
EU CHIDES UKRAINE OVER LAW TARGETING ANTI-CORRUPTION NGOS

- 02.06.2017

EurActiv (2 June 2017)

A top EU official criticised Ukraine on Thursday (1 June) over a law targeting nongovernmental organisations investigating state corruption, and urged greater independence for the agency charged with exposing graft.

The former Soviet republic recently adopted an anti-corruption law that requires top officials to publish their families incomes and assets online.

But Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko signed a controversial amendment to the law in March that applies the legislation to nongovernmental organisations which investigate and expose corruption.

EU Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn called the decision a mistake before a meeting with Poroshenko in Kyiv on Thursday.

Such kind of legislation should not hamper the work of the NGOs, Hahn told journalists.

The EU is happy to provide assistance but we also expect Ukraine to deliver results, he added.

Ukraine's reformist central bank chief resigns

Ukraines reformist central bank chief, Valeriya Gontareva, submitted her resignation today (10 April) after coming under intense pressure from tycoons whose banks were shut down for illegal transactions and loans.

Poroshenko has promised to take another look at the legislation and amend it, but has not said when he might do so.

The graft-fighting organisations have called the measure a blatant attempt to silence them and disrupt their work.

Ukraine has been riddled for decades with insider dealings and embezzlement involving senior government officials as well as the courts and local authorities.

The leaders who came to power after the pro-EU revolution of 2013-14 have pledged to root out the problem, and in 2015 launched a National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU).

IMF threatens to cut Ukraine aid over corruption

The International Monetary Fund threatened to cut crucial financial aid to cash-strapped Ukraine

yesterday (10 February) because of the countrys slow progress in fighting corruption.

But Hahn reiterated earlier Western concerns about attempts to rein in the powers of the new anti-corruption agency to investigate officials suspected of ill-gotten gains.

NABUs independence and the functioning are too often put into question, he said.

The agency is facing headwinds from Ukraines prosecutors and its security service, which wants the power to take cases away from NABU and close them if they concern particularly powerful or influential figures.

NABU should finally get the power to conduct (its work) independently, Hahn said.

Kaynak/Source: