

Mentre Juncker annuncia che l'Europa si darà frontiere (naturalmente blindate e con guardie "europee") come una sola grande nazione ma darà anche la caccia al "lavoro qualificato" per appropriarsene, il capogruppo del Ppe, Weber (CSU) dice che lui voterà per la procedura contro il governo ungherese ma il gruppo lascia "libertà di coscienza". Brutte manovre a Strasburgo.

Stato dell'Unione 2018 - Ultimi tasselli per un compromesso su migrazione e riforma delle frontiere: le proposte della Commissione

European center-right leader Weber backs Hungary censure motion

But European People's Party lawmakers will be free to vote as they wish.

STRASBOURG — Manfred Weber, leader of the European People's Party in the European Parliament, said Tuesday he will vote for a motion declaring Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's government is at risk of breaching core EU values — but will give other members of the center-right group a free vote.

"I will vote in favor of Article 7," Weber said after a meeting with EPP members including Orbán, referring to the procedure that can lead to a member country losing its voting rights inside the EU. "I think we had enough dialogue."

Members of the European Parliament will vote Wednesday on a report drafted by Dutch Green MEP Judith Sargentini, which highlights concerns about the independence of the judiciary, academic freedom, corruption, freedom of expression, and the rights of migrants in Hungary, among other issues.

If the report gets a two-thirds majority, MEPs will ask the Council of the EU to determine whether Hungary is at "clear risk of a serious breach" by Hungary of the EU's core values.

The Article 7 procedure could ultimately lead to Hungary being stripped of its voting rights in the Council. That outcome is unlikely as it would require the support of all other EU member countries. But triggering the process would put a stain on Hungary's international reputation and make it difficult for EPP leaders to keep Orbán's Fidesz party in their ranks.

At a meeting of EPP members of the Parliament on Tuesday evening, Orbán defended his record in the face of strong criticism.

“Everybody was very emotional,” an EPP official said.

Gunnar Hökmark, a Swedish EPP MEP, said: “Orbán just had had a tough hour. Everyone was critical. He seemed disoriented and a bit aggressive.”

Until now, Weber and other EPP leaders have sought to find compromises to keep Fidesz in the group, despite pressure from more liberal members to kick it out.

However, Orbán made clear in a speech to the Parliament on Tuesday and in a press conference afterwards that he would not back down on controversial laws, widely viewed as crackdowns on NGOs and the Central European University in Budapest. He also said he did not want to leave the EPP.

Weber’s stance means the resolution is likely to gain the required two-thirds support in Parliament. Liberals and Socialists have said publicly they will vote in favor and EPP moderates from northern European countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, Finland as well as Belgium and Luxembourg have signaled they will back the motion. EPP MEPs from countries including Austria, Portugal and Greece are also expected to vote in favor.

Many of those national contingents have long regarded the actions of Orbán’s government as anathema to European values and incompatible with membership of their parliamentary group.

MEPs expected to vote against the report include the Tory-led European Conservatives and Reformists and the far-right parties in the Parliament. One of the few EPP leaders who has said publicly his MEPs will vote against the text is Silvio Berlusconi, the leader of Forza Italia. Some among France’s Les Républicains might also oppose it.

Franck Proust, a French MEP and head of the French delegation of the EPP, said he was inclined to vote against the Sargentini report. “Ostracizing Orbán will only reinforce extremists,” said Proust. “I see that Orbán has been elected with 49 percent of the votes, with a record turnout. When you talk about dictatorship, no one was forced to go vote.”

Hungary, he also said, is the only place “where the extreme right doesn’t exist.”

In June, a committee of MEPs agreed by 37 votes to 19 to back the Sargentini resolution.