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Press release | 01.06.2022

Commission pushes ahead with Polish Recovery Plan despite serious issues with judicial independence

Rule of law

Today, the European Commission has agreed that it will push ahead the National Recovery Plan for Poland. The Greens/EFA Group have long called for the Polish Plan approval to be withheld until the Polish government substantially reforms its judiciary creating an independent judiciary in line with EU requirements, and implements all relevant judgments of the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights. The Greens/EFA Group are calling for an urgent debate during next week's plenary session of the European Parliament.

Terry Reintke MEP, Greens/EFA Vice President and shadow rapporteur for Poland, comments:

"Today's announcement gives a carte blanche from Brussels for the PiS government to push ahead with their attack on the independence of the judiciary, and their hard-right, anti-feminist and anti-democratic agenda. It seems that the Commission's concerns over the rule of law in Poland are not a priority.

"The proposed judicial changes after negotiations with the Commission will not reinstate expelled judges, nor will they ensure real independence of the judiciary. The state of the judiciary is worse today than when the Commission President set the conditions related to judicial independence in October.

"People in Poland want to know that the Commission and the EU are standing up for their rights and their European future. But today's announcement flies in the face of those who want to live in a democratic Poland based on the rule of law and common European values."

Damian Boeselager, Volt MEP and Greens/EFA Group negotiator on the RRF, comments:

"The Polish government's supposed reforms are designed as token concessions to the Commission, however they fail to address the actual issue; namely the PiS party's efforts to weaken the rule of law in Poland. None of the proposed reforms contribute to reestablishing the full indepence of the judiciary. Political influence on the dismissal of judges remains very much possible.

"Judicial independence in Europe cannot be a negotiating chip. Now more than ever, it is clear that allowing slipping standards in the application of the rule of law in Europe harms the interests and security of all

Europeans.

“For the EU to function properly we need to know that the rules will apply in every EU Member State, for everyone equally. The Commission is shortsighted and unwise to hand over billions of euros in recovery money to a country where the checks and balances of democracy are being stripped away.”

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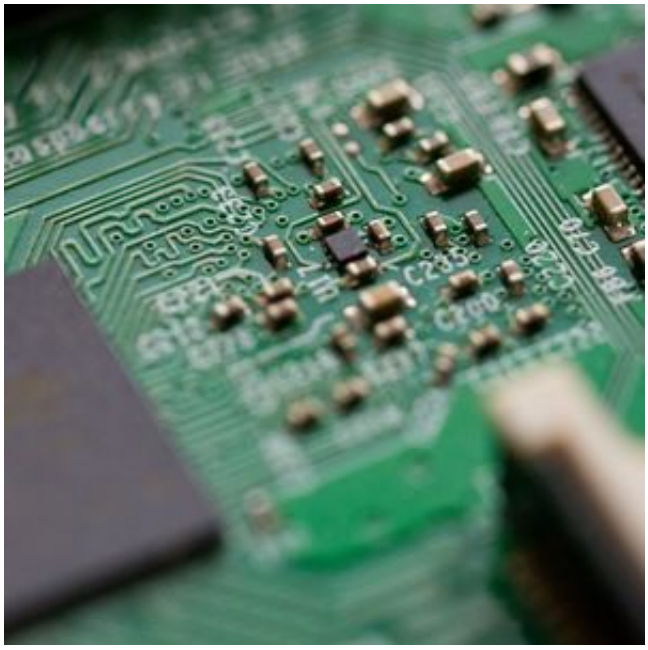


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Responsible MEPs



Damian Boeselager

Member



Terry Reintke

Co-President

Contact person



Alex Johnson

Press & Media Advisor EN (English language press)

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