

Dear Minister  
Zbyněk Stanjura  
Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic

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## Let's protect the rule of law in the vote on European money for Hungary

### Open letter of non-governmental organizations to the Minister of Finance Zbyněk Stanjura

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Prague, December 6, 2022

Dear Minister Stanjura,

**the Economic and Financial Affairs Council, which you chair, should hold an extraordinary meeting on 12 December 2022 to discuss the Council Implementing Decision on measures to protect the EU budget from violations of the rule of law in Hungary and the application of the general conditionality regime for the protection of the EU budget.** We, undersigned representatives of the NGO platforms and non-governmental organizations, express our vital interest in adhering the principles of the rule of law as one of the fundamental values of the European Union. We therefore appeal to you and the Czech government to take an active and principled position in line with need to strengthen the rule of law for the future of democracy in Europe and manage European funds in an accountable manner, and and openly communicate principles of your position with the public.

The European Commission conducted an intensive dialogue with the Hungarian authorities on systematic irregularities in the awarding of public contracts, insufficiently effective anti-corruption measures and other issues of the rule of law. Nevertheless, the Commission concluded that violations of the rule of law in Hungary threaten the Union's financial interests and the proper management of the EU budget. The Commission also confirmed this on November 30, when it decided to maintain its original proposal of September 18 and suspend 65% of the commitments for three operational programs under the Cohesion Policy amounting to €7.5 billion, while not authorizing any payment to Hungary under the Recovery Instrument and resilience (RRF) until 27 "super milestones" in relation to the rule of law are met.

Now comes a key political moment, when the EU Council will decide on the first negative impacts on Hungary's budget, and therefore the first use in history of an additional mechanism to protect the EU's financial interests in the event of a violation of the principles of the rule of law, valid from January 2021. If a member state deliberately does not fully comply with basic rules of political coexistence, it is necessary for a principled reaction to come in the form of tangible (i.e. financial) measures. Ultimately, it is also about protecting the funds of Czech citizens sent to the EU budget.

**We therefore urge you, as a representative of the Czech Presidency, to put this voting item on the agenda of the Council on 12 December, stand up for the use of the regulation on the conditionality of financial support as a tool for protecting the rule of law and the EU budget, and negotiate measures that are in line with with the position of the European Commission.**

**Such an attitude is consistent with the priorities of the program of the Czech presidency, in which the government set itself "strengthening the resilience of institutions that have a fundamental influence on the maintenance and development of the values of democracy and the rule of law in the EU". It is very important to us that you maintain this attitude and declare it to the public at crucial moments.**

With warm regards and best wishes for the remaining period of the Czech presidency in the Council of the EU.



Yours sincerely,

**Petr Lebeda, ředitel, Glopolis o.p.s.**

+ 420 607 682 015 | [lebeda@glopolis.org](mailto:lebeda@glopolis.org) | Botičská 4, 128 00 Praha 2

## Signatory organizations and NGO platforms:

Petr Lebeda, ředitel, Glopolis



### NGO PLATFORMS:

Aleš Sedláček, předseda ČRDM, Česká rada dětí a mládeže



Hana Stelzerová, ředitelka, Česká ženská lobby



Lenka Felcmanová, předsedkyně České odborné společnosti pro inkluzivní vzdělávání

Dana Benešová, výkonná ředitelka České odborné společnosti pro inkluzivní vzdělávání



Sabina Malcová, ředitelka, DEMAS - Asociace pro podporu demokracie a lidských práv



Pavel Příbyl, ředitel FoRS - České fórum pro rozvojovou spolupráci



Lukáš Kraus, vedoucí platformy Odolnější Česko



**NGOs:**

Eliška Kodyšová, ředitelka, Aperio - Společnost pro zdravé rodičovství, z.s.



Vít Dostál, výkonný ředitel, Asociace pro mezinárodní otázky



Ondřej Nováček, předseda České středoškolské unie, z. s.



Šimon Pánek, ředitel Člověk v tísni



Jiří Skuhrovec, předseda Datlab Institut z.s.



Martin Vokálek, výkonný ředitel, Institut pro evropskou politiku EUROPEUM



Jakub Janda, ředitel, Bezpečnostní centrum Evropské hodnoty

Andrea Michalcová, zástupkyně ředitele, Bezpečnostní centrum Evropské hodnoty



Hana Vosmíková, ředitelka HESTIA - Centrum pro dobrovolnictví, z.ú.



Michal Bláha, ředitel, Hlídač státu



Hlídač **státu**

Jindřich Calta, předseda Kohonevolit, z. s.

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NEDŮVĚŘUJ, PROVĚŘUJ!

Martina Břeňová, ředitelka Nadace OSF

| Nadace **OSF**

Šárka Zvěřina Trunkátová, předsedkyně Oživení, z. s.



Hana Vodrážková, ředitelka RADKA z.s.



Magda Faltová, ředitelka Sdružení pro integraci a migraci, o.p.s.



Ondřej Kopečný, ředitel, Transparency International - Česká republika, o.p.s.



Copy sent to:

Petr Fiala, Prime-Minister

Zbyněk Stanjura, ministr financí

Jan Lipavský, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Mikuláš Bek, EU Affairs Minister

Vít Rakušan, Interior Minister

Markéta Pekarová Adamová, Chairman of Chamber of Deputies

Miloš Vystrčil, Chairman of the Senate

Ondřej Benešík, Chairman, EU Affairs Committee, Chamber of Deputies

Vladislav Vilímec, Chairman, EU Affairs Committee, Senate