

The 2026 Hungarian Parliamentary Elections: Towards Regime Change?

Executive summary

- The 2026 Hungarian parliamentary election marked a historic turning point, ending sixteen years of Fidesz-KDNP rule under Viktor Orbán and opening the prospect of democratic renewal.
- Despite an electoral system designed to favour incumbents, Péter Magyar's newly established Tisza party secured a strong two-thirds parliamentary majority, defeating Fidesz on an uneven electoral playing field characterized by media bias, extensive state resource advantages, and disinformation.
- Tisza's success stemmed from grassroots mobilization, a centrist anti-establishment positioning focused on anti-corruption, institutional reform, and economic issues, and Magyar's ability to unite disillusioned voters across ideological divides. Within weeks of taking office, the Magyar government launched an ambitious programme of institutional reform aimed at restoring the rule of law, media independence, judicial autonomy, and constitutional checks and balances. Simultaneously, it initiated wide-ranging political and financial accountability measures targeting corruption and abuse of public funds by former Fidesz elites and uncovering political scandals under Orbán.
- The government also prioritizes rebuilding relations with the European Union, implementing reforms required to unlock suspended EU funds and abandoning Orbán's confrontational approach within the EU.
- While the 2026 election could initiate a process of re-democratization, Tisza's constitutional supermajority and reliance on some legislative practices used by the previous regime raise concerns about whether re-democratization will ultimately be achieved.

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Introduction

The Hungarian parliamentary election of 12 April 2026 was an “electoral revolution” that peacefully overturned the autocratic regime established by Viktor Orbán¹ and is, in terms of relevance, comparable to the 1990 regime change. The newcomer Tisza party’s landslide victory ended 16 years of unrestrained majority rule and democratic backsliding under the four Fidesz-KDNP governments headed by Prime Minister Orbán. The election and the subsequent government formation process were in many ways unique in the country’s post-socialist history, producing several historical records. First, while Fidesz-KDNP had won constitutional majorities in 2010, 2014, 2018, and 2022, this time they were defeated by opposition challenger Péter Magyar’s Tisza party. Moreover, Tisza managed to win despite the highly uneven electoral playing field created by Fidesz-KDNP. Second, Tisza not simply won but achieved a two-thirds majority itself, securing an even higher share of votes and parliamentary seats than Fidesz-KDNP ever had in any election. This makes it the largest electoral victory ever achieved by a single party since Hungary’s transition to democracy.² Third, for the first time since the first free elections in 1990, there is no left, liberal or green party represented in the new parliament. Apart from Tisza and Fidesz-KDNP, only one other party managed to clear the 5%-threshold, the radical right Mi Hazánk (*Our Home*). This makes the new parliament the most right-wing parliament since 1990. Fourth, for the first time, parliament elected its new Prime Minister Péter Magyar on the very day it was constituted. Finally, it was the fastest government formation since 1990, with the new government already taking office on 12 May 2026, just 30 days after the elections.

This article starts by briefly sketching the electoral campaign, followed by the election results and a brief review of the new government. The remainder of the article analyses the new government’s first two months in office. It argues that the 2026 elections amount to a third critical juncture in the country’s

post-socialist era. The first critical juncture was the transition to democracy in 1990. The second critical juncture was Fidesz-KDNP’s 2010 electoral victory, which led to the establishment of an electoral autocracy.³ As Péter Magyar and his Tisza have promised a regime change, including the restoration of the rule of law and democracy as well as holding the previous regime elites to account, the elections usher in a new phase of regime development and possibly a phase of re-democratization.

The electoral campaign

For the fourth time since 2010, the elections took place on a highly uneven playing field, marked by the blurring of the boundaries between Fidesz-KDNP party and state resources, a biased media landscape, and an electoral system favouring the incumbents.⁴ In 2011, Fidesz-KDNP had introduced an electoral system that strengthened majoritarian elements and hence favoured the strongest political force. In addition, the government majority amended the electoral rules several times after 2011, typically before elections, to its own advantage.⁵ More recent changes included a 2020 amendment that significantly raised the threshold for parties to compete on a party list, the redrawing of electoral district boundaries in 2024, and the erasure of campaign spending limits in 2025.

Despite this unfavourable electoral environment, the 2026 elections took place in a radically altered party-political context compared to the 2022 elections. In 2022, encouraged by the raised threshold for fielding party lists, six opposition parties, ranging from the left to the far right, formed the alliance *United Hungary* to increase their chances of defeating the incumbents.⁶ This strategy failed, however, resulting in the alliance’s defeat. Disillusioned by their defeat, this alliance quickly fell apart, with the opposition parties struggling to develop a new strategy. Given the increasingly repressive nature of the regime and the opposition’s inability to offer a credible alternative, the public mood was one characterised by large-scale political apathy and fear.

1 András Bozóki, “Választási Forradalom,” *Élet és Irodalom*, April 30, 2026, 18.

2 Balázs Cseke, “Történelmi Rekordok Sora Kellott a Tisza Párt Földcsuszamlásszerű Győzelméhez,” *Telex*, April 19, 2026, accessed May 14, 2026, <https://telex.hu/belfold/2026/04/19/orszaggyulesi-valasztas-vegeredmeny-tisza-part-elsopro-gyozelem-fidesz>.

3 István Benedek and András Bozóki, “Két Kritikus Fordulópont A Populista Választási Autokrácia Előzményei És Megszilárdulása Magyarországon,” *Politikatudományi Szemle* 33, no. 3 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.30718/POLTUD.HU.2024.3.54>; Sonja Priebus and Zsuzsanna Végh, “Ungarn: Parlamentarisches System und Patronale Herrschaft,” in *Die Politischen Systeme im Östlichen Europa: Institutionen, Akteure und Prozesse*, ed. Sonja Priebus and Timm Beichelt (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2025).

4 OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Hungary, Parliamentary Elections, 12 April 2026: Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions: 13 April, 2026* (2026), <https://odihr.osce.org/odihr/663199>.

5 Kim L. Scheppele, “How Viktor Orbán Wins,” *Journal of Democracy* 33, no. 3 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2022.0039>.

6 Sonja Priebus and Zsuzsanna Végh, “Hungary After the General Elections. Down the Road of Autocratisation?,” *Südosteuropa-Mitteilungen* 62, no. 03 (2022).

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This mood was disrupted in 2024 by the meteoric rise of a new challenger, Péter Magyar. In early 2024, the so-called clemency scandal shook Hungarian politics and the public, and led to the forced resignation of two prominent female Fidesz-KDNP politicians, President Katalin Novák and Fidesz party list leader for the upcoming European Parliament elections and former Minister of Justice, Judit Varga.⁷ One day later, on 11 February 2024, Varga's ex-husband and Fidesz member Péter Magyar gave an interview to the independent YouTube Channel Partizán, where he openly spoke about the regime, criticised Antal Rogán, the "minister of propaganda", and claimed to have proof of high-level corruption.⁸ He also suggested that the system was less stable than most expected and that change would come from within. While he said nothing entirely new, his interview represented a highly visible and consequential instance of elite defection⁹, which inflicted the first serious blow to the system.¹⁰

While initially denying having a political agenda, he organised his first mass rally on 15 March 2024, the national holiday commemorating the 1848 uprising against the Habsburgs, and announced the formation of a new political movement.¹¹ To be able to contest the upcoming EP elections, he co-opted the non-active Respect and Freedom party (TISZA). The extent of Tisza's rise in popularity within just a few months was demonstrated by its performance in the European Parliament elections, where the party won 29.6 per cent of the vote and seven of Hungary's 21 seats, becoming the largest Hungarian opposition party in the European Parliament.¹² Both these results and the fact that, by autumn 2024, Tisza had begun to lead the opinion polls demonstrated the popular demand for a new, credible opposition force and Magyar's ability to channel this demand, fuelled by widespread voter frustration. Within just a few weeks, Magyar had become the new political hero onto whom disillusioned voters projected their hopes.¹³

He firmly established himself as Orbán's major challenger, managed to re-politicise and mobilize the electorate, and instilled hope that change was possible after all.

By the end of 2025, it was clear that the elections would be a contest between Orbán and Fidesz-KDNP, on the one hand, and Magyar and Tisza, on the other. Because of Magyar's effective mobilization strategy and increasing popular support, other opposition parties, such as the liberal *Momentum*, the green *Politics can be Different* (LMP), and finally also the *Hungarian Socialist Party* (MSZP) – in power between 1994-1998 and 2002-2010 – decided not to contest the elections to support the joint aim of defeating the regime.¹⁴ While in some single-member districts these opposition parties still fielded their own candidates, they did not compete on a nationwide party list. Ultimately, only five party lists registered: *Fidesz-KDNP*, *Tisza*, *Democratic Coalition* (DK), the radical-right *Our Homeland* (Mi Hazánk), and the satire party *Hungarian Two-Tailed Dog Party* (MKKP).

Despite their limited resources resulting from the lack of state funding, Magyar and Tisza ran a highly effective campaign. They built on grass-roots mobilization, bread-and-butter issues, and a carefully designed image as a new untainted force, neither related to the incumbents nor to the "old opposition" (őellenzék). The grass-roots mobilization was built on two pillars. First, while the party as such consists of only a few official members, Tisza encouraged the formation of local so-called Tisza Islands. Although they were not formally part of the party, they became crucial hubs for campaigning and organizing activities at the local level.¹⁵ Secondly, although Tisza conducted an extremely active online campaign, especially on YouTube and various social media channels, it primarily relied on a traditional offline campaign.

7 Artúr Baranyai, Attila Gyulai, and Zsófia Papp, "Hungary: Political Developments and Data in 2024," *European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook* 64, no. 1 (2025): 284, <https://doi.org/10.1111/2047-8852.70011>.

8 Bálint Szántó-Nagy, "Varga Judit Volt Férje: Ha Én Lennék Rogán Antal, Nagyön Vigyáznék Arra, Hogy Magyar Péternek Ne Essen Semmi Baja," *Telex*, February 11, 2024, accessed July 3, 2026, <https://www.telex.hu/belfold/2024/02/11/magyar-peter-varga-judit-volt-ferje-inter-ju-partizan-ner-rogan-antal>.

9 Daniel Kovarek, "Elite Defection and Opposition Realignment in Hungary: Respect and Freedom Party (TISZA) in the 2024 European Parliamentary Elections," *East European Politics* 41, no. 2 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.1080/21599165.2025.2468693>.

10 Sonja Priebus, "The Collapse of a Patronal System: Tisza's 2026 Electoral Breakthrough in Hungary," *European Consortium For Political Research (ECPR)*, April 24, 2026, accessed May 4, 2026, <https://theloop.ecpr.eu/the-collapse-of-a-patronal-system-hungarys-2026-electoral-breakthrough/>.

11 Kovarek, "Elite defection and opposition realignment in Hungary: Respect and Freedom Party (TISZA) in the 2024 European Parliamentary elections," 265.

12 Kovarek, "Elite defection and opposition realignment in Hungary: Respect and Freedom Party (TISZA) in the 2024 European Parliamentary elections," 265.

13 Veronika Kövesdi and Rudolf Metz, *A Magyar Péter Jelensége: Egy Politikai Felemelkedés Anatómiája* (HVG Könyvek, 2025).

14 Balázs Cseke, "Nem Kispártoknak Való Vidék Ez," *Telex*, January 21, 2026, accessed May 14, 2026, <https://telex.hu/belfold/2026/01/21/valasztas-kispartok-indulasa-visszalepes-lmp-masodik-reformkor-megoldas-mozgalom>.

15 Kovarek, "Elite defection and opposition realignment in Hungary: Respect and Freedom Party (TISZA) in the 2024 European Parliamentary elections," 271.

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Beginning with his “One million steps” march from Budapest to Oradea (Romania) in May 2025, Magyar constantly toured the country, visiting over 700 towns and municipalities and holding mass rallies. The week before the elections, he visited seven to eight different municipalities per day, focusing on districts that had traditionally been Fidesz strongholds. This stood in sharp contrast to Orbán’s detached style and reinforced Magyar’s down-to-earth image as a politician who cared about ordinary people, many of whom had long felt neglected by the incumbents. These public appearances were key to increasing his support and compensated for the biased media landscape: As Magyar and his party were largely ignored or only depicted negatively by the government-controlled media – often the only available information channels for less affluent people especially in rural areas – the offline campaign helped to connect with these segments of society.

In terms of its programme, Tisza has adopted a centrist, anti-establishment, and “valence populist” stance.¹⁶ Valence populism is a subtype of populism that avoids ideological issues linked to the left or right, and instead focuses on non-positional issues around which voters from both camps can converge, such as anti-corruption, transparency, democracy, and moral integrity.¹⁷ Similarly, centrist anti-establishment suggests that it appeals to voters who had formerly supported either the opposition or Fidesz, as well as to disillusioned voters. This ideological positioning was captured by one of Tisza’s central slogans “There is no right, there is no left, only Hungarians”. In accordance with this, the party built on a strong anti-corruption narrative and centred on bread and butter issues, i.e. issues that mattered for ordinary voters and which, at the same time, were exemplary for the government’s failed policies. Such issues included Hungary’s disastrous economic performance and the deteriorating situation in several policy sectors, for example health, education, and social policy. This was complemented by promises to restore the rule of law, an independent media, accountability mechanisms, as well as to improve Hungary’s international standing and to unlock the funds withheld by the European Union because of democratic backsliding. Controversial

issues that could have been exploited by the government, such as Ukraine’s EU accession, migration or LGBTQ issues, were excluded. Their official programme “The foundations of a functioning and humane Hungary”¹⁸, was written by several working groups compiled of experts and prominent Tisza supporters, many of whom were to become members of Magyar’s government.

Fidesz’s campaign stood in stark contrast to that of Tisza, and was visibly marked by a lack of strategy in the face of the unexpected challenger. Driven by the need to catch up with Magyar’s successful online campaign, Orbán launched his so-called “Club of Fighters” (*Harcosok Klubja*) and the “Digital Civic Circles,” some of which were led by Hungarian celebrities, athletes, and other public figures. However, these initiatives struggled even to consolidate support among Fidesz’s core electorate and completely failed to mobilize undecided voters. In mid-March 2026, as a last attempt to attract voters, Orbán copied Magyar’s strategy of offline campaigning and visited a few larger cities. His public appearances, however, only reinforced the image of a tired, old politician lacking strategy and vision.

As in the previous three general elections, the party did not publish an official electoral programme but instead campaigned under the motto “Fidesz – the safe choice”.¹⁹ The main message was that Fidesz stood for continuity and security, whereas Tisza would bring chaos. In this way, the party failed to address the prevailing public mood and offered no solutions to pressing domestic policy issues. Instead, its campaign focused almost exclusively on foreign policy, particularly the war in Ukraine. Orbán repeatedly claimed that Magyar was a puppet of Brussels and Ukraine, both of which allegedly sought to install a subservient, Ukraine-friendly government willing to divert Hungarian taxpayers’ money to Ukraine. He even went as far as to frame the elections as a choice between a pro-Ukrainian government formed by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy himself and a pro-Hungarian government. This was complemented by the claim that Tisza would drag Hungary into the war between Ukraine and Russia. This Ukraine-focused

16 Endre Borbáth, “Explaining Tisza’s Hungarian Breakthrough,” *European Consortium For Political Research (ECPR)*, April 16, 2026, accessed May 4, 2026, <https://theloop.ecpr.eu/explaining-tizas-hungarian-breakthrough/>.

17 Mattia Zulianello and Erik G. Larsen, “Blurred Positions: The Ideological Ambiguity of Valence Populist Parties,” *Party Politics* 30, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688231161205>.

18 TISZA, *Bemutatta „Működő És Emberséges Magyarország” Programját a TISZA: 2026. Február 7., Szombat* (2026), <https://magyartisza.hu/hirek/ujzag/bemutatta-mukodo-es-emberseges-magyarorszag-programjat-a-tisza>.

19 Tibor Lengyel, “Orbán Viktor Kiadta a Feladatát: A Kampánynak a Háborúról, a Migrációról És a Genderveszedelelemről Kell Szólnia – Ez Volt a Fidesz Jelöltbemutató Kongresszusa,” *hvg.hu*, January 11, 2026, accessed July 3, 2026, https://hvg.hu/itthon/20260110_a-biztos-valasztas-ez-lett-orbanek-valasztasi-jelszava-eloben-a-fidesz-jeloltbemutato-kongresszusarol.

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campaign peaked in several targeted provocations. These included a public spat over the damaged Druzhba pipeline and the subsequent blocking of a 90 billion Euro aid package to Ukraine, as well as the illegal confiscation of Ukrainian gold and money en route from Austria to Ukraine in March 2026 by the Hungarian police.

A novelty of the campaign was Fidesz's massive use of AI-generated deepfakes to discredit Magyar, spread disinformation, and stoke fear and hatred.²⁰ One of these videos showed, for example, how a Hungarian soldier was executed by Ukrainian forces, amplifying the message that a Tisza government would drag Hungary into the Ukrainian-Russian war.

Russian and US foreign interference also played a crucial role. According to the investigative platform VSquare, the Russian military intelligence service GRU had stationed three people in Hungary to influence the elections and boost Orbán.²¹ Networks of Russian bots and faked news portals disseminated false information and repeated the government's messages.²² Allegedly, the Kremlin had even recommended staging an assassination against Orbán to curb emotions ahead of the elections.²³ The Trump administration interfered less clandestinely. In February 2026, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio visited Budapest, assuring Orbán of President Donald Trump's support. In March, Trump himself released a message reiterating his endorsement of Orbán.²⁴ US Vice-President J.D. Vance visited Orbán just a few days before the elections, praising the US-Hungarian relations, and ironically accusing the EU of election interference.²⁵

However, none of this significantly tipped the balance in favour of Fidesz. Instead, the final weeks of the campaign were marked by "political skeletons"

emerging from the incumbents' closets, further undermining their popularity. One such case was the revelation that Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Péter Szijjártó had regularly used breaks during EU Council meetings to call his Russian counterpart and keep him updated.²⁶ Another such incident was former police officer Bence Szabó, who revealed that the Constitution Protection Office led an operation to bring down Tisza's IT system.²⁷ In addition, a wave of elite defections accelerated the system's demise. Finally, on Easter Sunday, Orbán announced that explosives were found at the TurkStream gas pipeline in Serbia, which delivers gas to Hungary. Almost instantly, this turned out to be a false flag operation. This incident was arguably the last desperate attempt to turn the tide, but it ultimately backfired: Polls continued to forecast Tisza's electoral victory, some even a two-thirds majority.²⁸

Winners and losers

The stakes of these elections were extremely high, as it was a choice between another Orbán government likely to become even more autocratic and the regime change promised by Magyar. These high stakes were reflected in the unusually high voter turnout of 79.56 per cent, the highest turnout ever in Hungary.

Less than two hours after the polling stations closed on 12 April, projections forecasted that Tisza had not just defeated Fidesz-KDNP but secured a constitutional two-thirds majority. While ahead of the election commentators speculated that Orbán could refuse to accept a possible defeat, Tisza's substantial lead left him with no choice but to concede defeat. In his victory speech in front of thousands of followers at the Danube bank, Magyar spoke about an unprecedented electoral authorization and promised account-

20 Richárd Demény et al., *Synthetic Influence: Deepfakes and Artificial Intelligence in the Hungarian Election Campaign* (HDMO, Political Capital, 2026).

21 Szabolcs Panyi, "Goulash: Kremlin's Vote-Meddling Team in Budapest; Slovakia's Shady Help for Arms Group IPO," March 5, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, https://vsquare.org/goulash-kremlins-vote-meddling-team-in-budapest-slovakias-shady-help-for-arms-group-ipo/?fbclid=IwY2xjawQXUhdleHRuA2FlbQlXMQBZcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzZg4MjAwODkyAAEel-lsIU9UJJDi-InV9CHK3vb5fca5sFtwLm3o6fB-45i3Mjea-okulkgBovU_aem_gdXcSDjQJftYboWgDivjGw.

22 Zsófia Frank, "Orosz Kötődésű Hálózat Terjeszt Hamis Videókat, Hogy Befolyásolja a Magyar Választást, És Amit Látnak, Az Csak a Jéghegy Csúcsa," *Népszava*, March 24, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, <https://nepszava.hu/3316428-oroszorszag-dezinformacio-magyar-valasztas-fresz-ferenc>.

23 Catherine Belton, "To Tilt Hungarian Election, Russians Proposed Staging Assassination Attempt," *The Washington Post*, March 21, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2026/03/21/hungary-election-interference-russia-orban/>.

24 See https://x.com/PM_ViktorOrban/status/2035295209097957790.

25 Nick Thorpe and Paul Kirby, "JD Vance Backs Orbán's Re-Election Bid in Budapest Visit and Hits Out at EU," last modified April 7, 2026, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cyv16lq2rp1o>.

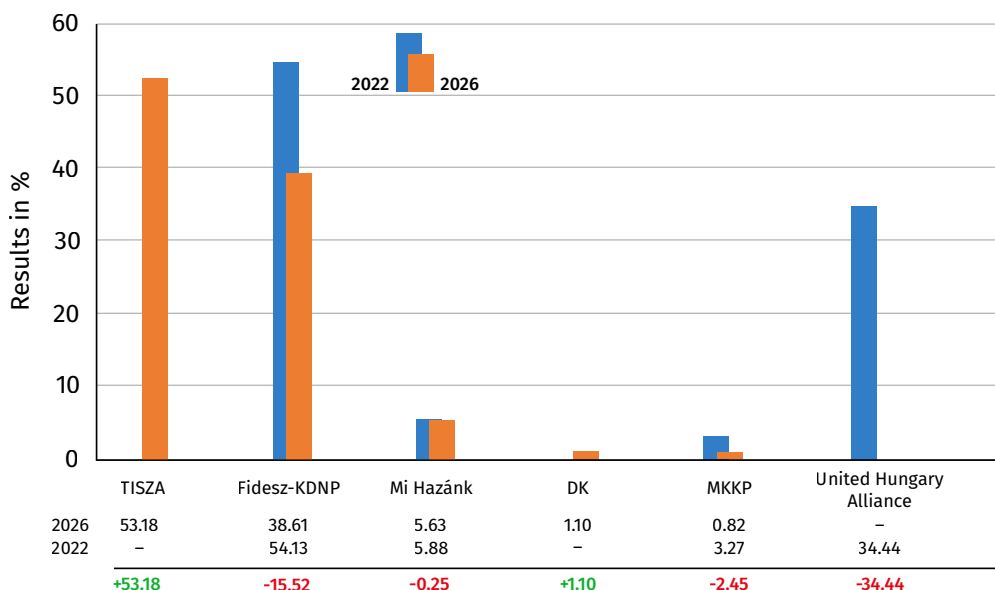
26 Belton, "To tilt Hungarian election, Russians proposed staging assassination attempt."

27 András Pethő and Zsuzsanna Wirth, "Inside the Covert Operation to Bring down the Party Threatening Viktor Orbán's Rule," last modified March 25, 2026, <https://telex.hu/direkt36/2026/03/25/inside-the-covert-operation-to-bring-down-the-party-threatening-viktor-orban-s-rule>.

28 Sandor Zsiros, "Hungarian Opposition Tisza Party Cements Lead Ahead of April Elections, Polls Show," *Euronews*, April 1, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, www.euronews.com/my-europe/2026/04/01/hungarian-opposition-tisza-party-cements-lead-ahead-of-april-elections-polls-show.

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Figure 1: Election Results by Electoral Formation in Comparison to the Elections in 2022



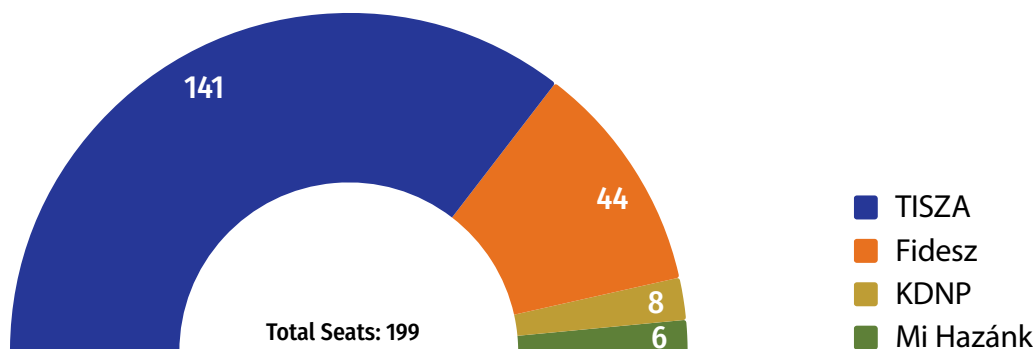
Source: Hungarian National Election Office <https://vtr.valasztas.hu/ogy2022>;
Hungarian National Election Office <https://vtr.valasztas.hu/ogy2026>

ability and reconciliation. Hungary would no longer be a country without consequences. He also called on the President of the State, Tamás Sulyok, and on other Fidesz “puppets”, including the presidents of the Constitutional Court, the Kúria (Supreme Court), the National Media and Infocommunications Authority, and the Public Prosecutor, to resign. Magyar also warned the outgoing Orbán government from adopting far-reaching decisions until the new government’s installation.²⁹

According to the final results, Tisza’s party list received over 3,385 million votes (53.18%), translating into

45 seats. They also secured 96 of the 106 single-member districts (SMD), which means that they even managed to turn around several Fidesz strongholds. In total, Tisza commands 141 delegates in the new parliament and hence a two-thirds majority. Fidesz won only ten SMD (2022: 87; 2018: 91; 2014: 96) and 38.61% (42 seats) through the party list (2022: 54.13%, 48 seats). Fidesz thus reduced its number of seats by around two-thirds, plunging from 135 seats in 2022 to just 52 seats in 2026. In fact, with a seat-share of around 26 per cent, they produced their worst result since 1994.³⁰

Figure 2: Distribution of Seats by Electoral Formation



Source: Hungarian National Election Office <https://vtr.valasztas.hu/ogy2026>

29 Vilmos Weiler, “Magyar Péter Győzelmi Beszédében Elszámoltatást És Megbékélést Ígért, És Lemondásra Szólította Fel Sulyok Tamást,” last modified July 4, 2026, <https://telex.hu/belfold/2026/04/12/magyar-peter-beszede-a-valasztas-ejszakajan-kormanyalakitas-ugyvivo-kormany-elnoke-es-allami-vezetoket-lemondasra-szolitotta-fel>.

30 In 1990, they secured 22 of 386 seats (5.7%), in 1994 20 seats (5.18%), in 1998 148 (38.34%). In 2002, they won 188 seats in an alliance with MDF (48.7%), and in 2006 also 188 seats in an alliance with KDNP (48.7%). In 2010, 2014, 2018, and 2022, Fidesz-KDNP always had a seat-share above 65%.

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Table 1: Competing Parties in the 2026 Elections and Results

Party Acronym	Party Name (Original)	English translation	Lead Candidate	% of votes	Number of Seats	Seat Change	European Party Family
TISZA	Tisztelet és Szabadság Párt	Respect and Freedom Party	Péter Magyar	53.18	141	+141	European People's Party
Fidesz	Fidesz – Magyar Polgári Szövetség	Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance	Viktor Orbán	38.61	52	-83	Patriots for Europe
MHM	Mi Hazánk	Our Home	László Toroczkai	5.63	6	–	Europe of Sovereign Nations

Source: Hungarian National Election Office <https://vtr.valasztas.hu/ogy2022>;
Hungarian National Election Office <https://vtr.valasztas.hu/ogy2026>

The other opposition parties fared badly, with none managing to get their candidates elected in any SMD. In addition, their party lists received only a modest share of votes. The radical right *Our Homeland* secured 5.63%, which is 0.25% lower than in 2022, and barely entered parliament with six seats. The social-democratic DK received 1.1% of votes, the MKKP even less (0.82%) and did not make it into parliament. Hence, the new parliament consists of only four parliamentary groups: *Tisza*, *Fidesz*, *KDNP* (*Fidesz* and *KDNP* decided to form two separate groups), and *Our Homeland*. More importantly, for the first time since 1990, there are no left-liberal or green parties represented in parliament, only conservative to radical right parties, making it the most right-leaning parliament ever.

Parliament held its constituent session on 9 May, just 27 days after the elections. Despite initial concerns that President Tamás Sulyok, a *Fidesz*–*KDNP* political appointee, could refuse to task Magyar with forming a government, this scenario did not materialize. Consequently, parliament elected Péter Magyar as Prime Minister on the same day. This was another novelty, as the Prime Minister is usually elected in a separate session at a later date.

Tisza's electoral victory is outstanding in several ways. Firstly, it is unprecedented in Hungary's post-socialist history, as no political force had ever achieved such a majority.³¹ Even *Fidesz*–*KDNP* received "only" 3,060,706 million party list votes and secured "only" 135 seats in 2022. Secondly, *Tisza* secured this victory *despite* the highly unfair electoral system. Ironically, *Fidesz*'s electoral engineering meant to cement their leading position backfired: the so-called winner compensation

introduced in 2011 this time benefited *Tisza*. This compensation mechanism adds the difference in votes between the first- and second-placed candidates in an SMD to the party list of the winning candidate. In the past, this resulted in five to six extra seats for *Fidesz*, which sometimes were necessary for the supermajority.³² Since in most SMDs *Tisza* candidates won with a strong lead, the winner compensation brought them an extra 1,132,103 votes, translating into six additional seats.³³ Thirdly, *Tisza* won despite a highly unfavourable electoral environment, including a biased media, a government campaign massively relying on disinformation and AI-generated deep-fakes, and systematic attempts of vote buying.³⁴ Fourthly, *Tisza* can base its rule on the same claim of electoral authorisation as *Fidesz* in 2010. Just as *Fidesz*'s constitutional majority allowed them to overhaul the system unilaterally, *Tisza*'s two-thirds majority allows it to redesign the political system and enact major constitutional reforms.

It remains to be seen how coherently the *Tisza* parliamentary group will act. All of its members are political newcomers with highly diverse personal and professional backgrounds and little to no previous political experience. More importantly, *Tisza* is a movement rather than a traditional institutionalized party, held together primarily by one overarching goal: the removal of the *Fidesz* regime. Now that this goal has been achieved, the party group and government members face the challenge of agreeing on the policies that will shape the new post-Orbán system.

Fidesz was in an initial state of shock after the elections. Roughly two weeks after the defeat, Orbán announced to return his parliamentary mandate to

31 Cseke, "Történelmi rekordok sora kellett a Tisza Párt földcsuszamlásszerű győzelméhez."

32 Scheppele, "How Viktor Orbán Wins," 57.

33 Political Capital, "Nem Kellott a TISZA Kétharmadához a Győzteskompenzáció," last modified July 4, 2026, https://politicalcapital.hu/hireink.php?article_read=1&article_id=3683.

34 OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Hungary, Parliamentary Elections, 12 April 2026: Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions: 13 April, 2026* (2026), <https://odihr.osce.org/odihr/663199>.

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focus on the “reorganisation of the national camp”.³⁵ For the first time since regime change, Orbán is not a member of parliament. Other prominent Fidesz (and KDNP) politicians followed Orbán’s example and also gave back their mandates. Although at its first post-defeat congress in June Fidesz re-elected Orbán as party chief, internal rifts became visible. High-ranking members and ordinary delegates alike voiced massive criticism, something that was unthinkable before the elections. While some argued that Fidesz could no longer build on a strategy of fear and polarization, one delegate pointed out that the party had been turned into a military organisation, where orders came from the top, without any opportunities to channel in opinions.³⁶ Whether and how the party can renew itself and restore credibility remains to be seen.

The new Magyar government’s first months in office

With only 30 days between the elections and the inauguration, the formation of the new government was the swiftest since 1990. This was due to the fact that Magyar had already assembled a shadow cabinet well before the elections and did not have to form a coalition with another party. The process was therefore smooth, though it was not entirely free of friction: just two days before the inauguration, Magyar’s designated justice minister, Márton Méléthi-Barna, resigned amid mounting criticism over his appointment because he is Magyar’s brother-in-law. Against the backdrop of Orbán’s cronyism, this was indeed an unfortunate choice.

The new government (in office since 12 May) follows a different structure than the previous Orbán governments. Magyar established separate ministries for health, social and family policies, and education, which under the previous governments were bundled in one “super ministry”, the Ministry of the Interior, and received little attention. A novel portfolio is the Ministry for the Living Environment. Given that most ministers have no previous political experience and instead pursued careers in their respective profes-

sions (e.g. medicine, agriculture, or academia), the government resembles a technocratic administration that relies heavily on expertise.

Like its predecessors, the government structure appears to be highly centralized, with power concentrated in the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister’s Office. The Prime Minister is tasked with the formulation and implementation of the government’s policies, and decides and coordinates the work of the ministers.³⁷ The former Prime Minister’s Cabinet Office (dubbed “propaganda ministry”) has been merged with the Prime Minister’s Office and is headed by policy analyst Bálint Ruff. Ruff, who, next to Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Orbán, is one of the two Deputy Prime Ministers, promised to make the Office the “motor of regime change”.³⁸ The Office can indeed wield substantial power because it coordinates the government’s work, is responsible for government communication, and is also in charge of European affairs. In addition, the Office will operate based on policy units (*referatúrák*), meaning that policy officers will track and supervise the work of each ministry.³⁹ Yet despite this centralization, the ministers of justice, education and child issues, finance, and health have received veto power over government decisions, which is a novelty.

The first weeks and months of the new government have been marked by an extraordinarily high level of activity and efforts to live up to the promise of regime change and accountability. Apart from implementing badly needed reforms in policy areas such as health and education, the government has focused on institutional reform, the financial and political accountability of former regime elites, and normalizing Hungary’s relations with the European Union, including securing the release of suspended EU funds. As it is impossible to address all of these measures, I will focus on the most consequential ones.

35 József Spirk, “Orbán Viktor Visszaadja a Mandátumát, Hogy a Nemzeti Oldal Újjászervezésével Foglalkozzon,” *24.hu*, April 25, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, <https://24.hu/belfold/2026/04/25/orban-viktor-visszaadja-a-mandatumat-hogy-a-nemzeti-oldal-ujjaszervezesével-foglalkozzon/>.

36 hvg.hu, “Orbán Viktort Választották Meg a Fidesz Elnökének, Bár Azért Voltak Kritikus Hangok,” last modified June 17, 2026, https://hvg.hu/itthon/20260613_orban-viktor-jovojerol-is-dont-a-fidesz-elo-kozvetites-a-part-tisztujito-kongresszusarol.

37 Government Decree 90/160. (V.13.).

38 András Király, “Ruff Bálint: Orbán Viktor Nem Egy Mindentudó Félísten,” May 12, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, <https://telex.hu/belfold/2026/05/12/ruff-balint-miniszterjelolti-meghallgatas-igazsagugyi-bizottsag>.

39 Ibid.

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Institutional reform

Tisza's electoral programme included pledges to restore the rule of law, re-establish an independent state media, and reinstate accountability mechanisms. The programme also announced an end to rule by decree (which the previous government used continuously since the 2015–16 migration crisis), proposed limiting the Prime Minister's term in office, and called for a participatory constitution-making process. All of these measures aim to prevent the centralization of power seen under Orbán and to strengthen checks and balances.

Within just a few months of taking office, the government has already delivered on some of these promises. Its first constitutional amendment adopted in mid-June stipulates that anyone who has served as Prime Minister for a total of eight years or more since 1990 is ineligible to hold the office again. This means that Orbán can never again become Prime Minister. The same amendment laid the groundwork for abolishing the Sovereignty Protection Office, established in 2023 to investigate foreign-funded activities of opposition parties, NGOs, and media outlets.⁴⁰ It also deleted from the constitution the article that served as the basis for a cardinal law which, in 2021, established the so-called "public trust funds performing a public function" (*kekva*) and effectively privatized state assets, including the property of most Hungarian public universities, without providing any means of public scrutiny.⁴¹ These funds have been a major point of contention between the government and the European Commission, leading to the suspension of EU funding and the exclusion of Hungarian universities from the Erasmus and Horizon programmes in 2022.

Measures to restore media pluralism have also been adopted. A legislative package enacted in June regulates political campaigning by prohibiting political advertisements and billboards outside official election campaign periods. It also bans political advertising that incites hatred or violates human dignity.⁴² These measures were adopted in response to the Orbán government's extensive and continuous use of large-scale political campaigns to discredit political actors – such as former Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker

and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy – and to disseminate government propaganda.

Another legislative package has been adopted to overhaul the state media system. Under Orbán's media regulations adopted in 2010, the public media system became highly centralized and subject to direct government control, effectively turning public broadcasters into government mouthpieces. The new media framework seeks to restore the independence of the public media and eliminate direct political influence by decentralizing its governance structure.⁴³

To this end, the package reforms several existing media regulatory bodies while also establishing new ones. Unlike the media governance framework introduced by Fidesz, members of these bodies will serve shorter terms of office, with the government and the opposition each nominating an equal number of members. The package also provides for the adoption of a new Public Broadcasting Charter, which will set out the fundamental principles governing the operation of the public media. These include requirements relating to balanced reporting, editorial independence and journalistic freedom, the handling of fake news, disinformation, and the use of artificial intelligence, the protection of minors, and ethical standards applicable to employees. Finally, the Media Services and Support Trust Fund (MTVA), established in 2010 through the merger of Hungarian Radio, Hungarian Television, Duna Television, and the Hungarian News Agency (MTI), will be dissolved. The Hungarian News Agency (MTI) will once again operate as an independent institution. While media experts see merit in the new media framework, they warn that political influence remains substantial. They have also criticized the bill for having been drafted hastily and without prior consultation with media professionals.⁴⁴

A second draft constitutional amendment, currently under consideration and announced as part of the government's "Operation Purifying Fire" includes several changes. First, it seeks to introduce a 12-year term limit for members of parliament. Such term limits are highly unusual in democracies but are sometimes introduced after regime transitions as a

40 András Léderer, "What Is the Sovereignty Protection Act? Hungarian Helsinki Committee," last modified July 4, 2026, <https://helsinki.hu/en/what-is-the-sovereignty-protection-act/>.

41 Hungarian Helsinki Committee, "Creating a Parallel Structure I: Public Trust Funds Performing a Public Function," 21 May 2021, https://helsinki.hu/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/05/parallel_state_I_May2021.pdf.

42 Act XX of 2026 on Restricting Political Advertisements Capable of Inciting Hatred, Ensuring the Townscape Compatibility of Commercial Advertisements, and Amending Certain Rules on Investments.

43 Act XXI of 2026 Amending Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Communication and Act XXXVI of 2012 on the National Assembly.

44 Mária Vásárhelyi, "Médiatörvény Újratöltve," *Élet és Irodalom*, June 26, 2026, 26.

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form of symbolic constitutionalism, signalling the new regime's commitment to alternation in power.⁴⁵ Second, it aims to restore the independence of the Constitutional Court by reinstating its right to elect its own president and restore the Court's authority to review legislation concerning public finances and the state budget, a power that the Fidesz government removed in 2013. At the same time, the mandatory retirement age of 70 for Constitutional Court judges would be reinstated. This age limit was abolished in 2013, allowing judges to remain in office until the expiry of their twelve-year terms. If reinstated, the current President of the Court, Péter Polt, who was elected in 2025, would also have to step down. Third, the independence of the Kúria and the National Judicial Council would be strengthened by modifying the procedures for selecting their presidents. Finally, the amendment contains a provision to remove the current President of the State, Tamás Sulyok (see below).⁴⁶

While the government seeks to address the most pressing issues through amendments to the 2011 constitution, Prime Minister Magyar has already announced a constitution-making process expected to begin in September 2026.

Political and financial accountability

One central campaign promise was to hold the Fidesz elites to account, both politically and financially. To this end, the new government has introduced both substantial and more symbolic accountability measures. Among the latter is the decision to deny severance pay to members of the former government, justified on the grounds that they had systematically looted the state coffers.

A more substantial political accountability measure is the establishment of five parliamentary investigative committees in May to examine some of the most significant scandals of the Orbán government. These include the systemic failures of Hungary's child protection system, the 2024 clemency scandal – which led to the resignation of President of the Republic

Katalin Novák – and the disappearance of public funds. In parallel, parliament adopted legislation requiring individuals to cooperate with these committees and introducing sanctions, including imprisonment, for non-compliance.⁴⁷ While these measures are intended to strengthen the role of investigative committees, which have traditionally been weak in Hungary, they have also attracted criticism because such committees are political bodies that normally lack independent investigative powers.⁴⁸

Another crucial element of political accountability concerns the removal of senior office holders. Since election night, Prime Minister Magyar has repeatedly called on high-ranking public officials to resign, setting a deadline of 31 May for them to do so. Apart from a small number of lower-ranking officials, however, all others failed to comply. Senior office holders, including President of the Republic Tamás Sulyok, remained in office.⁴⁹ Following Magyar's subsequent announcement of a constitutional amendment to remove him from office, Sulyok petitioned the Hungarian Constitutional Court to examine whether the government's planned constitutional amendment was an instance of targeted legislation. He also requested an opinion from the Council of Europe's Venice Commission on the issue, although the exact wording of the request remains unknown because his office has refused to publish it.⁵⁰ While the Venice Commission has already visited Hungary, the Constitutional Court will not decide on his petition. Following Sulyok's request, seven of the fifteen judges declared themselves to be partial, which means the court no longer has the required quorum of ten judges to decide the case. Ironically, Fidesz members have repeatedly questioned the legality of Magyar's attempt to remove Sulyok and accused the new government of "dictatorship".⁵¹

On 22 June, Magyar announced his "Operation Purifying Fire". Drawing a parallel between his government's efforts to dismantle the mafia-like structures established under Orbán and Italy's fight against the Cosa Nostra in the 1990s, he presented the proposed

45 Paolo Gambacciani, "The Politics of Legislative Term Limits: A Comparative Analysis in Latin America and Southeast Asia," *International Political Science Review*, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1177/01925121251389989>.

46 Magyarország Alaptörvényének tizenhetedik módosítása.

47 Act XXIII of 2026 Amending Certain Acts in Connection with Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Work of Parliamentary Committees of Inquiry.

48 István Riba, "Jogában Áll Vállalni – Így Tennék Utóképesebbé a Vizsgálóbizottságokat Magyarék," last modified May 27, 2026, https://hvg.hu/360/20260527_vizsgalobizottsagok-mukodese-btk-tisza-kormany-tasz-hvg.

49 Sulyok has, however, proven cooperative so far and has signed all laws adopted by parliament.

50 See <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1880696472605675>.

51 Szilvia Iván-nagy, "A Fidesz Szerint Diktatúrákban Szokás Egy Köztársasági Elnököt Erőszakkal És Zsarolással, Fenyegetéssel Eltávolítani a Hivatalából," *Telex*, June 1, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, <https://telex.hu/belfold/2026/06/01/gulyasek-meltatlannak-tarjak-ahogy-az-uj-kormany-es-magyar-sulyokhoz-viszonyul>.

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constitutional amendment providing for the removal of President of the Republic. The initiative has, however, raised concerns. Rather than amending the constitutional rules governing the initiation of impeachment proceedings against the President, as many had expected, the proposal simply stipulates that Sulyok would cease to hold office on the day the amendment enters into force.⁵² How this constitutional conflict will unfold is yet to be seen.

In the same vein, Magyar and his ministers have already dismissed and replaced the heads of several state bodies, many of which were established under Orbán. These include the heads of the four national security services – among them the Constitution Protection Office, which led the operation to bring down Tisza's IT system – the Counter Terrorism Centre (TEK), the National Bureau of Investigation, and the National Media and Infocommunications Authority.

Political accountability also extends to the disclosure of sensitive issues that had been kept secret under the Orbán governments. To this end, the government has launched a section on its website where it publishes information and documents relating to such issues. So far, it has made available documents concerning the 2024 clemency scandal and the previous government's plans to establish a migrant camp in western Hungary.⁵³

The Fidesz government had operated in a highly non-transparent and secretive manner, classifying contracts and significant government decisions while creating legal structures designed to conceal the flow of public funds. Therefore, the need to ensure financial accountability – including the investigation of high-level corruption, the use of public funds, and the recovery of state assets channelled to leading Fidesz figures and oligarchs—represents the second dimension of accountability. Although the high-level corruption under the Orbán government involving both state and EU funds has not been a secret, the opportunity to assess its full scale arose only after the elections. Several public procurement contracts concluded in the final months before the elections have now

become public. One example is a contract signed in mid-March 2026 between the Ministry of Defence and 4iG – a telecommunications company that has become extremely powerful under the Orbán government –, with a value exceeding HUF 1.3 trillion (EUR 3.68 billion) and running until 2025.⁵⁴ Another is the disclosure that the National Cultural Fund of Hungary (NKA) distributed approximately HUF 17 billion (EUR 48 million) in the run-up to the elections, largely without open calls for applications and predominantly to celebrities who supported Orbán's election campaign.⁵⁵

A central element of the government's efforts to ensure financial accountability – and one of Magyar's earliest electoral promises – is the establishment of the National Office for Asset Recovery and Protection (*Nemzeti Vagyonszerzési és Védelmi Hivatal*). The Office is intended to examine the flow of public funds under the Orbán government and to recover state assets and public money diverted to private individuals and entities. A draft bill currently under consideration would grant the Office far-reaching powers. It would be authorized to investigate privatizations, public contracts, procurement procedures, state subsidies, and the management of state-owned enterprises, with retrospective jurisdiction covering the previous twenty years. The Office would be empowered to collect information, conduct on-site inspections, and employ its own investigators. Unusually, its powers would extend beyond monitoring and oversight: it would be authorized to conduct investigations independently and initiate proceedings before the courts, giving it a role that resembles that of a public prosecutor. The draft bill also provides for extensive sanctioning powers in cases of non-cooperation.⁵⁶ If this Office were established, it could become a powerful institution for uncovering the Orbán government's shady businesses and even result in the sentencing and imprisonment of former government members.

52 Tibor Lengyel and Viktória Serdült, "Nem Okoz Felhőtlen Örömet a Jogászkoösségben, Ahogy Eltávolítják Sulyok Tamást," last modified June 23, 2026, https://hvg.hu/360/20260623_allamfovesztes-alaptorveny-modositas-egymondatos-selyemzsinar-sulyok-tamas-elmozdítása.

53 See <https://kormany.hu/igazsagtetel>.

54 Zsófia Gergely, "Egybillió-Háromszáztizencmilliárd Forintos Szerződést Kötött Az Orbán-Kormány a 4iG-Vel Márciusban," *hvg*, May 14, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, https://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20260514_1-billio-311-milliard-forintos-szerzodeset-kotottek-a-4ig-vel-a-valasztas-elott.

55 Dóra Patakfalvi, "Az NKA Csúcshozzájárulása Is Megdöbbentette, Ahogyan a 17 Milliárdos Pályázatokkal Meghívták a Testületüket," *Telex*, May 1, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, https://telex.hu/belfold/2026/05/01/nka-bizottsag-beszamolo-jokai-mari-program-hanko-balazs-17-milliard-vidnyanszky?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

56 See <https://egyztetes.kormany.hu/egyztetes/nemzeti-vagyonvisszaszerzesi-es-vedelmi-hivatal-felallitasarol>.

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Normalization of relations with the European Union and recovery of frozen EU money

Under the 16-year rule of Orbán, Hungary has become a pariah in the European Union. In 2018, the European Parliament triggered an Article 7 (1) procedure against Hungary for a “clear risk of a serious breach” of the EU’s founding values, including democracy and the rule of law.⁵⁷ The European Commission also launched several rule of law-related infringements, and in 2022 froze approximately 38.7 billion in EU funding through three different conditionality mechanisms.⁵⁸ Tisza promised to make Hungary a European country again, restore good relations with the EU and its member states, and unfreeze the suspended EU funds. To this end, high-level consultations with the Commission began immediately after the elections, even before the new government took office. After several rounds of negotiations, the Commission announced on 29 May to release EUR 10 billion from the Recovery and Resilience Funds (RRF) – which is to expire in August – and EUR 6.4 billion from the cohesion funds, once necessary reforms are implemented.⁵⁹ These include the phasing out of the “public trust funds performing a public function”, join the European Public Prosecutor’s Office (EPPO), strengthen the so-called Integrity Authority by giving it the right to check asset declarations, and revising the public procurement rules. Parliament adopted a legislative package to implement these reforms in June.⁶⁰ The government also submitted its official request to join the EPPO as well as its modified National Recovery and Resilience Plan, which the Commission has accepted.⁶¹ Subject to a positive vote in the Council – which is necessary for both the release of money under the Conditionality Regulation and the RRF – Hungary will receive the promised amount of money within months.

These efforts, along with the new government’s decision to end the Orbán government’s veto policy in the Council, are signs of a normalization of relations. Hungary agreed on the renewal of sanctions against

Russia for twelve months and agreed to the 90 billion support loan to Ukraine. Nevertheless, conflicts are likely to remain, particularly concerning migration policy (the government opposes the implementation of the EU’s Migration Pact) and Ukraine’s accelerated EU accession, which the Magyar government does not support.

Conclusion

Tisza’s 2026 electoral victory has demonstrated that even a highly entrenched authoritarian regime can be removed through elections. It arguably marks a new critical juncture in Hungary’s post-socialist development and could usher in a phase of re-democratization. Péter Magyar promised nothing less than regime change and declared that Hungary would no longer be a country without consequences. To deliver on these promises, the government initiated several far-reaching legislative measures within its first weeks in office. As the government enjoys a constitutional majority in parliament, it has been able to push through reforms unilaterally, including the adoption of a new constitution. In this respect, the new government finds itself in a much more favourable position than its counterpart in Poland. While Donald Tusk succeeded in defeating the similarly authoritarian *Law and Justice* (PiS) government in the 2023 elections, his coalition failed to secure the majority necessary to enact legislation restoring the rule of law and has also been at loggerheads with the powerful Polish president.⁶² Moreover, contrary to expectations, President Sulyok has so far signed all bills into law, including the one limiting the Prime Minister’s term.

While the new government has already demonstrated its determination to break with the past and dismantle the remnants of the Orbán regime, it is far from certain that this regime change will result in a genuine re-democratization of the country. The first pieces of legislation – for example, those restoring the inde-

57 European Parliament, *European Parliament Resolution of 12 September 2018 on a Proposal Calling on the Council to Determine, Pursuant to Article 7(1) Of the Treaty on European Union, the Existence of a Clear Risk of a Serious Breach by Hungary of the Values on Which the Union Is Founded (2017/2131(INL))* (2018), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0340_EN.html.

58 Lisa H. Anders and Sonja Priebus, “The Commission as a Critical Actor for Strengthening Supranational Rule of Law Enforcement: The Mixed Record of the Von Der Leyen Commission,” in *The European Commission Under President Ursula Von Der Leyen: Gender, Leadership, Policies, and Crises*, ed. Gabriele Abels et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2025); Sonja Priebus, Lisa H. Anders, and Neculai-Cristian Surubaru, “The Advent of Polity Conditionality as a New Form of Internal Governance in the European Union,” *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2025.2604677>.

59 See <https://x.com/vonderleyen/status/2060331263072899430>.

60 Act XVIII of 2026 Amending Certain Acts as Necessary to Secure Access to European Union Funds.

61 Sándor Zsíros, “Az Európai Bizottság Elfogadta a Magyar Kormány Átdolgozott 10 Milliárd Eurós Helyreállítási Tervét,” *Euronews*, June 19, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, <https://hu.euronews.com/my-europe/2026/06/19/az-europai-bizottsag-elfogadta-a-magyar-kormany-atdolgozott-10-milliard-euros-helyreallita>.

62 Stanley Bill and Ben Stanley, “Democracy After Illiberalism: A Warning from Poland,” *Journal of Democracy* 36, no. 3 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2025.a964585>.

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pendence of the state media and the judiciary – point in this direction. Yet analysts have also warned that Tisza could become a “Fidesz 2.0” and exploit its constitutional majority. In addition, the new government has replicated some of Fidesz’s widely criticised practices, including submitting key pieces of legislation as private member’s bills to avoid lengthy public consultation, amending the parliamentary standing orders to accelerate the legislative process, and rewriting bills at the very last minute in the parliament’s powerful Legislative Committee, which was created under Fidesz.

Yet these caveats notwithstanding, the emergence of Tisza has undoubtedly ended a period of fear and political apathy. Magyar and Tisza also continue to enjoy exceptionally high levels of public support, with their popularity even increasing after the elections. A research institute found in June 2026 that support for Tisza had risen to 72 per cent, while support for Fidesz had fallen further to 20 per cent.⁶³ Whether Tisza will maintain this high level of public support over the long term – and, by extension, continued backing for regime change – will depend on whether the new Tisza government can deliver on its promises.

63 András Nádor, “A Závecz Research kutatása szerint a biztos pártválasztók körében a Tisza 73, a Fidesz mindössze 20 százalékon áll”, Telex, June 4, 2026, accessed July 4, 2026, <https://telex.hu/belfold/2026/06/04/zavec-research-partok-tamogatottsaga-tisza-part-nagy-elony-fidesz-harommillio>.