union stands for equality and non-discrimination. These are our fundamental values, enshrined in our treaties," she declared, calling on Hungary to ensure that Pride could take place. In parallel, a small [solidarity Pride march](#) was held in Brussels, organised by Amnesty International, to protest the Hungarian ban.

In June, 33 embassies, one diplomatic mission and eight cultural institutes issued a [joint statement](#) to mark the 30th Budapest Pride. Among the signatories were the embassies of countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Germany and Spain, while the United States notably did not join. The statement reaffirmed the participating missions' support for LGBTI people in Hungary and elsewhere, underscoring their commitment to equal treatment, non-discrimination, freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, and protection from verbal and physical violence – principles grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In September, Budapest Pride was [nominated](#) for the European Union's Sakharov Prize for human rights by the Greens in the European Parliament. The nomination highlighted Budapest Pride's role in defending fundamental freedoms, particularly the right to freedom of assembly and association as guaranteed by the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The nomination did not result in an award.

## LEGAL GENDER RECOGNITION

In late February, the Hungarian government announced [plans](#) to amend the constitution to explicitly state that "Human beings shall be male or female." (See also under Equality and Non-

Discrimination). In April, the Hungarian Parliament [approved](#) these constitutional amendments by a vote of 140 to 21, officially enshrining that a person can be defined exclusively as either male or female. The change codifies a binary definition of sex into the country's Fundamental Law, and according to the explanatory memorandum, the new wording bars any legal gender recognition. Following the approval, the European Commission [announced](#) it would closely analyse the amendment, stating that changes must be examined "with great care and from a European legislative perspective," and stressing that the EU "will not hesitate to act if necessary" should the amendment be found to breach EU law. The Section of Biological Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences issued an [official statement](#) calling the binary definition of sexes "imprecise", which might result in "marginalizing those people who do not fit in these categories (...) and expose them to systemic discrimination in education, healthcare and employment". The [Venice Commission](#) noted that the explanatory memorandum "aims at strengthening the existing legislative legal basis for the prohibition of the legal recognition of gender identity" by entrenching a binary understanding of gender.

In March, the CJEU [affirmed](#) that member states have to offer the possibility to rectify data on gender in state registries, and such rectification cannot be made conditional on proof of surgery. The case concerned an Iranian refugee in Hungary who, despite medical certificates confirming his male gender identity, had been registered as female in the asylum registry. Hungarian authorities refused to amend the record on the grounds that he had not undergone gender reassignment surgery. The Budapest court referred the matter to the CJEU, which ruled that under the GDPR, national authorities must correct inaccurate data relating to gender identity when sufficient evidence is provided. The judges [concluded](#) that a surgical requirement would infringe on fundamental rights, notably the right to physical integrity and private life, and is neither necessary nor proportionate to ensure the reliability of public registers.

## POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

In July, Budapest police confirmed they will not bring legal proceedings against participants in the Pride march that took place at the end of June, despite the fact that the event had been formally banned. (See also under Freedom of Assembly). Police said in their statement that no prosecutions would be launched, emphasising that participants could reasonably have believed the march was legal given both the organisers' communications and the visible involvement of the municipal government. In early August, Budapest's mayor Gergely Karácsony was nonetheless questioned over allegations that he had helped organise this year's Pride march, which the Hungarian government had officially banned. Afterwards, Karácsony revealed that the prosecutor's office had rejected the complaint he had filed. "According to the prosecutor's office, there is also a suspicion of a crime because we stood up for diversity, equality and love – and because we did not allow the government to restrict freedom of assembly," he wrote.

In July, Hungarian police opened a criminal case against Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg for her participation in Budapest's Pride March on June 28, which had been banned by the government but nonetheless went ahead with record turnout. According to local media, the Fifth District Council of Budapest announced on July 11 that police had initiated proceedings, though no official details were provided on the precise grounds for the case. The case was discontinued.