
ROMANIA'S PARLIAMENT ADOPTS CONTROVERSIAL CHANGES TO PENAL CODE

- 24.04.2019

Emerging Europe (24 April 2019)

Romanias parliament voted on April 24 to adopt a raft of controversial changes to the countrys penal code which opponents claim will severely handicap the fight against corruption. Lacking a majority in parliament, the ruling PSD-ALDE coalition was able to pass the changes with votes from the UDMR, a party which represents Romanias Hungarian minority.

The changes passed by parliament include a reduction in the statute of limitations for corruption offences, more lenient penalties for abuse of office and the reclassification of criminal negligence, previously a felony, as a misdemeanour. The new penal code also makes it almost impossible for prosecutors to offer informants reduced sentences or immunity.

Restrictions will also be placed on the media, which will no longer be allowed to report that leading politicians and officials have been accused of corruption. Reporting on trials will also be severely restricted. The press will also be forbidden from referring to politicians and officials as guilty until the appeals process has been exhausted.

The PSDs attack on honest people and its favouring of criminals has reached new heights, said Stelian Ion, an MP for the opposition Save Romania Union (USR), while Dacian Ciolos, a former Romanian prime minister, called the vote shameful for us all.

One of the main beneficiaries of the changes could be Liviu Dragnea, leader of the PSD. Mr Dragnea (pictured above) was found guilty last year of corruption and sentenced to three years and six months in prison. He remains free pending the outcome of an appeal, but could now see his conviction quashed due to the shorter statute of limitations.

<https://emerging-europe.com/news/romanias-parliament-adopts-controversial-changes-to-penal-code/>

Kaynak/Source: