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PM Andrej Babiš could face prosecution for EU subsidies fraud

Czech Republic

Today, Czech police have finalised their investigation and proposed to the state prosecutor to charge six people including Prime Minister Andrej Babiš and his wife for their alleged roles in the Stork's Nest scandal involving the fraud CZK 50 million in EU funds. The supervising state prosecutor will now study the investigation and decide on whether or not to file charges against the Prime Minister. Babiš could face between 5 and 10 years in prison if he is convicted.

Philippe Lamberts, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, comments:

"If Andrej Babiš is found guilty it would completely undermine the integrity of the EU to have a sitting Prime Minister convicted for subsidies fraud. It would be an embarrassment and a stain on the European Council if decisions that affect all Europeans are made with someone who may have defrauded the EU out of millions.

"It's pathetic the lengths that Guy Verhofstadt, Emmanuel Macron and the ALDE group will go to in order to defend their favourite oligarch. Macron defended Babiš at several occasions; always underlining that he was a "liberal" and not a populist Prime Minister. It's quite clear that ALDE's values only matter when it comes to attacking their political opponents and not when their own people might be undermining the integrity of the European Union."

Bart Staes, Greens/EFA member of the budgetary control committee, comments:

"Any fraud involving EU funds cannot be tolerated and must be punished no matter the perpetrator, even - or should I say especially - if they might be a sitting Prime Minister. It is of the utmost importance that the state prosecutor must be able to look into this matter free from political interference. This case also underlines the necessity to have a European prosecutor, who can work with complete independence.

"Andrej Babiš' Agrofert group is at the heart of the Stork's Nest scandal. The European Commission should announce how it intends to react to these developments and they must speed up their investigation into the conflicts of interest surround Babiš and his role as Czech PM. They cannot continue to push this issue into the long grass out of political convenience, especially now that Babiš might be personally convicted for subsidies fraud."

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Philippe Lamberts

Member



Bart Staes

Member

Contact person



Alex Johnson

Press & Media Advisor EN (English language press)

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