

**Question for written answer E-000681/2021  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Idoia Villanueva Ruiz** (The Left)

Subject: The Gag Law

In the 2020 Rule of Law report, in the chapter on Spain, the Commission acknowledged concerns over the Spanish legislation on public security 'allegedly restricting the freedom of information and the freedom of expression'. Likewise, it highlighted the prison sentences for serious defamation against the Crown or members of the royal family. The United Nations Human Rights Council, during its 2020 universal periodic review of Spain, made recommendations aimed at improving laws related to the freedom of expression.

1. The Commission has expressed concern over this matter, but what mechanisms will it use to evaluate Member States' level of compliance with international human rights standards on freedom of information and expression?
2. There are reports, such as that of Amnesty International, that allude to there being an average of 80 fines and prison sentences per day for defamation against the Crown in Spain. Is the Commission monitoring court cases that are affected by laws that go against international human rights standards at EU level?
3. How does it plan to promote Member States' compliance with international human rights standards?