Basic information

2019/2954(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on the rule of law in Malta following the recent revelations surrounding the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia **Subject** 8.30.10 Principles common to the Member States, EU values **Geographical area** Malta	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
17/12/2019	Debate in Parliament		
18/12/2019	Decision by Parliament	T9-0103/2019	Summary
18/12/2019	Results of vote in Parliament		
18/12/2019	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2019/2954(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Motion for a resolution		B9-0240/2019	17/12/2019	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0103/2019	18/12/2019	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2020)105	29/04/2020	

Resolution on the rule of law in Malta following the recent revelations surrounding the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia

2019/2954(RSP) - 18/12/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 581 votes to 26, with 83 abstentions, a resolution on the rule of law in Malta following the recent revelations surrounding the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups.

As a reminder, the Maltese anti-corruption investigative journalist and blogger Daphne Caruana Galizia was assassinated in a car bomb attack on 16 October 2017. The murder investigations led by the Maltese authorities, assisted by Europol, have so far led to the identification and arraignment of several suspects and one potential mastermind behind the murder, namely the owner of the Dubai-based company 17 Black Ltd., who was arrested on 20 November 2019 in an apparent attempt to escape Malta on his yacht. One of the alleged accomplices and the alleged mastermind have implicated the Prime Minister’s former Chief of Staff in the planning and funding of the murder.

These revelations have led to numerous large demonstrations and civil society protests in Malta, calling for justice, accountability and respect for the rule of law.

The Maltese Prime Minister has announced that he will resign after a party leadership election to be held on 12 January 2020 amid the growing political turmoil surrounding the murder investigation.

The European Parliament and several other international institutions have repeatedly expressed concerns over the impartiality of law enforcement, the separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary in Malta.

Parliament is deeply concerned about the integrity and credibility of the investigations into the assassination of Daphne Caruana Galizia. It noted the widespread negative perceptions of the government’s actions in this regard, as well as the declining trust and credibility in the institutions.

It also deeply regretted that developments in Malta in recent years have led to serious and persistent threats to the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights, including freedom of the media, the independence of the police and judiciary, and the freedom of peaceful assembly. It regretted that the Commission in recent years has refrained from taking any concrete measures against the Maltese Government despite repeated calls by the European Parliament. It stated that Malta's failure to enact judicial reforms could serve as a basis for triggering an Article 7 procedure of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU).

Parliament called on the Commission to use all tools and procedures at its disposal in order to ensure full compliance with EU law vis-à-vis the fight against money laundering (especially in the areas of anti-money laundering investigation and enforcement and the independence of competent authorities), banking supervision, judicial independence, public procurement and planning and urban development. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is urged to cooperate with the Maltese and European authorities and to ensure that funds frozen in the bank accounts of 17 Black remain frozen until a thorough investigation has been conducted.

As regards investor citizenships and residence schemes, Members reiterated their call on Malta to terminate these schemes and to commission an independent, international investigation into the impact of this sale of citizenship and residence on the Maltese anti-money laundering enforcement capabilities, on further cross-border crime and on the integrity of the Schengen area.

Lastly, Parliament welcomed the endorsement by the Bureau of Parliament of the creation of a ‘European Daphne Caruana Galizia prize for investigative journalism’, to be awarded annually for outstanding investigative journalism in Europe.