



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0184

Rule of law, fundamental rights and misuse of EU funds in Slovakia: the need for an EU response

European Parliament resolution of 20 May 2026 on the rule of law, fundamental rights and misuse of EU funds in Slovakia: the need for an EU response (2026/2607(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on European Union (TEU), in particular Articles 2, 4, 4(3), 5, 6, 9 and 10 thereof, and to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), in particular Article 20 thereof,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union ('the Charter'),
- having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the protocols thereto, and to the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights concerning Slovakia,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the international human rights treaties of the United Nations and the Council of Europe,
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2019/1937 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2019 on the protection of persons who report breaches of rule of Union law¹ (the Whistleblower Directive),
- having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a

¹ OJ L 305, 26.11.2019, p. 17,
ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1937/oj>.

general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget² (the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation),

- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy³ (Common Provisions Regulation),
- having regard to its resolution of 19 April 2018 on protection of investigative journalists in Europe: the case of Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and Martina Kušnírová⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 28 March 2019 on the situation of the rule of law and the fight against corruption in the EU, specifically in Malta and Slovakia⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 October 2022 on growing hate crimes against LGBTIQ+ people across Europe in light of the recent homophobic murder in Slovakia⁶,
- having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2024 on the planned dissolution of key anti-corruption structures in Slovakia and its implications for the rule of law⁷,
- having regard to its reports following the missions of the Committee on Budgetary Control to Slovakia from 26 to 28 May 2025 and of the Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights Monitoring Group (DRFMG) of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs to Bratislava, Slovakia, from 1 to 3 June 2025,
- having regard to the country chapters on Slovakia in the Commission's annual rule of law reports,
- having regard to the reports, surveys and opinions of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights,

² OJ L 433 I, 22.12.2020, p. 1,
ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2092/oj>.

³ OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 159,
ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj>.

⁴ OJ C 390, 18.11.2019, p. 111.

⁵ OJ C 108, 26.3.2021, p. 107.

⁶ OJ C 149, 28.4.2023, p. 22.

⁷ OJ C, C/2024/5712, 17.10.2024,
ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/5712/oj>.

- having regard to the Council of Europe Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and its 2025 Annual Report,
- having regard to the declaration of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers of 30 April 2014 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors,
- having regard to the commitments by participating States of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe on freedom of the media, freedom of expression and the free flow of information,
- having regard to Resolution No 464/2024 of 20 November 2024 of the Judicial Council of the Slovak Republic expressing concerns regarding the criminal offence of 'abuse of law' and recommending its repeal or amendment to ensure stronger safeguards in line with judicial independence,
- having regard to the statement by the International Commission of Jurists of 14 February 2025 raising concerns about apparent executive interference in the work of the Judicial Council of the Slovak Republic and emphasising the need to safeguard the independence of judicial councils from parliamentary and executive influence,
- having regard to the joint open letter of 16 October 2025 signed by 56 civil society organisations expressing profound concern over the recently adopted constitutional amendments in Slovakia and calling on the EU to take urgent action,
- having regard to the letter of 28 November 2025 from the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) to the Commission raising concerns that the proposed amendments to whistleblower protection legislation in Slovakia may be incompatible with rule of law principles, restrict protection for certain categories of whistleblowers, introduce retroactive effects on ongoing cases, and negatively affect the protection of the financial interests of the EU,
- having regard to the public hearing of the Committee on Budgetary Control of 27 January 2026 on the protection of the financial interests of the EU in Slovakia,
- having regard to the 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index, which gave Slovakia a score of 48 out of 100 and ranked it 61st globally,
- having regard to the 2025 Gender Equality Index of the European Institute for Gender Equality, which gave Slovakia a score of 57.2 out of 100 and ranked it 20th in the EU, indicating that it has made progress over time but continues to perform below the EU average,
- having regard to the statements by the Council and the Commission

of 11 February 2026 on the rule of law, fundamental rights and misuse of EU funds in Slovakia: the need for an EU response,

- having regard to its resolution of 29 April 2026 with observations forming an integral part of the decisions on discharge in respect of the implementation of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2024, Section III – Commission and executive agencies and the ninth, tenth and eleventh European Development Funds⁸,
 - having regard to Rule 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the EU is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as set out in Article 2 TEU and as reflected in the Charter and enshrined in international human rights treaties; whereas these values are shared by all the Member States and should be upheld and actively promoted by the EU and each Member State individually in all their policies, both internally and externally in a consistent way; whereas the Member States should ensure that there is no backsliding in the protection of the values enshrined in Article 2 TEU; whereas any undermining of these values risks eroding the rights and freedoms of people living in the EU;
- B. whereas Article 6(3) TEU recognises that fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the ECHR and as arising from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, constitute general principles of EU law;
- C. whereas the functioning of the EU relies on mutual trust between the Member States, grounded in the assumption that they uphold democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the ECHR and the Charter;
- D. whereas a DRFMG fact-finding mission to Slovakia from 1 to 3 June 2025 raised serious concerns about criminal law reforms weakening anti-corruption efforts, reduced limitation periods, and the use of fast-track procedures without adequate consultation; whereas the mission also highlighted risks related to prosecutorial discretion, the absence of a comprehensive anti-corruption strategy, growing pressure on the judiciary, media, and civil society, declining media freedom, and proposals challenging the primacy of EU law; whereas, in particular, it was noted that anti-corruption is no longer a government priority, with fewer corruption prosecutions being brought, not owing to reduced levels of corruption, but to reduced enforcement, and that no major new cases would be pursued beyond those related to the Prime Minister’s previous government; whereas an estimated 1 324 convicts have purportedly benefited from legal reforms, with 446 having been

⁸ Texts adopted, P10_TA(2026)0125.

released early, many of whom are politically connected;

- E. whereas the Committee on Budgetary Control mission to Slovakia from 26 to 28 May 2025 raised serious concerns regarding the functioning of control and audit systems, the management of EU funds, and the broader rule of law environment; whereas the mission took place in a tense political climate and was marked by public attacks against its members and revealed serious concerns regarding transparency, contradictory information provided by the authorities and stakeholders, and a hostile environment for civil society and investigative journalists; whereas it also highlighted risks related to the management of EU funds, including structural weaknesses in oversight mechanisms, insufficient safeguards against fraud, and reduced investigative capacity following the dismantling of the Special Prosecutor's Office (SPO) and the reform of the Criminal Code, resulting in alarming preliminary statistics according to which, in the first months of 2025, only two indictments were allegedly issued for similar offences to those previously investigated by the SPO; whereas the SPO previously investigated between 120 and 150 indictments every year; whereas the mission also revealed shortcomings in the effective use of EU funds for vulnerable communities, in particular in the implementation of EU funds intended for Roma communities;
- F. whereas the amendment to the Slovak Constitution adopted on 26 September 2025 supplemented Article 7 thereof with additional provisions on national identity that enable Slovak authorities, including courts, to assess whether and to what extent EU law applies in Slovakia, including rulings of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU); whereas the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, the Venice Commission and the UN Human Rights Committee have raised concerns about the amendment; whereas on 21 November 2025, the Commission decided to open an infringement procedure by sending a letter of formal notice to Slovakia for breaching fundamental principles of EU law, particularly the principles of primacy, autonomy, effectiveness and the uniform application of EU law;
- G. whereas the justice system continues to face challenges regarding its efficiency, particularly in administrative cases; whereas in its 2025 Rule of Law Report, the Commission recommended that Slovakia introduce measures to ensure sufficient guarantees of independence as regards the dismissal of members of the Judicial Council, in particular those not elected by judges, taking into account European standards on the independence of judicial councils, and to ensure that sufficient safeguards are in place and duly observed when assessing judges' criminal liability for the crime of 'abuse of law' in their judicial decisions;
- H. whereas in its 2025 Rule of Law Report, the Commission recommended that Slovakia introduce proposals to regulate lobbying

and strengthen the asset declaration and verification system, and continue in its ongoing efforts to reform conflict-of-interest rules and to ensure the effective and independent investigations and prosecutions of high-level corruption cases in order to establish a robust track record, including by preventing any undue interference and restricting the use of the Prosecutor-General's powers to annul final investigatory and prosecutorial decisions;

- I. whereas on 8 May 2025, following a European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) recommendation, the Commission adopted an implementing decision on the reduction of support under the Recovery and Resilience Facility in case of conflict of interests in accordance with Articles 22(5) of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 and Article 19(1) and (2), point (a), of the Financing Agreement for Slovakia (C(2025)0294);
- J. whereas on 6 June 2025, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) adopted its Ad hoc Report on the Slovak Republic, in which it addressed a number of recommendations in the light of findings regarding the use of the fast-track legislative procedure, the shortening of limitation periods, the reduction of criminal sentences, the institutional reforms affecting the public prosecution service and the police force, as well as the application of the offence of 'abuse of law'; whereas on 6 and 7 March 2026, the Venice Commission and the Directorate General for Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe indicated that the criminal offence of abuse of law is of concern, as it inherently risks undermining judicial independence, and reiterated that the primary avenue of recourse should be ordinary appellate review;
- K. whereas in its 2025 Rule of Law Report, the Commission recommended that Slovakia strengthen the rules and mechanisms to restore and further safeguard the independent governance and editorial independence of public service media, taking into account European standards on public service media, and to advance with the process of establishing legislative and other safeguards to improve the physical safety and working environment of journalists, including a reform of defamation law, taking into account the European standards on the protection of journalists; whereas the Slovak Government and Parliament appointed the Slovak Television and Radio (STVR) Board in 2025, and it is composed exclusively of nominees of the ruling coalition, reflected in the choice of the Director-General and the significant pressure on STVR staff regarding editorial content;
- L. whereas on 11 February 2026 the Slovak Constitutional Court decided to request a preliminary ruling of the CJEU (C-107/26) regarding the compatibility of the Law on Slovak Television and

Radio with the European Media Freedom Act⁹;

- M. whereas in the past, public attacks by politicians in Slovakia against journalists, civil society and vulnerable groups have contributed to a kind of normalisation of hate speech, in which context serious violent crimes have been committed, including the murder of Ján Kuciak and Martina Kušnírová; whereas the murder of Ján Kuciak and Martina Kušnírová is one of the most complex cases being investigated; whereas this case was being supervised by the SPO and is now under the authority of the General Prosecutor;
- N. whereas in its 2025 Rule of Law Report, the Commission recommended that Slovakia ensure effective public consultations and stakeholder involvement in the law-making process, including by addressing the frequent use of the fast-track procedure; whereas in 2025, 20 % of the laws passed by the Slovak Parliament were discussed and adopted under the fast-track legislative procedure;
- O. whereas on 12 December 2025, the Slovak Parliament changed whistleblowing protection legislation through a fast-track procedure; whereas on 17 December 2025, the Slovak Constitutional Court suspended the effect of those changes; whereas on 30 January 2026, the Commission decided to open an infringement procedure by sending a letter of formal notice to Slovakia for breaching the EU rules on the protection of whistleblowers;
- P. whereas on 16 April 2025, the Slovak Parliament amended legislation on non-profit organisations; whereas the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission expressed concerns about compliance of the amendment with the ECHR; whereas non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been subjected to smear campaigns, threats and intimidation¹⁰; whereas on 17 December 2025, the Constitutional Court concluded that the amendment does not comply with the Slovak Constitution or the ECHR; whereas despite this ruling, the Slovak authorities introduced alternative measures increasing administrative oversight of civil society organisations and amended transparency rules, raising concerns about continued pressure placed on civic space;
- Q. whereas UN human rights experts and the UN Human Rights

⁹ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 establishing a common framework for media services in the internal market and amending Directive 2010/13/EU (European Media Freedom Act) (OJ L, 2024/1083, 17.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1083/oj>).

¹⁰ Civil Liberties Union for Europe (Liberties), Liberties Rule of Law Report 2025: Slovakia; European Commission, 2025 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter on Slovakia; information from the Office of the Public Defender of Rights (Ombudsperson) of the Slovak Republic, 2025.

Committee raised concerns about the stigmatisation and persecution of NGOs, journalists and civil society organisations in Slovakia, as well as restrictions on civic space; whereas the Committee called on Slovakia to review and amend its legislation to ensure that the right of peaceful assembly is fully protected and to ensure a proper framework for NGOs; whereas Slovakia remains under an enhanced procedure as regards the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights owing to a lack of safeguards in respect of secret surveillance¹¹;

- R. whereas on 11 December 2025, the Slovak Parliament amended the Criminal Code in order to criminalise obstruction of the election campaign ‘in connection with a foreign power or a foreign agent’; whereas on 27 March 2026, a proposal was put forward to amend legislation on the conditions for exercising the right to vote in order to replace postal votes from abroad with in-person voting in diplomatic and consular representations;
- S. whereas amendments to the Constitution adopted on 26 September 2025 introduced provisions relating to adoption, educational activities and the constitutional definition of sex; whereas the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe and the Venice Commission have expressed concerns about these amendments;
- T. whereas there are systemic shortcomings in the effective investigation and prosecution of acts of domestic violence in Slovakia, as highlighted by the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights¹²;
- U. whereas Case C-799/23, *Commission v Slovakia*, remains pending before the CJEU; whereas Slovakia remains under an enhanced procedure as regards the execution of a judgment of the European Court of Human Rights concerning the discriminatory enrolment and schooling of Roma children in special classes in primary schools for children with intellectual disabilities¹³; whereas on 25 February 2025, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe called for urgent measures to address the inadequate living conditions of marginalised Roma communities; whereas the Commissioner made recommendations on guaranteeing access to inclusive and quality education for Roma children and ending their segregation, and on addressing antigypsyism and discrimination, especially in policing; whereas Slovakia remains under an enhanced procedure as regards the execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

¹¹ European Court of Human Rights judgments of 26 October 2023 in the case of *Plechlo v Slovakia* (18593/19) and of 20 July 2021 in the case of *Zoltan Varga v Slovakia* (58361/12).

¹² European Court of Human Rights judgment of 22 January 2026 in the case of *J.S. v. Slovakia* (35767/23).

¹³ European Court of Human Rights judgment of 27 February 2025 in the case of *Salay v. Slovakia* (29359/22).

concerning the treatment of Roma by the police¹⁴;

- V. whereas the 2025 Rule of Law Report by the Civil Liberties Union for Europe¹⁵ highlights persistent concerns in Slovakia in the areas of judicial independence, the anti-corruption framework, media freedom, the use of fast-track legislative procedures, civic space and fundamental rights, particularly in respect of minorities and vulnerable groups;
- W. whereas on 11 December 2025, the Slovak Parliament amended the Criminal Code in order to criminalise the questioning of the ‘post-World War II decrees’; whereas this recently adopted law risks creating a chilling effect on freedom of expression and academic freedom, as protected under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; whereas the continued confiscation of land on the basis of the above mentioned decrees that have been applied in particular to citizens belonging to the Hungarian national minority is in fact a land grabbing scheme, which has deprived hundreds of owners of valuable land and raises concerns regarding legal certainty and respect for the rule of law; whereas on 2 February 2022, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities invited the Slovak authorities to enter into dialogue with representatives of the national minorities concerned about any possible negative effects of the 1945 regulation on confiscation of property on current interethnic relations;
1. Expresses deep concern over the deterioration of democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights in Slovakia; highlights that verifiable adherence by the Member States to both the rule of law and the Charter must be regarded as an essential precondition to receiving any EU funds; underlines that all programmes and investments financed by the EU budget must serve the public interest; stresses that systemic deficiencies in the rule of law, in particular in the independence of the judiciary and in audit and control systems, endanger the protection of the EU’s financial interests;
 2. Calls on the Commission to assess whether there could be a clear risk of a serious breach by Slovakia of the values referred to in Article 2 TEU; calls, furthermore, on the Commission to make full use of all available instruments to address concerns regarding democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights, starting with preventive and cooperative tools within the framework of its annual rule of law report, with a view to ensuring compliance with the values enshrined in Article 2 TEU; stresses, however, that where

¹⁴ European Court of Human Rights judgments of 1 September 2020 in the case of *R.R. and R.D. v. Slovakia*, of 8 September 2022 in the case of *P.H. v. Slovakia* (37574/19), and of 24 October 2024 in the case of *B.B. v. Slovakia* (48587/21).

¹⁵ <https://www.liberties.eu/f/vdxw3e>.

concerns persist and are duly substantiated, the Commission should not hesitate to make use of all enforcement measures at its disposal to protect the EU budget and uphold the values enshrined in Article 2 TEU, including infringement procedures, and, in particular, expedited infringement procedures, applications for interim measures before the CJEU and actions regarding the non-implementation of CJEU judgments, as well as reinforced audits, suspension of payments, systematic application of financial corrections and recovery procedures;

3. Regrets the fact that Slovakia has adopted a series of amendments to its criminal law and criminal procedure law, including a reduction in penalties for corruption and financial crimes, a shortening of limitation periods, and the closure of specialised anti-corruption entities, the National Crime Agency and the Special Prosecutor's Office, which has resulted in delays in investigations transferred to other bodies and a significant drop in the number of corruption cases, and which undermines the prosecution of offences involving EU funds; expresses concern over the broad discretionary powers granted to the Prosecutor General in Slovakia under Article 363 of the Slovak Criminal Procedure Code, which may allow the interruption or delay of criminal proceedings on formal grounds without sufficient safeguards, thereby posing risks to the effective investigation and prosecution of cases, in particular corruption-related offences; expresses concern over the reported harassment and investigation of former anti-corruption investigators and considers that these actions weaken the fight against corruption, risk undermining the protection of the EU's financial interests and may have a chilling effect on independent investigations; expresses further concerns about the discovery of conflicts of interest in the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility;
4. Expresses deep concern about the constitutional amendments in Slovakia, in particular those restricting fundamental rights, the rule of law and the primacy of EU law; notes with concern that civil society organisations have warned that these amendments may violate fundamental rights; stresses that constitutional provisions must be formulated with sufficient precision to prevent arbitrary interpretation and must fully comply with obligations under EU law, including the Charter, as well as international human rights standards; recalls that the primacy of EU law and the binding nature of international obligations must be fully respected and that no constitutional provision can justify non-compliance with judgments of the CJEU or the European Court of Human Rights; calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure that its Constitution complies fully with EU law and international human rights law and to take into account the recommendations of the Venice Commission and international human rights bodies, in particular as regards the primacy of EU law, the rights to private and family life, non-discrimination on grounds of gender and sexual orientation and the right to education;

5. Calls on the Commission to assess the compliance of recent legislative changes with EU law and apply the provisions of the Common Provisions Regulation in cases of non-compliance with the horizontal enabling conditions thereunder;
6. Emphasises that the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation is not limited to last-resort measures, but also provides for early action with partial suspensions where rule of law breaches are identified that pose a serious risk to the sound financial management of the EU budget; reiterates its call made in the context of the 2024 budgetary discharge of the Commission to initiate the first step of the procedure laid down in Article 6 (1) of the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation;
7. Expresses deep concern over the attempted abolition of the Whistleblower Protection Office, which would have led to a substantial reduction in the level of protection afforded to whistleblowers, including increased exposure to retaliation and reduced access to legal safeguards; rejects provisions introducing a 'review mechanism' allowing authorities or employers to withdraw whistleblower protection without judicial oversight, thereby jeopardising the fundamental right to an effective remedy as enshrined in the Charter; stresses that limiting whistleblower protection is incompatible with the EU Whistleblower Directive and undermines the rule of law; welcomes the decision of the Slovak Parliament of 17 March 2026 to repeal the controversial law and maintain the Whistleblower Protection Office; calls on the Commission to closely monitor the implementation of the repeal of the legislation abolishing the Whistleblower Protection Office in Slovakia, in order to ensure that this repeal fully restores the previous level of protection and aligns with EU law, and to assess the extent and effectiveness of the repeal before considering any further action; calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure compliance with EU law and standards on whistleblower protection;
8. Urges the Commission to intensify targeted controls and on-the-spot checks in Slovakia, including through strengthened and systematic cooperation with OLAF and the EPPO, in order to compensate for the weakening of national enforcement capacities and ensure effective follow-up to ongoing investigations; stresses that such controls must be systematically applied across all relevant EU funding streams, including both multiannual financial framework and Recovery and Resilience Facility funds;
9. Reaffirms its readiness to work in a spirit of sincere cooperation with the Slovak authorities, as well as with civil society and independent institutions, with a view to addressing the identified shortcomings; underlines that the objective of its scrutiny and missions is to support the strengthening of democratic institutions, the rule of law and the proper use of EU funds; calls on the Slovak authorities to

engage constructively and proactively with the EU institutions in this process;

10. Calls on the Slovak authorities to fully implement the recommendations of the Commission, the GRECO and the Venice Commission on the judiciary and anti-corruption, in particular as regards the repeal of the criminal offence of abuse of law and ensuring the independence and impartiality of the Judicial Council in law and practice, the functioning of specialised anti-corruption entities, substantive and procedural criminal law and the independence of prosecutors;
11. Strongly condemns the closure of the Special Prosecutor's Office in light of its evident impact on the investigation and prosecution of corruption, which cannot be compensated by the activities of the EPPO, especially in the light of reported 'fragmenting' of the fraudulent activity in such a way that the alleged value of a case remains below the threshold established for the involvement of the EPPO; underlines the need for an urgent reassessment of the recent changes; calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure full, timely and proactive cooperation with the EPPO and OLAF;
12. Reiterates its concerns about the functioning of the Slovak Agricultural Paying Agency and the management of common agricultural policy funding, including structural failures confirmed by the Supreme Audit Office of the Slovak Republic, inadequate control mechanisms, insufficient remedial actions, and increasing disbursements with weak controls; considers that these shortcomings confirm the serious and systemic weaknesses in the management and control system governing agricultural expenditure in Slovakia;
13. Expresses concern about allegations of misuse and irregularities in the implementation of EU-funded rural development and tourism projects in Slovakia, including cases related to EU-funded guesthouse projects, involving the alleged misuse of agricultural and rural development funds for the construction or renovation of luxury private estates with limited or no clear EU added value; stresses that such practices, where confirmed, would constitute a serious breach of the principles of sound financial management, transparency and equal treatment, and would undermine public trust in the EU budget;
14. Recalls the obligation of the Member States to ensure the effective, transparent and accountable management of EU funds; calls on the Slovak authorities to take immediate and effective remedial measures to deliver concrete benefits for citizens, including strengthening internal control systems, ensuring proper detection and management of conflicts of interest, and improving the recovery of irregular payments, in full cooperation with the Commission;

15. Expresses deep concern about the deterioration of media freedom and pluralism in Slovakia, including political interference in public service media, pressure on journalists through a climate of hostility, smear campaigns and disinformation, the use of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), including by high-ranking political figures, and the risk of a concentration of media ownership in politically aligned hands, combined with dismissals of key cultural institution leaders, which risk creating a chilling effect on press freedom and public discourse; stresses that a weakened media environment significantly reduces democratic scrutiny and facilitates corruption in the implementation of EU funds; calls on the Slovak authorities to fully implement the Commission's recommendations regarding the media, in particular as regards the legal framework for public service media, in compliance with the European Media Freedom Act and ensuring editorial independence and the protection of journalists; calls on Slovakia to fully and effectively comply with the European Media Freedom Act and urges the Commission to closely and proactively monitor its implementation; recalls that the Slovak authorities have to respect the freedom of expression and arts in the functioning and funding of cultural institutions, and to refrain from the misuse of legal actions that restrict public debate; pays tribute to Ján Kuciak following his assassination and to his essential work as an investigative journalist; calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure that justice is served in this case;
16. Regrets the repeated and unjustified use of fast-track legislative procedures for substantial reforms; stresses that such procedures must not become the norm and should be strictly justified only under duly substantiated circumstances, as they undermine public scrutiny, transparency and inclusive law-making and limit meaningful consultation and parliamentary debate; calls on the Slovak authorities to fully implement the recommendations of the Commission and the GRECO regarding checks and balances, in particular as regards effective public consultation and stakeholder involvement in the law-making process, including by addressing the frequent use of the fast-track procedure; reiterates its concerns about access to information for journalists and civil society organisations, including to reports of the Supreme Audit Office and the Control Section of the Government Office;
17. Strongly denounces the increasing pressure placed on civil society organisations, watchdogs and justice professionals, including administrative burdens and attempts to delegitimise their work; considers that such actions undermine accountability and the effective protection of fundamental rights; calls on the Slovak authorities to end the stigmatisation and persecution of civil society organisations and to ensure that legislation affecting civil society, including on funding and reporting, fully respects EU law and international human rights law, in particular with regard to the right to private life, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and

freedom of association;

18. Calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure that electoral legislation, including on postal voting, and criminal sanctions related to violations of such legislation, fully respects EU law and international human rights law, in particular with regard to the right to vote and be elected, freedom of expression and freedom of association; recalls that restrictions on postal voting should be duly justified and proportionate, in particular in the absence of substantiated systemic deficiencies regarding the integrity of such voting, and stresses the need to ensure equal access to electoral participation for Slovak citizens residing abroad;
19. Calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure the effective prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence in law and in practice, in accordance with EU law and international human rights law; reiterates the importance of the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence without delay and of bringing the legal definition of rape in line with international human rights standards;
20. Calls on the Slovak authorities, in view of the backlash provoked by several legislative initiatives in Slovakia, particularly since 2023, to ensure full compliance with their obligations to guarantee effective, timely and non-discriminatory access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including access to safe and legal abortion; recalls that these obligations derive from international human rights standards and are integral to the protection of fundamental rights, including the rights to private and family life, health and non-discrimination;
21. Calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure the effective protection of the rights of LGBTIQ+ persons in law and in practice, in accordance with EU law and international human rights law;
22. Calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure the effective protection of Roma people's rights in law and in practice, in accordance with EU law and international human rights law, in particular as regards the end of segregation in education, access to healthcare, and policing; reiterates its concerns about the implementation of EU funds intended for Roma communities in Slovakia;
23. Expresses particular concern regarding the rights of minorities in Slovakia, in the light of political discourse, legislative initiatives and administrative practices that risk leading to discrimination, stigmatisation or exclusion, and regarding the retroactive confiscation of property on the basis of the collective guilt of EU citizens of various ethnic origins; believes that historical grievances should be addressed through dialogue rather than criminalisation; stresses that the protection of minority rights is a core component of

the rule of law and democratic governance; calls on the Slovak authorities to ensure the effective protection of persons belonging to minorities in law and in practice, in accordance with EU law and international human rights law, in particular as regards the freedom of expression and the right to property;

24. Expresses grave concern regarding administrative and judicial practices involving the Slovak Land Fund and the Forests of the Slovak Republic state enterprise resulting in uncompensated land and forest confiscations on the basis of post-war decrees; calls on the Slovak authorities to repeal the amendment of the Criminal Code, suspend all legal proceedings, and end any ongoing land confiscations;
25. Calls on the Slovak authorities to investigate systemic shortcomings that persist in the handling of complaints of police ill-treatment, including a lack of impartial and effective investigations into credible allegations of ill-treatment; calls for the strengthening of safeguards against ill-treatment by law enforcement authorities, including guarantees of institutional independence, effective oversight mechanisms and adequate procedural safeguards to ensure accountability and public trust in law enforcement institutions;
26. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the United Nations.