

We Stand With Transparency International Hungary and Átlátszó

EU Needs To Urgently Protect Civic Space in Hungary

27 June 2024

The undersigned organisations call on the European Commission and EU Member States to take immediate action to protect civic space in Hungary and express our unwavering support for and solidarity with [Transparency International Hungary](#) and [Átlátszó](#), who have recently been targeted for investigation by Hungary's Sovereignty Protection Office.

Transparency International Hungary is a watchdog committed to exposing corruption and Átlátszó is a Hungarian investigative journalism nonprofit focused on uncovering stories of corruption and misuse of EU funds in Hungary.

Transparency International, in its Corruption Perceptions Index, has ranked Hungary as the most corrupt in the European Union for two years in a row, and the targeting of the two organisations seems to be a clear act of retaliation by the Hungarian government.

It also appears designed to send a broader message of intimidation to Hungarian citizens, civil society organisations and journalists, striving for transparency, accountability and a society that is free of corruption.

The European Commission should accelerate the infringement procedure it has commenced in response to Hungary's Law on the Protection of National Sovereignty and its enforcement arm, the Sovereignty Protection Office. We also urge the European Commission to refer the matter to the Court of Justice of the European Union requesting interim measures to suspend the enforcement of this law and protect other civil society organisations and others who work in Hungary and might face similar intimidation.

The investigations, enabled by the controversial Law on the Protection of National Sovereignty, appear to be an effort to silence critical voices and weaken anti-corruption initiatives. They contravene the democratic values and human rights enshrined in both Hungarian and European Union law. Such action endangers not only individual organisations but also the broader space for civil society and democracy in Hungary.

We urge the European Commission and EU Member States to take immediate and decisive action as described above to protect NGOs and independent journalists in Hungary. Ensuring their freedom and safety is vital for upholding transparency, accountability and democracy within the EU.

Signatories:

