

### 19.5 Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán Discusses Democracy (2014)

**Source:** <https://budapestbeacon.com/full-text-of-viktor-orbans-speech-at-baile-tusnad-tusnadfurdo-of-26-july-2014/>

**Instructions:** This excerpt is from a 2014 speech by Hungarian Prime Minister speech Viktor Orbán. At the time he delivered this speech Orbán was accused of using rightwing populism to secure his country's presidency and using state power to move Hungary from democracy to authoritarianism. In this speech, Orbán argues liberal democracy failed the Hungarian people and that his goal was to create a "non-liberal" form of democracy. Other authoritarians, most notably Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, used the democratic process to gain power and eliminated democratic values. As you analyze the text of Orbán's speech, decide if "non-liberal democracy" is simply a different form of democracy or is a threat to democratic government and society and then prepare a written response (100 to 200 words) in response to Prime Minister Orbán.

A. "What is happening today in Hungary can be interpreted as an attempt of the respective political leadership to harmonize relationship between the interests and achievement of individuals – that needs to be acknowledged – with interests and achievements of the community, and the nation. Meaning, that Hungarian nation is not a simple sum of individuals, but a community that needs to be organized, strengthened and developed, and in this sense, the new state that we are building is an illiberal state, a non-liberal state. It does not deny foundational values of liberalism, as freedom, etc.. But it does not make this ideology a central element of state organization, but applies a specific, national, particular approach in its stead."

B. "We needed to state that a democracy is not necessarily liberal. Just because something is not liberal, it still can be a democracy. Moreover, it could be and needed to be expressed, that probably societies founded upon the principle of the liberal way to organize a state will not be able to sustain their world-competitiveness in the following years, and more likely they will suffer a setback, unless they will be able to substantially reform themselves."

C. "Liberal democracy was not capable of openly declaring, or even obliging, governments with constitutional power to declare that they should serve national interests. Moreover, it even questioned the existence of national interests . . . Liberal democracy, the liberal Hungarian state did not protect public wealth . . . [I]n Hungary liberal democracy was incapable of protecting public property that is essential in sustaining a nation, even compared to other countries. Then, the liberal Hungarian state did not protect the country from indebtedness."

D. "Hungarian voters expect from their leaders to figure out, forge and work out a new form of state-organization that will make the community of Hungarians competitive once again after the era of liberal state and liberal democracy, one that will of course still respect values of Christianity, freedom and human rights. Those duties and values that I enumerated should be fulfilled and be respected."