



European Commission
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Opinion on a new EU Framework to strengthen the Rule of Law

26 May 2014

Dear Viviane REDING

Ref.

The European Affairs Committee of the Danish Parliament has considered the Commission's communication of 11 March 2014 to the European Parliament and the Council concerning a new EU Framework to strengthen the Rule of Law – COM (2014)158.

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The communication introduces a new process which is to apply if systemic threats to the rule of law emerge in a Member State. The Commission proposes a dialogue-based three-stage mediation process, which is to precede Article 7 TEU mechanisms.

It is the opinion of a majority of the parties of the European Affairs Committee comprising the Social Democrats (S), the Social Liberal Party (RV), the Socialist People's Party (SF), the Red-Green Alliance (EL), the Liberal Party (V), the Conservative Party (KF) and Liberal Alliance (LA) that mutual trust among EU Member States depends on each Member State's compliance with the fundamental values of the EU. The mechanism contributes to maintaining the EU as a community of values and ensures that all Member States continue to respect the fundamental values of the EU.

A majority of the parties of the European Affairs Committee comprising the Danish People's Party (DF), V, S, RV, EL, LA and KF welcome the Commission's intention to introduce a mechanism which in the first instance will be based on constructive political dialogue between the Commission and a Member State, and which aims at preventing an escalation of the systemic threats to the rule of law in a Member State.

A majority comprising S, RV, SF, EL, V, KF and LA would have liked to see a stronger mechanism making it possible to impose demands on the Member State affected rather than a mechanism placing the Commission under an obligation to initiate a structured dialogue with the Member State in question. The majority note that the mechanism is a step in the right direction. However, the majority believe that it should be made possible to take measures that will put pressure to bear on a Member State to an even greater extent if threats

emerge to the rule of law without thereby activating the mechanisms of Article 7 TEU. Such measures could for example include the withholding of EU funds for the Member State in question.

A majority comprising S, RV, SF, EL, V, KF and LA find, furthermore, that the Commission should specify in which cases the proposed mechanism may be applied.

Yours sincerely

Eva Kjer Hansen
Chair of the European Affairs Committee