



Hungary: Localist Lawmakers Defend Local Values

Description

HUNGARY: The Hungarian Parliament has given a big fat finger to the cultural imperialists of the West:

Hungary's parliament has passed a law banning gay people from featuring in school educational materials or TV shows for under-18s, as Viktor Orbán's ruling party intensified its campaign against LGBT rights.

The national assembly passed the legislation by 157 votes to one, after MPs in the ruling Fidesz party ignored a last-minute plea by one of Europe's leading human rights officials to abandon the plan as "an affront against the rights and identities of LGBTI persons".

Despite a boycott of the vote by some opposition politicians, the outcome was never in doubt, as Fidesz has a healthy majority and the plans were supported by the far-right [Jobbik party](#).

The measures have been likened by critics to [Russia's 2013 law against "gay propaganda"](#) that independent monitors say has increased social hostility and fuelled vigilante attacks against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the EU country's eastern neighbour.

The Hungarian legislation outlaws sharing information with under-18s that the government considers to be promoting homosexuality or gender change.

"There are contents which children under a certain age can misunderstand and which may have a detrimental effect on their development at the given age, or which children simply cannot process, and which could therefore confuse their developing moral values or their image of themselves or the world," said a Hungarian government spokesperson.

The law also means only individuals and organisations listed in an official register can carry out sex education classes in schools, a measure targeting "organisations with dubious

professional background ... often established for the representation of specific sexual orientations”, the government spokesperson said.

Companies and large organisations will also be banned from running adverts in solidarity with gay people, if they are deemed to target under-18s. In 2019, a Coca-Cola ad campaign featuring smiling gay couples and anti-discrimination slogans prompted some prominent Fidesz members [to call for a boycott](#) of the company's products.

The law means that TV shows and films featuring gay characters, or even a rainbow flag, would be permitted only after the watershed, say campaigners who have studied the legislation.

So [Viktor Orban has neutered Blue](#). You don't see things like that often. Of course that article, from *The Guardian*, is filled with liberals characterizing this as the apocalypse. Note well, however, that most of the opposition MPs boycotted the vote. They're positioning it as a protest against the outrageousness of the law, but the truth is, none of them wanted to be on record as voting against it. They know it would be used against them in next year's campaign, and that it would be used against them effectively, because most Hungarians do not share liberal views on LGBT, not when it comes to children. To be fair to them, the ruling Fidesz Party tacked this legislation onto a bill penalizing pedophilia, putting opposition MPs who opposed the legislation in the position of having to vote against a larger bill strengthening laws against pedophilia.

You can criticize the law as bigoted, and Hungarian lawmakers who voted against it as bigoted, but this is really going to help Fidesz next year — for reasons that you will not likely hear about in Western news reporting.

I have written in this space for a couple of months how being in Hungary this season has taught me a lot about why the Hungarians believe the things they do. For example, none of us outside of Hungary (and adjacent countries) can possibly grasp how intensely Hungarians feel about the Treaty of Trianon. The 1919 treaty concluding World War I against the defeated Austro-Hungarian Empire carved two-thirds of Hungarian territory away from the country, and distributed it to other peoples. Slovaks, Romanians, Croatians and others did well by Trianon, but it was a massive trauma to the Hungarians, and remains so to this day. It is impossible to overstate how strongly they feel about it — but spending a couple of months getting to know them, you really and truly get it.

And then they were occupied by an imperial power (the Soviets) for 40 years.

So, Hungarians feel very, very strongly about national sovereignty. They had a rotten 20th century, and resent like hell people from other countries exercising control over their fate. With that in mind, take a look at this e-mail I received last night from a reader:

I'm writing to you in connection with your recent article, in which you mentioned that you have no idea whether claims about Hungarian state corruption are true or false. Well, I just thought you might be interested to hear my two cents, as a young, conservative, somewhat disillusioned but still solid Orbán-voter.

I don't want to bore, so just in a nutshell: in Hungary, the main opposing forces are not left and right, but globalist (the opposition) and localists (Fidesz). The globalists also significantly overlap with the post-communists. Post-communists, who have Western connections from their ruling days (when they built up these links through foreign-trade relations and so called "impex" companies), and who are now parroting every Western trend, from trans-acceptance to BLM, have managed to transfer their rule of most Hungarian institutions, from the arts to business (through "smart" privatization). When Orbán was defeated in 2002 (and this wasn't today's fire-and-brimstone Orbán, this was a moderate version), the media (partly Western-owned, partly under the rule of post-communists) played a large role in his defeat.

So when Orbán won in 2010, he decided to build up the localist side, whatever it takes. So yes, you might say that MediaWorks (the huge umbrella corporation of Orbán-friendly news outlets, from *Magyar Nemzet* to a large number of small local papers) is a corrupt empire propped up by state cash funnelled to it by crony deals. BUT the alternative is a media landscape where no conservative voice will ever find purchase, led by moral nihilists who would (and did) sell their country for baubles. Or you might find fault with the rise of Lőrinc Mészáros, now the richest man in Hungary, who is a childhood friend of Orbán. BUT the alternative is our country sold out to the highest bidder.

So, in my opinion "corruption" should be seen in this light. Of course, it is always disheartening to read about the latest purchase of Mr. Mészáros (currently he is building a 10 million USD mansion for his new, much younger wife), but we often say that if this is the price to pay to escape the madness engulfing the USA and much of the Western world now, so be it. We'll pay that price.

So, to Western eyes, the Fidesz anti-LGBT legislation must look like nothing but cynical bigotry. But from the point of view of Hungarians who support it, it's about the government refusing to allow Hungarian cultural beliefs to be steamrolled by Western elites, NGOs, and the media. You may think that this is a mistake by the Hungarians, but you should try to see it from their point of view, so at least you'll understand why they think the way they do. As I've seen from my two months in this part of the world, the cultural imperialism coming from the West is really strong. In Poland, Romania, and Hungary, I've talked to a number of people who resent the hell out of being made to feel by Western Europeans that they are backwards because they are more socially conservative. When they have a government that pushes back to defend the nation's values, they love it.

Meanwhile, in America, this new piece from Adweek:

Everyone knows the story of Rapunzel. But this time, her super long hair is armpit hair, and she's not waiting for anyone "because she's hella gay." And that tower? It's her sweet penthouse with an elevator.

It's a body-positive Pride fairy tale, presented by [DTC razor brand Billie](#) on its Instagram

account. The [Rapunzel reimaging](#), illustrated by Sofie Birkin, is one of four charming stories that the brand will release via Instagram throughout Pride Month.

Billie unveils [the next story](#) in the series today, and Adweek got a special exclusive look at the new tale before its release.



Gosh, can't imagine why the Hungarians wouldn't want their children's culture to enjoy these blessings of liberty...

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