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This briefing follows up the commitments made by the commissioner since 2019.

Commitment	State of play
<p>Lead candidate system, transnational lists and electoral law</p> <p>■ “[...] we need to improve the lead candidate system, including by addressing the issue of transnational lists.”</p> <p>“[...]we will work on the new push for democracy, which will cover elections, and thus electoral law.”</p>	<p>The Commission did not table specific proposals. Parliament is working toward the revision of the European Electoral Act defining common minimum electoral standards and a Union-wide constituency. On 3 May 2022, Parliament adopted a resolution on the revision of the European Electoral Law. According to Article 223 TFEU, Parliament has the legislative initiative for the European Electoral Act, with the Council acting unanimously.</p> <p>In November 2021, the Commission tabled two proposals to revise rules on EU mobile citizens for the European and municipal elections.</p>
<p>Right of initiative</p> <p>■ “[...] I can see that Parliament wants to have this fixed in a formal procedure, and this is what I want to support.”</p>	<p>The Commission did not table a proposal. However, the Commission has followed up on the Parliament’s legislative initiative reports pursuant to article 225 TFEU.</p> <p>Parliament adopted a resolution on its rights of initiative on 9 June 2022.</p>



Common transparency register

"[...] we should work towards a common transparency register."

On 20 May 2021, an [Interinstitutional Agreement](#) was adopted between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register.

Independent ethics body common to all EU institutions

■ *"[...] I will analyse or look into the systems.... of the European institutions and will try to filter out ... under the remit of the ethics body."*

The Commission did not table a proposal. In September 2021, Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on setting up an independent EU ethics body.

Paid political advertising and financing European political parties

"[...] I will work on solutions to bring more transparency on paid political advertising and more clarity on financing European political parties.."

In the [European Democracy Action Plan](#), adopted on 3 December 2020, the Commission presented its first assessment of the challenges in relation to political advertising and issues linked to new techniques used to target advertising based on users' personal data. On 25 November 2021 the European Commission presented a [proposal for a Regulation on transparency and targeting of political advertising](#).

At the same time, the Commission has put forward a [proposal](#) to recast the Regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and foundations, following a [resolution](#) of the Parliament. The [AFCCO](#) committee has started working on the new proposal, so as to have the revised rules in force ahead of the 2024 European elections. A vote in AFCCO is foreseen on 13 July 2022.

Assessment of the Code of Practice on Disinformation

"[...] I will also assess carefully whether platforms have fulfilled the obligations they accepted under the Code of Practice on Disinformation."

The [EU Code of Practice on Disinformation](#) laid out self-regulatory standards for online platforms. On 10 September 2021 [the first year assessment](#) of the Code was published by the Commission. On 16 June 2022 a [strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation](#) was signed and presented by 34 [signatories](#).

European Democracy Action

"[...] I will design the European Democracy Action Plan [...] as a vehicle for a new push in addressing the issue effectively so that our democracy is more resilient."

[The European Democracy Action Plan](#) and the [Action Plan for the Media](#) adopted on 3 December 2020 set out measures to promote free and fair elections, strengthen media freedom and pluralism, counter disinformation, support the recovery and

transformation of the media and audio-visual sector after the pandemic.

Media pluralism, safety of journalists and funding for media freedom and pluralism

"[...] We should continue to use our funding for independent projects monitoring media pluralism, map violations to media freedom, and support journalists whose safety is under threat."

"[...] I will work intensively on the proper designing of the funding programme which is under the Creative Europe programme and is intended to support independent journalism."

The Commission annual Rule of Law reports monitor the situation of media freedom and pluralism in the EU Member States.

On 16 September 2021, the Commission [presented its first-ever Recommendation to strengthen the safety of journalists and other media professionals](#).

The Commission also announced the presentation of a European [Media Freedom Act](#) in 2022, building on the revised [Audiovisual Media Services Directive](#), aimed at safeguarding the independence and pluralism of media.

[The Creative Europe programme 2021-2027](#) has a budget of € 2.44 billion, compared to €1.47 billion of the previous programme (2014-2020). In the period 2021-2027, actions that monitor and assess risks to media pluralism and freedom are supported through [the Creative Europe programme](#). [A call for proposals](#) was published on 16 September 2021 for the actions on media freedom and pluralism with a budget of EUR 3.75 million.

EU anti-SLAPP legislation

"[...] I will be mapping all the possible situations of the abuse of litigation against journalists."

"[...] we have to come up with systematic measures which will cover all the Member States to protect better – not only in situations when systems in the Member States are endangering journalists, but also individual threats to individual journalists. So we will look at the best possible use of this funding."

On 4 October 2021, the European Commission launched [a public consultation](#) on EU action against abusive litigation targeting journalists and rights defenders, while Parliament, in its [resolution of 11 November 2021 on strengthening democracy and media freedom and pluralism in the EU: the undue use of actions under civil and criminal law to silence journalists, NGOs and civil society](#), called once more the Commission to come up with EU-wide legislative and non-legislative measures on the matter.

On 27 April 2022, the European Commission presented the [Proposal for a Directive on protection of journalists and human rights defenders from abusive court proceedings](#). The proposed Directive covers SLAPPs in civil matters with cross-border implications. It enables judges to swiftly dismiss manifestly unfounded lawsuits against journalists and human rights defenders. It also establishes several procedural safeguards and remedies, such as compensation for damages, and dissuasive penalties for launching abusive lawsuits.

In addition to journalists, the proposal includes other categories as well, such as civil society organisations, human rights defenders or politicians. The proposal is now dealt with under the ordinary legislative procedure.

Along with the above proposal, the Commission issued, on the same date, its [Recommendation on protecting journalists and human rights defenders who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings](#) ('Strategic lawsuits against public participation').

Access to documents, transparency of the legislative process, including of trilogues

"[...] on transparency, I would like to come with initial proposals to Parliament and the Council already this year. So this should be started as soon as possible."

No specific initiative was taken in this field.

Better law-making

"We will have to do more on this and to publish the report on implementation, I see this as a very possible solution."

On 13 August 2020 the Commission published [communication on The EU's efforts to simplify legislation – 2019 Annual Burden survey](#).

Annual rule of law review cycle

"[...] I will join forces with the Justice Commissioner to further strengthen the toolbox to deliver on the rule of law, notably with the annual rule-of-law review cycle."

The Commission effectively implemented the [Rule of Law Mechanism](#) by publishing annual reports on Rule of Law ([2020](#) and [2021](#)) that cover four pillars (the justice system, the anti-corruption framework, media pluralism and other institutional issues related to checks and balances). From 2022 on, the reports will also include recommendations, a long-standing EP request. Still, the EP expressed [criticism](#) on some aspects of the report, notably on the limited scope that does not cover all Article 2 TUE values.

Fundamental rights, rule of law

The Commissioner committed to promote fundamental rights, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, EU accession to the ECHR, update on the strategy on fundamental rights and use all the tools available to ensure respect of rule of law.

The Commission effectively launched infringement proceedings to defend fundamental rights, led negotiations for the EU accession to the ECHR and presented in 2020 a [new Strategy to strengthen the application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) in the EU. It also used various tools to counter Rule of Law violations, from Article 7 TEU procedure against Poland to infringement proceedings. After refraining from releasing Resilience and Recovery funds to Hungary and Poland, the Commission applied the conditionality regulation to Hungary and decided to

agree to the Polish national recovery and resilience plan, while conditioning the release of funds to the achievement of “milestones”, something [criticised](#) by Parliament

Engaging to fight all kinds of anti-semitism

“Here, we have to join forces and be absolutely clear in one message – that this is absolutely unacceptable.”

[The first-ever EU strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish life](#) (2021-2030) was adopted by the European Commission on 5 October 2021.

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