



Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
The Chairman

IPOL-COM-LIBE D (2024) 31461

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To the Chairperson(s) of the committee(s) concerned

Honourable Chairperson,

Since 2016, the European Parliament has called for a comprehensive and preventive mechanism in the field of Rule of Law, via an EU mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (EU DRF Pact).

This position was reinforced by the Parliament resolution of 7 October 2020 on the establishment of an EU mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights, that called for a wide-ranging mechanism, to be governed by an interinstitutional agreement between the Parliament, the Council and the Commission. This resolution foresees an Annual Monitoring Cycle on Union Values, covering all aspects of Article 2 TEU and in this context, it recognises the indispensable role of national Parliaments and calls on them to hold public debates and adopt positions on the outcome of the rule of law monitoring cycles. The resolution also provides for the organisation of annual interparliamentary debates on the findings of the Annual Report.

On 24 July 2024, the Commission published its fifth annual Rule of Law Report that presents the state of play of the situation in Member States as regards the rule of law. The Commission has noted that its report has been discussed with national Parliaments. To this report the LIBE committee reacts via an annual own initiative report assessing the state of play and providing recommendations for the future. As a novelty, the 2024 Rule of Law Report also includes country chapters on four accession countries – Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia – to support their reform efforts on democracy and the rule of law prior to accession, therefore the presence of national parliamentarians from these countries is highly welcomed.

Against this background, and considering the importance of this issue, the LIBE Committee would like to **invite Members of national Parliaments to an inter-parliamentary committee meeting on “The situation of the Rule of Law in the EU”**. The meeting is scheduled on Thursday, 12 December 2024, from 09.30 to 12.30, in the European Parliament premises in Brussels, followed by a lunch scheduled between 12h30 and 13h30 on the same day.

The interparliamentary committee meeting will be dedicated to an assessment of the fourth Commission’s rule of law report with a specific emphasis on checks and balances as pillars of the Rule of Law and the role of the civil society in this context. It follows previous such interparliamentary meetings, including the one that took place in December 2023, and the calls made in the Parliament’s resolution of 28 February 2024 on the Commission’s 2023 Rule of Law report.

In view of the above, and following previous years' practice, this meeting would provide the occasion for in-depth exchange of views on the rule of law situation in the EU and on the role of national Parliaments in the context of the EU efforts to protect and enforce the Union values. The outcome of the exchanges will contribute to the ongoing work on the LIBE own-initiative report on the Commission's 2024 Rule of Law Report.

I am therefore pleased to invite up to four Members of the relevant committee(s) from each national Parliament (two from each Chamber in the case of bi-cameral Parliaments) to attend this meeting in the premises of the European Parliament.

Should you be unable to attend, I would welcome any written contribution, which would be distributed to the participants.

The draft programme and practical details concerning the meeting will be forwarded in due course to your Parliament's services for relations with the European Parliament.

I sincerely hope that you will be able to accept this invitation and I am looking forward to your participation in this event on 12 December 2024.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J. Zarzalejos', with a large, stylized flourish underneath.

Javier ZARZALEJOS