

Hungary Country Report

July 2022

Since Victor Orban and his Fidesz Party took power in 2010, Hungary has seen a marked increase in discrimination and persecution of minority groups, specifically Roma, Jews, and LGBTQ+ Hungarians. The Hungarian Constitutional Court has upheld laws restricting freedom of assembly and peaceful protests.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his party, Fidesz, have systematically enacted anti-LGBTQ+, anti-immigrant, and antisemitic legislation. The Hungarian parliament passed [a bill](#) in July 2021 that bans discussions of homosexuality or gender reassignment in educational materials or programs for children under 18. This anti-LGBTQ+ law even links the LGBTQ+ community with pedophilia.

Hungary also discriminates against its Jewish population. Although antisemitic violence has decreased, the government openly supports antisemitic public figures, and many Hungarian Jews do not feel safe [practicing](#) their religion publicly. Popular conspiracy [theories](#) accuse Jewish communities of developing and spreading the COVID-19 pandemic. The government has harassed Hungarian-Jewish billionaire [George Soros](#) using antisemitic stereotypes and hate speech. Soros was [compared](#) to Hitler and called the “Liberal Fuhrer” in a popular Hungarian newspaper op-ed.

Hungary’s Roma population is the country’s largest ethnic minority. Romani suffer increasing discrimination and [harassment](#). Romani face lower life expectancies, higher rates of poverty, higher rates of human trafficking, inadequate housing and living conditions, and lower access to higher education compared with other Hungarians. Racist violence, ethnic profiling, and discrimination by the police are problems. Romani students are often [segregated](#) in Hungarian schools and are even placed in schools for the mentally disabled.

Hungary’s democracy has faltered under Victor Orban. Freedom House’s 2022 Nations in Transit Report labeled Hungary as a ‘[transitional or hybrid regime](#)’. The ruling Fidesz party is effectively able to implement laws and bills without opposition. Fidesz exercises controlling influence over the media and advertising, [restricting](#) free speech. There are ongoing efforts to silence and monitor potential critics of the government.

This year, a group of journalists, businessmen, politicians, and lawyers were targeted by [secret surveillance](#) with Pegasus spyware. Hungary’s stance on the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been notably neutral, including its refusal to comply with NATO’s boycott of Russian oil and gas.

Due to Orban’s antisemitic, anti-LGBTQ+, anti-Roma, and anti-immigrant policies, Genocide Watch considers Hungary to be at **Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 6: Polarization, and Stage 8: Persecution.**

Genocide Watch recommends:

- Hungary should revise its National Social Inclusion Strategy to better protect Roma citizens from discrimination, harassment, and segregation.
- Hungarian civil society groups should actively speak out against antisemitic stereotypes and hate speech and protest against anti-LGBTQ+ legislation.
- The EU should initiate proceedings against Hungary for violations of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFR).