

## INFOCUS

### **Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union put under the microscope**

C4EP analysis on the subject – *Clouds are gathering, preparing for the storm... then a light rain – evaluation of the 2024 Hungarian Council presidency*

„The Hungarian EU Council presidency had to face criticism and several challenges that promised quite a bumpy ride ahead. At some points even stripping Hungary from the presidency was considered as an option by some, but as we pointed out in an earlier analysis, this was not a realistic idea.

One of the biggest problems was around concerns about democratic values, as domestic policies of Hungary, particularly during the 13 years of Viktor Orbán’s government, were badly criticized for undermining EU principles such as media freedom, judicial independence, and the rule of law. These concerns persisted long before (and also throughout) the presidency and led to serious scepticism from some (member states, institutions and political actors) about Hungary’s possible leadership in guiding European policies and capacity of acting as an “honest broker” in European matters.”

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## C4REPORT

*Court of Justice of the European Union: Hearing on the Hungarian Child Protection Act – 19 November 2024*

„An infringement procedure against Hungary was launched nearly three years ago by the European Commission, and after lengthy negotiations without any results, it announced in July 2022 that it would refer its debate with Hungary to the Court of the European Union. 19 November has seen the hearing for the case, in front of a full court in session, with a high number of member states and the European Parliament as intervenors in the case, representing their own opinion – which is fairly rare in infringement cases.

According to the position of the Commission, the contested Hungarian law (the so-called Child Protection Law) violates not only the provisions of more of the laws of the European Union (e.g. the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, the E-Commerce Directive), but also various principles, namely the principle of freedom to provide services, or the right to data protection and certain notification obligations”

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*C4EP: 10 year anniversary event – 19 November 2024*

“Seemingly, it was just another rainy day in Brussels, but we had a reason to be excited as we celebrated the 10 year anniversary of C4EP yesterday at Press Club Brussels. It was a great opportunity for us to reconnect with some of our former colleagues and have a relaxing time with current friends and partners. This time, we did not organise a professional event with an experts’ panel, because we wanted to allocate some time for ourselves.”

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*European Movement International: United front: Mobilising against gender-based violence and online abuse – 21 November 2024*

“At the beginning of the panel, Maria Rosaria Mollica expressed her satisfaction with the first von der Leyen Commission, as promises were kept. Namely, new rules on pay transparency were adopted in 2023, then a directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence in 2024, and there was also improvement in gender balance and work-life balance. Although there are two more deliverables: a recommendation on preventing and combating harmful practices against women and girls, and engagement to facilitate the cooperation between Internet platforms.”

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*From Washington to Brussels: the US election and EU foreign policy – 21 November 2024*

“The event organized by EUISS explored the implications of Donald Trump’s re-election as President of the United States for the EU’s foreign and security policies. Speakers analyzed the challenges and opportunities posed by this – not so new – transatlantic dynamic, focusing on key issues such as defence relations, rivalry with China, economic security, and tensions in the Western Balkans.”

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C4EP WISHES EVERYONE

A MERRY CHRISTMAS

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!