

**Question for written answer E-001614/2016/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Zdzisław Krasnodębski (ECR)

Subject: Media freedom in Germany

On 31 December 2015, women in Cologne and a number of other German cities fell victim to mass sexual attacks and robberies. The scale of the violence was so great that the former President of the German Constitutional Court, Hans-Jürgen Papier, described it as 'a partial failure on the part of the state to guarantee the freedom and security of its citizens'. The German public, however, were not informed of the events. The police announced on their website that New Year's Eve in Cologne had been peaceful and that the police had carried out their work properly. The German media did not mention the story until five days later, although media bosses admitted that they had known about the attacks earlier and had deliberately kept the story quiet. (The German Constitution, in particular Article 5.1, guarantees the freedom of the press and the inadmissibility of censorship, while Article 11 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights provides for freedom of expression and information.)

1. Does the Commission believe that the events described amount to a violation of the freedom of expression?
2. Does it share the opinion that these events highlight the threat to media freedom in Germany?
3. Does the Commission intend to respond to these events, and, if so, how?