

**Question for written answer E-004727/2015  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea (ALDE)**

Subject: Need to treat marital rape as a criminal offence throughout the EU

In seven of the 28 Member States of the EU, marital rape is not treated as a criminal offence, which puts the people who suffer this kind of violence in a position of defencelessness.

Although this issue is largely hidden, according to the European Institute for Gender Equality 30 % of women in the EU have been victims of sexual assault by their partners – study by the

Fundamental Rights Agency.

UN Women points out that in other continents such as America there is a higher percentage of countries that expressly prohibit marital rape.

Accordingly, there is a need for marital rape to be treated as a specific criminal offence throughout the EU, as proposed by Amnesty International. Moreover, this is required under the Istanbul Convention, which has only been ratified by 14 Member States.

In these circumstances I should like to ask the Commission:

1. Does the Commission consider that, in order to comply with Directive 2012/19/EU, all the Member States of the EU should pass laws to expressly make marital rape a criminal offence?
2. In view of the lack of specific data on this issue, does the Commission intend to commission the European Institute for Gender Equality to carry out a specific study on sexual assault within couples?
3. Does the Commission consider that there is a need to undertake a campaign of visibilisation and awareness-raising with respect to marital rape?