

Annual Rule of Law Report - Council of Europe contribution



2026

Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DG I)

Hungary

I Justice System

CEPEJ

The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) regularly collects data on judicial systems concerning efficiency and quality of the justice system. In the framework of the CEPEJ Study for the EU Justice Scoreboard, CEPEJ prepares Country profiles annually, including [Hungary](#).

The 2024 data have been collected, quality checked and sent to DG-JUST in the framework of the 2026 EU Justice Scoreboard. The publication of the country profiles based on 2024 data will depend on final acceptance of the CEPEJ Study by DG-JUST. The CEPEJ Secretariat (christel.schurrer@coe.int) remains at the disposal of European Commission for any question related to these data.

EXECUTION OF JUDGMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Official statistics on the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights are published in the Committee of Ministers [Annual reports on the execution](#) (next edition to be published in March 2026). The Department for the Execution of Judgments can be consulted for any question on statistics: DGI-Execution@coe.int.

Irremovability of judges; including transfers, dismissal and retirement regime of judges, court presidents and prosecutors

[Baka](#) (20261/12) (enhanced supervision): undue and premature termination of the applicant's mandate as President of the former Hungarian Supreme Court through *ad hominem* legislative acts of constitutional rank and therefore beyond judicial control, prompted by views and criticisms the applicant had expressed on reforms affecting the judiciary, and exerting a "chilling effect" on the freedom of expression of other judges and court presidents.

Latest decisions: [CM/Del/Dec\(2025\)1521/H46-15](#)

Latest submissions: [DH-DD\(2024\)1499](#), [DH-DD\(2025\)117](#),

Length of proceedings

[Gazsó group](#) (48322/12) (enhanced supervision) concerns the excessive length of judicial proceedings in civil, criminal and administrative matters, and the lack of an effective remedy in this respect.

Latest decisions: [CM/Del/Dec\(2025\)1521/H46-17](#)

Latest submissions: [DH-DD\(2024\)1502](#), [DH-DD\(2026\)43](#)

Transparency of administrative decisions and scope of sanctions (incl. Their publication and rules on collection of related data) and judicial review (incl. Scope, suspensive effect)

[Szabó and Vissy group](#) (37138/14) (enhanced supervision) concerns the violation of the applicants' right to respect for private and family life and for correspondence on account of the Hungarian legislation on secret surveillance measures, within the framework of intelligence-gathering on national security grounds which did not provide for safeguards sufficiently precise, effective and comprehensive on the ordering, execution and potential redressing of such measures.

Latest decisions: [CM/Del/Dec\(2025\)1531/H46-22](#)

Latest submissions: [DH-DD\(2025\)340](#), [DH-DD\(2025\)668](#)

[Kludia Csikós](#) (31091/16) (enhanced supervision): the alleged tapping of the applicant's telephone calls, between 3 and 6 November 2015, apparently with a view to reveal her journalistic sources, and the lack of adequate procedural safeguards to challenge the alleged use of secret surveillance with a view to revealing such sources.

Latest decisions: First examination proposed by the Secretariat for June 2026 (indicative, to be decided by the CM in March 2026)

[Kenedi](#) (31475/05) (enhanced supervision) concerns a violation of the applicant's right to freedom of expression and the lack of an effective remedy in this respect on account of the "obstinate reluctance" of the Hungarian authorities to comply with a court order granting the applicant unrestricted access to certain documents, as well as a violation of the applicant's right to fair trial due to the excessive length of the enforcement proceedings initiated in this respect. Case has been pending in execution since 2009, in 2024 the CM decided to trigger up the case to the enhanced supervision.

Latest decisions: [CM/Del/Dec\(2024\)1514/H46-41](#)

Latest submissions: [DH-DD\(2024\)1203](#)

Lack of adequate legal safeguards against arbitrary police intervention

[Víg](#) (59648/13) (standard supervision): violation of the applicant's right to respect for his private life, who in 2013 was subjected by the police to an "enhanced check" under the Police Act and a 2011 decree.

Latest submissions: [DH-DD\(2022\)237](#), [DH-DD\(2025\)1319](#)

VENICE COMMISSION

[CDL-AD\(2025\)028](#) Opinion on the constitutional and legislative amendments concerning the requirements to be appointed Prosecutor General and Constitutional Court Judge of Hungary, as well as the appointment and retirement of judges.

[CDL-AD\(2025\)023](#) Opinion on certain provisions of Act XVII of 2024 concerning the power of the Minister of Justice to have access to judicial and prosecutorial decisions as well as related documents.

Anti-discrimination

Act LXXIX of 2021 continues to curtail LGBTI content and especially its availability to minors, which negatively impacts freedom of expression, media plurality and the ability for civil society to function (see Venice Commission Opinion [here](#)). This situation was exacerbated by the adoption of further legislation on 18 March 2025, which empowers the Hungarian Government to ban events breaching the provisions of the aforementioned Act, such as Pride marches. These laws are further strengthened by a constitutional amendment (Fifteenth Amendment of the Hungarian Fundamental Law), which raises children's right to protection above almost all other rights (see Venice Commission Opinion [here](#)). Whilst the Budapest Pride march did go ahead, charges have since been filed against the mayor of Budapest in the application of this legislation.

II Anti-corruption framework

PACE

Monitoring committee

Hungary | [Doc. 16316](#)

The fight against corruption, a persistent and serious issue in Hungary, does not seem to make any progress. Anti-corruption authorities are either undermined or subject to political influence. Despite the introduction of institutions such as the Integrity Authority and the Anti-Corruption Task Force at the behest of the EU, these bodies face operational crises and accusations of political persecution, compounded by non-transparent asset transactions and procurement irregularities. Independent media and civil society helping to expose corruption cases are targeted by official authorities and hampered in their functioning.

III Media pluralism

PACE

Monitoring committee

Hungary | [Doc. 16316](#)

Media freedom and pluralism have greatly suffered, with media regulatory authorities and public service broadcasters dominated by government affiliates. Media ownership is concentrated in pro-government hands, limiting independent journalistic voices to a small minority and subjecting critical outlets to administrative and financial pressure.

IV Other institutional issues related to checks and balances

PACE

Monitoring committee

Hungary | [Doc. 16316](#)

The committee has discussed the developments in Hungary on several occasions in 2025. In January, it agreed to request two opinions to the Venice Commission, on the fourteenth amendment to the Fundamental Law of Hungary and on the December 2024 electoral reform. In March, the committee held a hearing on recent developments in the country, with the participation of Mr Tamás Bodoky, journalist, editor and publisher at [atlatszo.hu](#), and Mr András Léderer, Head of advocacy at the Hungarian Helsinki Committee. In May, the committee held an exchange of views entitled “Challenges to civil society and independent media in Hungary”, with the participation of Ms Claire Bazy Malaurie, President of the Venice Commission and Mr Michael O’Flaherty, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe. On 19 May 2025, the co-rapporteurs issued a statement according to which “the Hungarian draft law on ‘transparency in public life’ must not be adopted.

In June, the committee considered a preliminary draft report and agreed to send it to the authorities of Hungary for comments and to request the Venice Commission for an opinion on the draft bill of Hungary on “The transparency of Public Life” and other legislation relating to “foreign influence”. The committee considered a draft report and adopted a draft resolution in September 2025, and [Resolution 2617 \(2025\)](#) was then adopted by the Assembly on 30 September 2025.

According to the co-rapporteur's explanatory memorandum, Hungary has undergone dramatic political and legal transformations since 2010, marked by the dominance of the Fidesz-KDNP coalition and a series of structural changes to the country's constitutional order, electoral system, and State institutions. As a result, there has been a significant decline in the quality of democracy, rule of law, and the protection of human rights, leading to growing concerns at both domestic and international levels.

Following its transition to a parliamentary republic and accession to the Council of Europe in 1990, Hungary initially made strides toward pluralist democracy and respect for human rights. However, the adoption of a new Constitution in 2011 triggered mounting scrutiny, with international bodies repeatedly urging Hungary to honor democratic standards amid fears of "illiberal democracy".

Electoral legislation has been systematically modified to favour the ruling coalition, through gerrymandering and the introduction of first-past-the-post voting amplifying majoritarian advantages. Additionally, the financing of political parties and campaigns has displayed profound disparities, with pro-government actors enjoying far greater resources, weak transparency and little effective oversight of campaign funding practices. Such changes allowed to transform simple majorities out of the ballot boxes into 2/3 "supermajorities" in parliament, giving the power to single-handedly change the Constitution. Numerous constitutional reforms have consolidated executive power and undermined institutional checks and balances.

Partisan control has extended to judicial institutions, regulatory bodies, and public oversight offices through supermajority appointments, challenging the independence of the judiciary and weakening mechanisms that ensure government accountability. While recent reforms aimed at accessing frozen EU funds have introduced improvements in judicial functions, broad discretion over appointments and disciplinary controls remain vested in ruling party allies.

Civil society and academic independence have likewise been eroded, with public interest foundations taking control of universities and cultural institutions, removing them from public or parliamentary oversight. Funding for independent NGOs has been curtailed in favour of government-aligned organisations, and new laws threaten the operation and existence of critical civil society actors.

In its [Resolution 2617 \(2025\)](#), the Assembly called for a complete overhaul of the electoral legislation after the 2026 elections; the publication of the GRECO reports and the strengthening of independent anti-corruption institutions; restoration of public oversight over public interest asset management foundations; and for measures to strengthen the independent oversight of the media. The Assembly also called for the abolition of the Sovereignty Protection Office. The Assembly expressed its readiness to further the constructive dialogue and close co-operation with the Hungarian authorities within the framework of the monitoring procedure.

COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

[Letter](#) from the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights addressed to the Speaker of the Hungarian Parliament of 27 May 2025 (published on 4 June 2025). The Commissioner raises concerns as to the compatibility of the Draft Law on Transparency of Public Life with the principles of legality, necessity and proportionality. Some provisions are so vaguely phrased that they could encompass a wide range of legitimate activities of civil society organisations and other legal entities, precluding them from accessing any form of funding and subjecting them to the national anti-money laundering framework of scrutiny and sanctions. If adopted, the law would allow for severe interferences in the functioning of civil society organisations, without providing any procedural safeguards and without a clear, evidence-based risk analysis to demonstrate a pressing social need.

[Statement](#) by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights on 27 June 2025, while in Budapest. The Commissioner refers to successive constitutional and legislative amendments over one year that appear aimed at silencing civil society organisations and independent media by restricting the space in which they can operate and stigmatising them in campaigns that are fuelled by disinformation. He points out that civil society actors face intimidation and harassment in relation to their work of defending human rights or exposing corruption and expresses renewed concern about the Draft Law on Transparency in Public Life which, in the version pending before Parliament, fundamentally undermines civic space in Hungary.

VENICE COMMISSION

[CDL-AD\(2025\)018](#) Opinion on Act LXXIX of 2024 amending certain laws relating to elections.

CDL-AD(2025)028 Opinion on the constitutional and legislative amendments concerning the requirements to be appointed Prosecutor General and Constitutional Court Judge of Hungary, as well as the appointment and retirement of judges.

CDL-AD(2025)023 Opinion on certain provisions of Act XVII of 2024 concerning the power of the Minister of Justice to have access to judicial and prosecutorial decisions as well as related documents.