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Major Swedish Party Calls For Milah Ban In The Country

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A major Swedish political party has voted to change its official stance in favor of banning bris milah.



The Swedish Centre Party tally at its annual meeting was 314-166, overturning the 18-member party board's unanimous rejection of the proposal.

The vote was criticized by party chief Annie Loof.





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The party has 31 of the 349 seats in the parliament. It currently backs the left-wing bloc, though it's not officially part of the coalition.

Both the Jewish and Muslim communities expressed outrage over the vote.

"The Swedish Centre Party's decision to promote a ban on religious circumcision is a request for Jews to leave Sweden—the most liberal of E.U. states," said Conference of European Rabbis president Rabbi Goldschmidt in a statement on Thursday. "We mourn the lack of tolerance and loss of diversity in today's Sweden."

"I am very surprised and very disappointed," Aron Verständig, chairperson of the Official Council of Swedish Jewish Communities, told the Expressen newspaper. "This means, if the proposal becomes reality, that it will be completely impossible to live as a Jew or a Muslim in Sweden."

"We are appalled to learn that a political party in Sweden has proposed a ban on non-medical circumcision of infant boys," said the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations in a statement. "This proposal, put forward by members of Sweden's minority Center Party, would be an outrageous violation of religious freedom and civil rights."

The statement continues, saying "the Conference stands with Sweden's Jewish Central Council in condemning this blatantly discriminatory legislation. We call on the government to reject this initiative quickly and absolutely."

President of the Orthodox Union Moishe Bane stated, "The Swedish Centre Party's decision to promote a ban on religious circumcision is synonymous with calling for the end of Jewish life in Sweden. Religious circumcision is a core Jewish obligation which has been practiced for over two millennia."

OU executive vice president Allen Fagin added that the party's decision to promote the ban would lead to the exodus of Jews from the country. "We ask that they hear our concerns, understand the importance of this issue and respond accordingly."

An estimated 20,000 Jews in Sweden.

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