
EU MEMBERS UNDERMINING RULE OF LAW FACE FUNDING CUTS

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Undermine courts and the rule of law and be kicked where it hurts. This is the message coming out of Brussels, as the EU unveiled its post-2021 budget plans.

Member states deemed as breaking the rules face having their funding cut, a move which could cost Hungary and Poland millions of euros.

Guy Verhofstadt, Belgian Liberal MEP, commented: "European money in my opinion should be used to lift up our national economies to lift up our citizens and not be given or to be granted to the family of Mr, Orban or to finance one or other new football stadiums in its constituency. That's not the reason to spend the money. "

The EU's struggled to punish countries judged as breaching democratic norms. Its main weapon of discipline - Article 7 - needs approval from all member states.

"This new proposal gives the right to the Commission to decide on whether to introduce or not such measures against the member states, and in the Council there is a need for a qualified majority to stop, to veto the Commission's proposal," said Benedek Jávor, a Hungarian Green MEP.

Hungary's foreign minister told Euronews last week that the funding cut proposal amounted to political blackmail.

Péter Szijjártó said: "Applying any kind of subjective conditions to the criteria would result in a very dangerous situation, where institutions or member states could use the EU funds for political blackmailing."

But the budget is far from being approved and the rule of law link will be among the many battles now being fought in the EU.

Kaynak/Source: