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Press release | 24.03.2021

Rule of Law Mechanism: quotes from Terry Reintke MEP & Daniel Freund MEP

Rule of law

Later this evening (after 21:00), MEPs will vote on a resolution on the EU's rule of law mechanism, which has been in place since January 1st. The mechanism is designed to hold Member States to account for breaches of the rule of law.

Terry Reintke MEP, Greens/EFA Group shadow rapporteur on the Resolution on the Rule of law regulation & LIBE opinion rapporteur, comments:

"We have plenty of evidence piling up for cases to trigger the mechanism in several countries, yet the rule of law mechanism has not been activated despite being in place since January 1st. The Polish government continues to undermine the independence of the judiciary further targeting judges and recently also prosecutors. The Hungarian government continues to restrict civic spaces including by cracking down the funding of NGOs. The rule of law is not an abstract concept, it's the checks and balances that hold a government to account, it's what separates a democracy from a dictatorship.

"We cannot wait to defend European values. The longer the Commission waits, the worse the situation will get. This is why we need to see this mechanism applied and the Commission needs to come out with a regulation on the rule of law, before it's too late to reverse the facts on the ground."

Daniel Freund MEP, Greens/EFA Group shadow rapporteur on the Resolution on the Rule of law regulation, comments:

"This mechanism has been in place since the start of this year, but so far we haven't seen anything. The Commission says it is drafting guidelines, but these won't change the law, the application of the law is not dependent guidelines. This tool will only be effective if it's being used, otherwise it's just another piece of paper. The Commission needs to get its act together and protect the rule of law and the financial interests of the Union.

"We in the Parliament will not take the same lax approach as the Commission. We will not sit by and watch as EU funds are used to strip citizens of their rights to free media, independent courts and real democratic choices on their ballot papers. This resolution is telling the Commission that if they do not show how they

intend to act by June 1st this year, we will use every avenue to get them to do their job."

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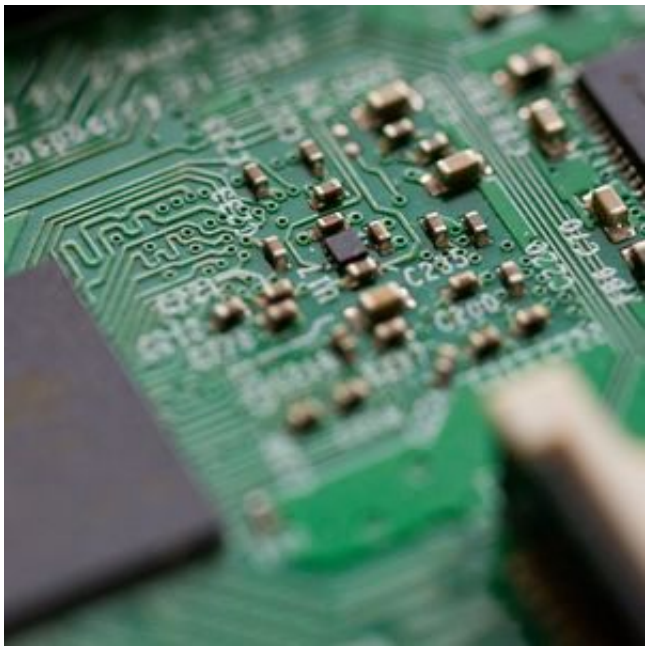


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