

**Priority question for written answer P-005542/2020
to the Council**

Rule 138

Katalin Cseh (Renew), **Ramona Strugariu** (Renew), **Petri Sarvamaa** (PPE), **Daniel Freund**
(Verts/ALE)

Subject: The Council's nominations of European prosecutors for the EPPO

Council Regulation (EU) 2017/1939 of 12 October 2017 put in place a set of institutional guarantees to safeguard the independence of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO). These include an impartial and independent selection process for European prosecutors. For this process, Member States nominate three candidates for a position. Selection and appointment is overseen by the Council with the support of an independent expert panel, which reviews and ranks the candidates and provides justification for its choices.

For the Belgian, Bulgarian and Portuguese nominations, the Council decided to overrule the independent panel's ranking without providing any justification. Although the Council is not legally bound by this ranking, such a decision could raise concerns that national governments may be exerting political pressure on the selection process, especially if the Council is not transparent about its reasons.

As the EPPO is a new institution, it is of paramount importance to build the trust of EU citizens through the highest standards of impartiality, independence and transparency.

1. What were the reasons behind the Council's decision to reject the proposed candidates in the above cases?
2. Why did the Council choose not to disclose its reasons to deviate from the independent panel's decision?