

**Question for written answer E-005431/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Jordi Cañas (Renew)

Subject: Limitation of the right of access to public information by the regional government of Catalonia in respect of its external actions

Following claims that the regional government of Catalonia has been spending millions of euros on gaining international support for the secession of Catalonia from Spain, through contracts and agreements with media outlets and think tanks, and by subsidising them, even going as far as making payments to members of international organisations in exchange for favourable reports, Members of the Catalan Parliament have repeatedly requested information from the regional government on how it has been using resources allocated for external action. The regional government has systematically refused to provide the information requested, thereby infringing the legislation in force¹.

This conduct on the part of the regional government of Catalonia has been denounced by the Catalan Parliament for 'lacking transparency' and 'being opaque'², and has equally been denounced in an opinion of the Commission on the right of access to public information, which again called on the regional government of Catalonia to provide MPs with the information requested³.

Given that access to public information is a vital instrument in any democracy to monitor public spending, as well as to prevent public representatives from engaging in unlawful conduct:

Does the Commission consider the refusal of the regional government of Catalonia to grant MPs access to the public information they seek in order to carry out their monitoring duties to be in line with the EU's guiding principles?

¹ State Law 19/2013 of 9 December 2013 on transparency, access to public information and good governance (<https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/2013/BOE-A-2013-12887-consolidado.pdf>). Regional Law 19/2014 of 29 December 2014 on transparency, access to public information and good governance (<https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2015/01/21/pdfs/BOE-A-2015-470.pdf>).

² <https://www.lavanguardia.com/politica/20200910/483397396560/parlament-condena-la-falta-de-transparencia-de-conselleria-accion-exterior.html>

³ <https://cronicaglobal.elespanol.com/uploads/static/cronica-global/pdfs/web/viewer.html?file=/uploads/s1/10/41/66/63/320-02258-12-rg74364-informe-ogdaip-20200724.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-19,723>