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MEPs vote to take Commission to Court over rule of law

Rule of law

Last night, the Legal Affairs Committee of the European Parliament voted for the Parliament to take the European Commission to court for inaction on the Rule of Law Conditionality Mechanism. Despite numerous breaches of the rule of law endangering the proper use of EU funds, the Commission has failed to activate the mechanism.

MEPs, led by the Greens/EFA Group, gave the Commission a deadline of July 1st to use the mechanism and when this deadline passed, the Parliament voted to take the Commission to the European Court of Justice for failure to act under Article 265 TFEU. After the Commission's final refusal to launch the conditionality procedure, the Committee of Legal Affairs followed the recommendation of Greens/EFA rapporteur, Sergey Lagodinsky, to formally file the request for action against the Commission with the European Court of Justice.

Sergey Lagodinsky MEP, vice chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs and its standing rapporteur for contentious matters of the European Parliament, comments:

"The current Polish rule of law crisis demonstrates very well why the Commission needs to show its unambiguous commitment to stand up for European values. Any delay or hesitation of the Commission on rule of law issues is life-threatening to European democracy and to the EU itself. We cannot afford a judicial ping pong between European and national courts that the so-called Constitutional Tribunal in Poland is attempting to launch with its recent ruling. If legal obligations are put into question, the EU must be able to limit financial flows that otherwise would remain unaccounted and unsupervised.

"The rule of law conditionality mechanism is an important part of making governments accountable for misuse of EU funds due to deficiencies of rule of law. It has been in place since the start of the year and yet the Commission hesitated to use it. The Commission is the guardian of the treaties and as such accountable to the Parliament. If it fails to act, then the Parliament must take action to defend democracy across the EU."

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