

**Question for written answer E-004692/2020**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Sylvia Spurek (S&D)**

Subject: EU action in connection with the situation in Belarus

Since the presidential elections were held in Belarus on 9 August 2020, the opposition and members of the public in the country have taken to the streets in mass protests against breaches of democratic standards. The Belarusian authorities' response – in the shape of brutal crackdowns on demonstrations, use of the army, police and other forces, mass arrests and casualties – shows that diplomatic efforts by the EU thus far have failed. Furthermore, the responses by the Commission and the Council indicate that the EU has no action plan whatsoever. Given what we know about the situation in Belarus at the moment, such an action plan is long overdue, and needs to be put into practice to prevent further human rights abuses by the regime and to protect the lives and health of protesters in Belarus.

In the light of the foregoing:

1. What steps did the EU's diplomatic service take prior to the presidential elections in Belarus to ensure that the authorities organised them in line with diplomatic standards? When did it take those steps?
2. Has an impact assessment been carried out on the sanctions that the EU has imposed on the Belarusian regime since 2004? If so, when was it carried out? What conclusions from that assessment were used by the EU's diplomatic service in its activities prior to the elections of 9 August 2020?
3. Were steps taken to tighten EU sanctions against Belarus before the elections of 9 August 2020, and if so, to what extent were they tightened?