

**Question for written answer E-006542/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Isabella Tovaglieri (ID)

Subject: Ban on religious services for Christmas 2020

It has been reported by numerous press sources that the Commission intends to recommend that Member States refrain from celebrating religious services during the upcoming Christmas festivities.

Given the importance of these festivities in the traditions of most EU countries, and given that under Article 17(1) TFEU 'the Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States', can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. On the basis of what statistical or medical data does it think that the celebration of Christmas festivities is such as to suggest that it be prohibited, compared to other events that are much more likely to encourage gatherings of people (public events or sporting events, for example)?
2. Why were bans on other forms of religious gatherings not suggested during other peaks of the pandemic?
3. Does it think this choice is compatible with the requirements of Article 17 TFEU?