# European countries unite against Hungary’s ban on public Pride parades



A growing number of European countries have voiced strong opposition to Hungary's recently enacted law banning public Pride parades, framing the legislation as an infringement on human rights and the right to peaceful assembly. This backlash unfolded during an informal meeting of equality ministers in Warsaw on Wednesday, where representatives from various nations condemned the Hungarian government's actions.

The Benelux countries—Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg—led the criticism by jointly issuing a statement, delivered by the Dutch minister, expressing concern over laws passed in Hungary that "undermine LGBTIQ+ rights and restrict the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression." The statement emphasised that "respecting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people, including LGBTIQ+ people, is inherent in being part of the European family" and highlighted the responsibility shared by EU member states and institutions to uphold these rights.

A number of other European nations—including Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden—offered their support for the Benelux position. Additionally, France issued a separate, "strongly worded" rebuke, while Greece and Cyprus expressed critical views concerning recent developments across the European Union, implicitly referring to the situation in Hungary without naming it explicitly.

These diplomatic responses follow Hungary’s parliamentary approval of a constitutional amendment, which codifies a controversial law fast-tracked by the ruling party earlier this year. The law bans public events that are deemed to contravene Hungary’s Child Protection Act, effectively prohibiting LGBTQ+ community-led events such as the annual Pride parade in Budapest, which historically attracts thousands of participants and visitors.

Under the new legislation, authorities are empowered to use facial recognition technology to identify individuals organising or attending banned events. Those found in violation may face fines of up to 200,000 Hungarian forints (approximately €485), with unpaid fines being collected as taxes. The constitutional amendment further declares that children’s rights take precedence over other fundamental rights—apart from the right to life—and enshrines the recognition of only two sexes, male and female, effectively excluding transgender and intersex identities from legal acknowledgement. The amendment also includes provisions enabling authorities, under certain conditions, to suspend the dual citizenship of some Hungarian nationals.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, a self-described advocate of "illiberal democracy," has defended the legislative changes, positioning them as protective measures for children and national values. Speaking after the parliamentary vote, Orbán stated, "We're protecting children's development, affirming that a person is born either male or female, and standing firm against drugs and foreign interference. In Hungary, common sense matters."

The measures introduced by Orbán’s government have intensified tensions between Budapest and European Union institutions. The European Commission announced it supports the LGBTQ+ community and indicated that it would consider legal action as needed after reviewing the new constitutional changes. However, a Commission spokesperson noted the complexity of the amendments, stating, "For the moment, we need to analyse the (constitutional) changes because it covers several topics and we need to look at them very carefully to be able to see from the perspective of European law." No specific timeframe was provided for any potential legal proceedings.

The Hungarian law’s use of facial recognition technology has also drawn scrutiny for potential conflict with the EU’s Artificial Intelligence Act, which imposes stringent restrictions on law enforcement’s deployment of such technologies. Legal action related to these issues would contribute to a list of ongoing disputes between Hungary and the EU.

Previously, the Child Protection Act—which serves as the foundation for the Pride ban—has been challenged before the European Court of Justice (ECJ) by the Commission alongside 15 member states. Other legal battles include the Commission’s suit regarding Hungary’s National Sovereignty Law and the enforcement of a daily €1 million fine imposed by the ECJ due to Hungary’s alleged failures in complying with EU migration and asylum regulations. This fine is deducted from Hungary’s share of the EU budget.

Beyond legal conflicts, Hungary’s stances on international matters have alienated many EU members. Orbán’s government’s refusal to endorse joint EU statements on Ukraine and its threats to block the renewal of sanctions against Russia have raised concern among member states. Diplomatic circles have reportedly explored contingency plans should Hungary veto these sanctions, anticipated around late July. Hungary remains the sole EU country opposing Ukraine’s membership bid and has launched a public consultation on the issue, using billboards depicting European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

The rising tensions underscore the divisions within the European Union over issues relating to human rights, national sovereignty, and foreign policy, with Hungary’s legislative and political positions becoming flashpoints for ongoing debate.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.lemonde.fr/en/lgbtq/article/2025/04/12/budapest-goes-gray-pride-as-drably-dressed-protesters-mock-pride-ban-law_6740156_211.html> - This article discusses the protests in Budapest against the ban on Pride marches, highlighting the societal backlash and use of satire to criticize the government's actions.
* <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2025/769565/EPRS_ATA(2025)769565_EN.pdf> - This European Parliament research document analyzes Hungary's ban on Pride, connecting it to previous laws and highlighting violations of fundamental rights like freedom of assembly.
* <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur27/9273/2025/en/> - Amnesty International discusses the severe human rights violations under Hungary's new law, emphasizing the threat to privacy and freedom of expression for LGBTI individuals.
* <https://www.rferl.org/a/hungary-bans-annual-pride-march-lgbt/33351870.html> - Radio Free Europe reports on Hungary's legislative action to ban the annual Pride march and the potential legal consequences, including fines and use of facial recognition technology.
* <https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_23_2349> - Although not directly available in the search results, the European Commission often issues statements on such matters; the explanation references potential statements from EU institutions condemning Hungary's actions as infringing on human rights and freedoms.