

HUNGARY'S PRIDE BAN

On March 18 2025, Hungary became the first country in the democratic world to ban Pride marches, further evidence of its drift away from EU values. It is the latest step in a steady rollback of rights: from stripping trans people of legal gender recognition or restricting LGBTIQ+ adoption, to censoring books and films with LGBTIQ+ content.

Borrowed straight from Vladimir Putin's playbook, this law imports Russia-style repression into the heart of the EU. This factsheet breaks down what is in the law, and the urgent steps EU institutions must take in response.

CONTENT OF THE LAW

The Pride Ban Law (Act III of 2025 amending Act LV of 2018 on the amendment of Act LV of 2018 on the right of assembly, relating to the protection of children, and related laws) creates a new administrative offence for organising or attending an assembly that "propagates or portrays divergence from self-identity corresponding to sex at birth, sex change or homosexuality," as defined in Section 6/A of the "Child Protection Act" (i.e. one of the five laws making up the 2021 Anti-LGBT Propaganda Law - see our [dedicated factsheet](#)).

It also authorises the use of facial recognition technology to identify and prosecute organisers and participants, and obliges the police to ban any assembly that violates the "anti-LGBT propaganda" Law.

IN PRACTICE

For organisers: up to one year in prison



Pride organisers face up to one year in prison under Section 217/C of Act C of 2012 of the Criminal Code, for organising and promoting participation in a protest banned by the police.

For participants: fines of up to EUR 500



Attending a prohibited assembly is an administrative offence, punishable by a fine of up to EUR 500 - around 40% of the Hungarian median salary.

Enforcement through facial recognition



Facial recognition technology can be used to identify and prosecute Pride participants and organisers.

Read more:

[Háttér Society, et al 'Briefing on Pride Ban Law' \(March 2025\)](#)



HUNGARY CONSTITUTIONALISES DISCRIMINATION AGAINST LGBTIQ+ PEOPLE

On 14 April 2025, Hungary amended its Fundamental Law (Constitution) to entrench discrimination against LGBTIQ+ people:

- It empowers the state to restrict fundamental rights under the pretext of "protecting" children; together with the "anti-LGBT propaganda law", this results in protest bans, speech censorship, and erasure of LGBTIQ+ people from public life.
- It redefined gender as sex at birth, leading to the removal of the protections based on gender identity in Hungary's Equal Treatment Act, leaving transgender people without legal recourse against discrimination.



EU LAW VIOLATIONS

Free Movement of Services

Pride events drive cross-border economic activity, involving services like media, security, catering, and entertainment, which are now hindered, in violation of Art. 56 TFEU

Privacy and data protection rights

The use of facial recognition technology violates EU data protection rules:

- GDPR (admin. offences): unlawfully processes protected sensitive data (Arts 6 & 9).
- LED (criminal offences): since facial recognition is only permissible when strictly necessary for prosecuting serious crimes, which is not the case.

EU Charter of Fundamental Right

The law breaches several CFREU rights, including: rights to human dignity (Art. 1) and non-discrimination (Art. 21), freedoms of expression (Art. 11) and of assembly and association (Art. 12).

Democracy, equality and human dignity

The fundamental rights breached flesh out Art. 2 TEU values like democracy, equality, and human dignity. According to Art. 10 TEU, EU citizens have the right to participate in democratic life. The Pride ban breaches the rights underpinning those values in a serious and systematic way.

LGBTIQ+ RIGHTS BACKSLIDING UNDER ORBÁN

Coca Cola fined for ad featuring same-sex couple

Adoption banned for rainbow families

LGBTIQ+ themed books must be wrapped in plastic and removed from youth sections

Pride Ban & Constitutional Amendments

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2025

Ban on gender studies in state-accredited university programmes

Ban on legal gender recognition

Anti-LGBT Law: Bans sharing LGBTIQ+ content with -18s in ads, media, schools, bookshops

Referendum to reinforce the anti-LGBT Law (*failed*)

CITIZENS MARCH WHILE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION REFUSES TO ACT

Despite the ban, hundreds of thousands marched at Budapest Pride in June 2025. In Pécs, thousands more took to the streets in October, risking fines and prison.

As of October 2 – more than six months after the law's adoption – the European Commission still claims to be “studying” the law and has yet to launch an infringement procedure against it, despite repeated calls by 20 Member States.

Each day of inaction leaves activists exposed to state repression and emboldens other governments to replicate such bans across the EU, as shown by the recent Pride ban in Oradea (Romania).

ACT NOW

Under Article 259 TFEU, Member States have the possibility to act when the Commission fails to enforce EU law.

Many have pledged to defend the rights of LGBTIQ+ people through litigation. This is the moment to honour that pledge.

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