

Threats to Key Freedoms: New EP Report on Situation of Fundamental Rights in the EU



News

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The European Parliament's recent annual [report on the situation of fundamental rights in the EU](#) unveils an alarming landscape of threats to fundamental rights within the EU: media freedom, corruption, and individual liberties were areas under particular threat in 2022 and 2023. The report, which garnered 391 votes in favor, 130 against, and 20 abstentions in the plenary vote on 18 January 2024, raised alarm over the state of citizens' rights across the Member States, with specific recommendations for Hungary, Poland, Greece, Cyprus, and Spain in addressing these issues promptly.

A key focus of the report is the urgent need to protect journalists and to regulate the spyware industry in order to protect citizens against misuse. In this context, MEPs welcomed the new agreement on the European media freedom act. In addition, the report looks into the disturbing trend of backsliding on women's and LGBTIQ+ rights, citing the denial of access to safe and legal abortion in Poland and the systematic discrimination against the LGBTIQ+ community in Hungary as examples. The European Parliament is pushing for the swift conclusion of negotiations on a directive to combat violence against women and domestic violence.

Corruption is another critical issue highlighted in the report. The need for a robust EU anti-corruption framework and full implementation of the Whistleblower Protection Directive are emphasized as crucial steps towards combating corruption effectively. The EP expresses deep concern over the increasing level of corruption in several EU countries and reiterates its condemnation of alleged incidents involving high-level officials and politicians, including current and former MEPs. The EP demands that zero tolerance for corruption must be the rule and it calls for the establishment of an independent ethics body.

The report also pinpoints threats to freedom of association, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly, citing instances of police violence and mass arrests as well as the challenges posed by disinformation and restrictions on artistic and religious freedoms. The pervasive discrimination against the Romani people and widespread violations of migrants' and refugees' rights, including the illegal practice of pushbacks, have also been identified as areas requiring attention.

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