

FREEDOM IN THE WORLD 2026

Hungary

PARTLY FREE

65 /100

Political Rights	24 /40
Civil Liberties	41 /60

LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS 65 /100 Partly Free

A country or territory's Freedom in the World status depends on its aggregate Political Rights score, on a scale of 0–40, and its aggregate Civil Liberties score, on a scale of 0–60. See the methodology.

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Overview

Since taking power in the 2010 elections, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Alliance of Young Democrats–Hungarian Civic Union (Fidesz) party has pushed through constitutional and legal changes that have allowed it to consolidate control over the country's independent institutions. The Fidesz government has passed laws that hamper the operations of opposition groups, journalists, universities, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that are critical of the ruling party or whose perspectives Fidesz otherwise finds unfavorable.

Key Developments in 2025

- Government pressure against independent media continued, with outlets and journalists critical of the government frequently characterized by government officials and supporters as purveyors of fake news or foreign-backed security threats. In December, the European Commission opened a new infringement procedure against Hungary for failing to comply with the European Media Freedom Act, saying the country did not meet “provisions regarding interference in the work of journalists and media outlets in Hungary, restricting their economic activities and editorial freedom,” among other concerns.
- The opposition Tisza party led most opinion polls in the run-up to the 2026 elections. The media ecosystem featured “deepfake” videos meant to discredit Tisza party leader Péter Magyar, which were generated by artificial intelligence (AI) but not labeled as such.
- In June, lawmakers approved the Hungarian Law on the Protection of Local Identity, which allowed municipal authorities power to determine who may move into localities, and it took effect in July. By December, about 180 municipalities had reportedly adopted decrees under the law, with some making acquisition of real estate or permission to move in conditional on criteria such as possessing a high school diploma, proof of employment, a clean criminal record, or Hungarian language proficiency. Experts and Roma rights organizations criticized the measure, warning that it could reinforce segregation. Separately, in March, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education called on Hungarian authorities to enforce antisegregation policies to prevent Romany students from being wrongly placed in special education classes.
- In March, the State Audit Office filed a criminal complaint against the Hungarian National Bank, alleging mismanagement of public funds resulting in losses of hundreds of billions' worth of forints. Information regarding the status of the investigation was not made public.
- In April, lawmakers approved a constitutional amendment banning public events that fail to comply with the 2021 Child Protection Act, which banned the public portrayal to children of “divergence from self-identity corresponding to sex at birth, sex change, or homosexuality.” Budapest police consequently banned a planned LGBT+ Pride march. However, Budapest Mayor Gergely Karácsony authorized the march as a municipal event called Budapest Pride Freedom, marking the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary in 1991. The event reportedly drew more than 100,000 people when it took place in June. In August, Karácsony was questioned by police in connection with allegations he helped organize an LGBT+ march.

This report has been abridged for Freedom in the World 2026 due to ongoing budget constraints. Freedom in the World is entirely funded by nongovernmental sources such as private foundations, corporations, and individuals like you. Please consider making a donation to support future editions of this vital resource.

For additional background information, see last year's full report.

Political Rights

A. Electoral Process

A1 0-4 pts	
Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?	2 /4
A2 0-4 pts	
Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?	2 /4
A3 0-4 pts	
Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?	3 /4

B. Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 0-4 pts	
Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?	3 /4
B2 0-4 pts	
Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?	2 /4
B3 0-4 pts	
Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?	3 /4
B4 0-4 pts	
Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?	3 /4

C. Functioning of Government

C1 0-4 pts	
Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?	2 /4
C2 0-4 pts	
Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?	2 /4
C3 0-4 pts	
Does the government operate with openness and transparency?	2 /4

Civil Liberties

D. Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 0-4 pts	
Are there free and independent media?	2 /4
D2 0-4 pts	
Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?	3 /4
D3 0-4 pts	
Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?	2 /4
D4 0-4 pts	
Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?	3 /4

E. Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 0-4 pts	
Is there freedom of assembly?	3 /4
E2 0-4 pts	
Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work?	2 /4
E3 0-4 pts	
Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations?	3 /4

F. Rule of Law

F1 0-4 pts	
Is there an independent judiciary?	2 /4
F2 0-4 pts	
Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters?	3 /4
F3 0-4 pts	
Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?	3 /4
F4 0-4 pts	
Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?	2 /4

G. Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 0-4 pts	
Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?	4 /4
G2 0-4 pts	
Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?	3 /4
G3 0-4 pts	
Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?	3 /4
G4 0-4 pts	
Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?	3 /4



On Hungary See all data, scores & information on this country or territory. See More

Country Facts

Population 9,643,000 Global Freedom Score 65 /100 Partly Free Internet Freedom Score 69 /100 Partly Free

Other Years

2025

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