

**Question for oral answer O-000019/2013  
to the Council**

Rule 115

**Claude Moraes, Sylvie Guillaume, Kinga Göncz, Michael Cashman**  
on behalf of the S&D Group

**Subject:** Strengthening the fight against hate crimes in the EU

Discriminatory attitudes and acts, hate-speech and hate-motivated crimes are on the rise in the EU. Extremist parties have gained parliamentary representation in various Member States and are influencing the policy-making process and the political debate. A recent report from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) notes that a majority of Member States still lack mechanisms to gather data on such acts, as most remain unreported.

The EU has adopted a series of instruments to strengthen the fight against hate crime in the EU, such as Council Directive 2000/43/EC (the Race Equality Directive), Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment, and Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating racism and xenophobia. Reflecting the opposition of a few Member States, the Council has not adopted the Commission's 2008 proposal for a Council Directive on equal treatment beyond employment (the Equality Directive).

Parliament has repeatedly called on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to strengthen the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-gypsyism, homophobia and transphobia by ensuring the full implementation of the existing directives, and by adopting the Equality Directive. Parliament has on several occasions asked that the scope of the Framework Decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law be revised to include crimes motivated by sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and to strengthen its efficacy. At the informal JHA Council of 17-18 January 2013, the Irish Presidency launched a debate on EU actions to counter hate crimes, racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and homophobia, and highlighted that better protection is necessary, along with data collection and a stronger engagement by leaders to 'actively uphold European values and foster a climate of mutual respect for and inclusion of persons of different religious or ethnic background or sexual orientation'. Commissioner Malmström recently warned about racist, extremist and populist political discourse spreading hatred, and the danger of 'lone wolves' carrying out indiscriminate killings.

What does the Council intend to do to strengthen the fight against hate-crime, racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-gypsyism, homophobia and transphobia in the EU? Would it support an ambitious review of Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA along the lines indicated by Parliament? Would it support a comprehensive EU strategy to fight discrimination and bias-related violence and hatred?

Tabled: 25.2.2013

Forwarded: 26.2.2013

Deadline for reply: 19.3.2013