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Parliament to vote on taking Commission to court over funds to autocratic Hungary

Tomorrow, the Parliament will vote on whether to refer the Commission to the European Court of Justice for releasing previously frozen funds to Hungary. The Legal Affairs Committee (JURI) will prepare to sue the European Commission.

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Greens/EFA MEP and European Parliament Rapporteur on the situation in Hungary, comments:

“Once again the Parliament is having to step in as the Commission and Council seem happy to give a carte blanche to Viktor Orbán to continue his bullying tactics and attacks on the rule of law. Last year, this Parliament recognised that Hungary is no longer a democracy. Initiating legal proceedings against the Commission is an extreme tactic but an essential one, given what’s happening in Hungary.

"The Council has failed to progress on the Article 7 procedure and so long as EU leaders continue to let this situation linger, then Orbán will continue to block decisions in the Council. EU Member States must move forward on Article 7 and issue recommendations for Hungary on how to return to the rule of law. Ultimately, EU decision making must move beyond unanimity in the Council if we are to avoid the kind of crisis moment in December that was caused by Orbán.”

Daniel Freund MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Home Affairs and Justice, comments:

"The EU is in extra time in the match with Hungary over the rule of law and the Commission and Council are giving away free kicks to Viktor Orbán. It’s time for the EU to finally show Orbán the red card and send him off the pitch for Council decisions. The decision to release ten billion euros to Hungary was a purely political own goal and not based on the supposed reforms in Hungary.

“We cannot allow an autocratic bully to hold back European decision-making every time he wants to squeeze some more cash out of the Commission. The Commission cannot buy its way out of this problem of their own making. If they continue to fail in their duty as guardian of the treaties then we as the European Parliament will use the tools we have to hold them to account. That includes taking the Commission to court for their failures over Hungary.”

More:

The Greens/EFA Group have long called for the Commission to take firm action against the Hungarian government for its attacks on democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law. In December, ahead of the European Council Summit, the Commission released funds that were previously frozen due to concerns around judicial independence.

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