

Ms. Ursula von der Leyen  
President of the European Commission

Ms. Henna Virkkunen  
Executive Vice-President, Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy

Mr. Michael McGrath  
Commissioner for Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection

Ms. Hadja Lahbib  
Commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management

Brussels, 16 April 2025

**Subject: Urgent European Commission action needed to defend the Fundamental Right to Freedom of Assembly in Hungary**

Dear President, dear Executive Vice-President, dear Commissioners,

In an attack on the EU fundamental rights of freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression, Hungary's Parliament passed a package of amendments banning and criminalising Pride marches and their organisers, with penalties including exorbitant fines, and in certain cases, imprisonment, and permitting the use of real-time facial recognition technologies for the identification of protestors, which marks a significant infringement on privacy and personal freedoms, also protected under EU law.

The amendment package was fast-tracked through Parliament in just one day, with no consultation or debate. It marks a significant erosion of the rights to freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, privacy and other fundamental rights in Hungary.

This amendment package builds on the 2021 'anti-LGBTIQ+ propaganda' law, which is currently being challenged before the CJEU (C-769/22), and expands its application to the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly. Additionally, since the implications of the amendments extend much more widely, it is not only the Pride march that faces restriction but all future assemblies organised by LGBTI people.

**We demand urgent action from the European Commission to ensure Pride organisers and people marching on 28 June 2025 in Budapest will be safe and able to enjoy their rights to peacefully assemble and to protest. This can be done through requesting an interim measure from the CJEU by 27 May; either through the ongoing infringement procedure already pending at the CJEU (C-769/22), or through a fresh infringement procedure against the new amendment package.**

The date by which this year's Pride march needs to be registered with Hungarian authorities is 27 May, and within 48 hours at the latest the police will issue the ban. Therefore an urgent action for the interim measure from the European Commission is needed before that date to protect this year's Pride organisers and the fundamental right of every citizen of the European Union to march and assemble in Budapest.

**While many politicians, policy-makers and human rights organisations from across the EU will join the Pride in Budapest in June to support defending the right to march, it is your institution alone that has the power at this stage to initiate an intervention with the potential to rectify this violation of EU fundamental rights and values, including the Treaties, the Charter of Fundamental Rights and a number of EU directives and regulations, and thus provide legal protection for Pride organisers and the people who will be marching.**

Without immediate action from the European Commission, through an interim measure in either the ongoing infringement procedure against the 'anti-LGBTIQ+ propaganda' law or in a new one encompassing the entirety of the recent amendments, the risk of serious and irreparable harm is imminent, including significant fines, the possibility of imprisonment of individuals, dispersal of the march, and dissolution of organisation(s) responsible for the organisation of the march.

We are including relevant European Commission services in this public letter and hope to hear from you shortly.

We remain at your disposal for any further information you might need to act in this case.

Kind regards,

List of signatory organisations

Amnesty International

Araminta

Budapest Pride

Center for Reproductive Rights

Civil Liberties Union for Europe

EDRi (European Digital Rights)

Eurocentralasian Lesbian\* Community – EL\*C

European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL)

Forbidden Colours

Háttér Society

Human Rights Watch

Human Rights Without Frontiers

Hungarian Civil Liberties Union

Hungarian Helsinki Committee

IGLYO

ILGA-Europe

International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

International Planned Parenthood Federation - European Network (IPPF EN)

International Service for Human Rights

OII Europe

RECLAIM

The Netherlands Helsinki Committee

Transgender Europe