

Brussels, 20. May 2025

Dear Commissioner Serafin, dear Commissioner McGrath,

We, 26 Members of the European Parliament, write to express our deep concern regarding recent developments in Hungary. **We urge the European Commission to increase pressure on Viktor Orbán's government to cease violating EU values and EU Laws by immediately suspending all EU funding for Hungary in line with the applicable legislation to protect the Union's financial interest.**

The Commission is currently rightly withholding €18 billion from Hungary through mechanisms including the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation, Common Provisions Regulation, and Recovery and Resilience Facility. These measures have been taken primarily due to widespread corruption, the Government's serious breaches of the rule of law, the establishment of kleptocratic and oligarchic structures and systemic violations of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

**Regrettably, since the decisions in December 2022, Hungary has not only failed to make meaningful progress toward meeting the stipulated conditions and/or milestones but has instead witnessed further alarming regressions:**

1. The **Hungarian Integrity Authority**, a key institution established to address corruption under the Rule of Law Conditionality, remains deliberately weakened and now **faces direct governmental interference**. Due to the ongoing intimidating investigation against him, the Head of the Authority recently declined several invitations from European Parliament committees and Members, thereby undermining Parliament's right to oversight and transparency in the fight against corruption;
2. **A troubling agreement effective from 1 January 2025 between the Ministry of Justice, the Curia, the National Office for the Judiciary (NOJ) and the National Judicial Council (NJC)** further undermines the independence of the judiciary. Most troublingly, the agreement was struck in an intransparent procedure and against the strong protests of the Hungarian Judges' Association. After signing the agreement, due to the strong discontent of the judges, the president of the NJC had to resign, and the Council stated that it considers this agreement invalid for its part. The government attacks against the judiciary are ongoing, constantly trying to undermine the independence of different bodies, among them the NJC, whose independence had led the Commission to release €10 billion of previously frozen funds to Hungary in December 2023.
3. On 18 March, the government enacted a law, which severely **restricts the freedom of assembly**, is banning the Budapest Pride, and enabling facial recognition surveillance against attendees. Additionally, the Parliament passed the 15th amendment of the Fundamental Law on 14 April which **enshrines these repressive measures in the Constitution**, alongside the possibility to suspend citizenship for non - EEA dual nationals perceived as threats.

4. In December 2023, the Hungarian government adopted the **national law on the "Defence of Sovereignty"**, establishing a state administrative body, the "Sovereignty Office", to inter alia investigate organisations that use foreign funds to "influence the will of the voters". This law is widely viewed as a tool to be used against government critics, including civil society, prompting the Commission to initiate infringement proceedings - but no blocking of additional funds - in October 2024 because the law violates the right to privacy, freedom of speech and assembly, and the presumption of innocence, among others. On 13 May 2025, the government further escalated this crackdown by submitting a draft "Lex NGO", enabling the state to blacklist NGOs deemed a threat to sovereignty, impose severe funding restrictions, and subject them to intrusive financial surveillance and penalties.

Given these troubling developments, we firmly believe the EU must adjust its response. By previously freezing some funds, the Commission has acknowledged that EU funds are indeed at risk of misuse due to corruption and fundamental rights violations. In its judgment in Case C-156/21, the Court of Justice of the European Union confirmed the legality of the Rule of Law Conditionality Mechanism and clarified that even far-reaching funding suspensions are lawful, as long as they are proportionate to the risk posed to the Union's financial interests. Given the transversal and comprehensive nature of recent governmental attacks, it must now be even clearer that all EU funding to Hungary—across all budget lines—is significantly at risk. **We therefore consider a freezing of all funds proportionate to the risk posed to the Union's financial interests.** Continuing to fund a corrupt regime openly undermining European values is unacceptable.

**We therefore call on you to urgently withhold all funding to Hungary through all available legal instruments.** We also urge the Commission to **ensure that blocked funds are not re-channelled** through programme amendments, such as Hungary's recent request to redirect €600 million in cohesion funds toward STEP objectives, which risks undermining the integrity of the existing conditionality framework.

At a moment when Europe faces profound external challenges, we must stand united in defense of democracy and fundamental rights, resisting any drift towards authoritarianism within our Union.

Sincerely,

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