

**Question for written answer E-001220/2016  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Marina Albiol Guzmán (GUE/NGL) and Javier Couso Permuy (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Puppeteers in prison in Spain

Two puppeteers from the puppet theatre company 'Títeres desde Abajo' were arrested during a carnival programme organised by Madrid City Council on Friday, 5 February 2016. They were performing *The Witch and Don Cristóbal*, a satirical work that criticises the current climate of persecution against social activism in Spain. At one point, puppets representing police officers stuck a sign on a witch they were arresting that read: *Gora Alka-ETA* ('Long live Alka-ETA'). The puppeteers were brought before the High Court, which ordered their unconditional detention for an alleged crime of glorifying terrorism.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union not only enshrines the rights to freedom of thought and freedom of expression (Articles 10 and 11), but also states explicitly in Article 13 that the arts must free of constraint.

- Does the Commission believe that this action by a Spanish court is in keeping with the provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union?
- Does it have any information on similar cases in other EU countries? If so, has it taken any action in response to failure to comply with one of the texts whose correct application the EU is responsible for ensuring?