Question for written answer E-007588/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Hate speech on the internet and in online media

The internet and online media enable users to create, publish, distribute and utilise multimedia content in many different ways, thus providing an arena for creativity and communication. In the sphere of human rights, the language of hatred, as such, is not a new problem. However, there are fresh grounds for concern in the volume of hate speech online and its potentially damaging impact on democratic development. According to recent reports on various countries by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), there has been no improvement in the situation with regard to hate speech in Europe: indeed, in recent months it has worsened. The incidence of online racism, xenophobia and incitement to racial hatred in Europe is increasing.

1.   Is the Commission aware of this negative trend in the use of hate speech on the internet?

2.   What tools does the Commission have at its disposal to counter the use of hate speech on the internet without curtailing online freedom of expression?

3.   What steps does the Commission intend to take to prevent internet users, and particularly young people, from using hate speech and also from being targeted by xenophobia and racism?