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The time for warnings has passed – the EU must trigger article 7

Hungary

Greens/EFA MEP Judith Sargentini has today presented her report on the European Parliament's investigation into whether or not Hungary is in breach of the values of the European Union. Sargentini's report recommends that the Council initiate Article 7 proceedings against Hungary.

Rapporteur **Judith Sargentini** comments:

"The time for issuing warnings has passed. The European Union now needs to stand up for rule of law and trigger Article 7 proceedings against Hungary.

"Time and time again, Viktor Orbán's government has undermined the independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press and the fundamental rights of its citizens. When countries join the European Union, they make a commitment to our shared values of respect for human rights, democracy, and rule of law. If the European Union is to be a real defender of these values, it has to be prepared to take strong action against those that work against them.

"The strongest possible sanction is for a country to lose its voting rights in the Council. This is not something we call for lightly. But the EU has an obligation to protect the rights of every single one of its citizens. With no sign that the Hungarian government will change course, the Council must initiate proceedings now."

Background

The report is available here:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/resources/library/media/20180411RES01553/20180411RES01553.pdf

On 15 May 2017, the European Parliament voted in favour of a resolution on the situation in Hungary. The resolution mandated the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs committee to draw up a report on the infringement of fundamental principles and values by the Hungarian Government. On the basis of this report, the European Parliament may invite the Council to initiate proceedings against Hungary in accordance with Article 7. This would require a 2/3 majority in parliament. The committee vote is expected before the summer, with a plenary vote to follow in September.

The report takes into account input from a wide range of experts and representatives, including those of the Commission, the Council of Europe, NGOs and academics, and opinions issued by third parties such as the Council of Europe, United Nations, OSCE and national and international courts. Judith Sargentini also visited Hungary in January as part of her investigation.

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