

**Question for written answer E-001692/2019
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Ramon Tremosa i Balcells (ALDE)

Subject: Censorship by the Spanish electoral commission

The Spanish electoral commission (Junta Electoral Central, JEC) has ruled that the terms 'political prisoner' and 'exile' must not be used in news programmes broadcast on Catalan public television and radio channels¹.

That decision follows a ruling by the same electoral commission asserting that Catalan institutions must not display any type of symbol denouncing the situation of the nine Catalan prisoners – two of whom are leaders of civil society organisations – who are currently on trial at the Supreme Court².

In Catalonia, there is growing concern over a possible increase in the censorship being carried out by one of the sides in this political crisis in Catalonia and Spain. Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union states that 'the Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights'³.

Article 11 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union states: 'Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected'⁴.

Does the Commission believe that the Spanish electoral commission's ruling is inconsistent with the Treaty on European Union and the Charter of Fundamental Rights?

Does the Commission have an opinion on this situation?

¹ <https://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20190328/461314307414/junta-electoral-prohibe-tv3-exilio-presos-politicos.html>

² https://elpais.com/ccaa/2019/03/28/catalunya/1553797181_189111.html

³ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_1&format=PDF

⁴ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf