

**Question for written answer E-005960/2017  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Marietje Schaake (ALDE)**

Subject: 'Golden visa' schemes and EU sanctions

On 17 September 2017, the Guardian newspaper made public various names that feature on a list of third-country nationals who have acquired Cypriot nationality through a so-called 'golden visa' scheme and hence have become EU citizens. The published list includes both Russian and Ukrainian businessmen as well as (former) politicians<sup>1</sup>.

Under an earlier, similar scheme for granting citizenship, Syrian businessman and avid supporter of the Assad regime Rami Makhlouf was granted a Cypriot passport in 2010. Cyprus subsequently had to revoke Makhlouf's citizenship when he became subject to EU sanctions.

Following the imposition of EU sanctions on Rami Makhlouf - at the time an EU citizen - in 2011, what measures and/or coordination efforts have been taken at EU level to ensure that, when granting citizenship, Member States take into account the political, social and economic background of the applicant as well as the considerations the EU and its partners take into account when imposing individual sanctions, so as to avoid a similar situation in the future?

Is the Commission aware of the Guardian's recent revelations, and can she guarantee that there have been no further cases of EU citizenship being granted to third-country nationals who are or have been subject to EU sanctions?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/17/cyprus-selling-eu-citizenship-to-super-rich-of-russia-and-ukraine>