

**Question for written answer E-009901/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto (S&D) and María Muñiz De Urquiza (S&D)**

Subject: VP/HR - Protecting the rights of the LGBT community in Russia

In the Russian Federation, the Government has passed two homophobic laws which discriminate against and persecute homosexuals. The first bans any public activity defending the rights of the LGBT community that could be considered 'homosexual propaganda'. The second bans foreign homosexuals or single people from countries where gay marriage or civil partnership is legal from adopting children.

Both laws have played a part in encouraging homophobia, stigmatisation of and discrimination against the LGBT population, leading recently to serious episodes of violence by radical groups attacking homosexuals.

In view of the principle of equality before the law and the principle of non-discrimination in the EU, bearing in mind that here in the institutions we are working towards building a truly democratic political, social and cultural space, with laws and values that guarantee the freedom, equality and well-being of our citizens, and considering that discriminatory laws such as these cannot be tolerated in countries with such close ties to the EU:

What kind of powerful response and measures does the High Representative, Catherine Ashton, intend to take to address this situation?

Does she intend to use the Russian Presidency of the G20 to start the debate on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation? Could she inform us of the outcome of these bilateral or multilateral talks, should they take place?