

**Question for written answer E-003236/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Clara Ponsatí Obiols (NI), Antoni Comín i Oliveres (NI), Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (NI)

Subject: Spread of disinformation and propaganda by an EU Member State institution

On 3 June 2021, the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Council of Europe released a forceful report¹ asking the Spanish authorities to release the Catalan politicians convicted for their role in organising the 2017 independence referendum and drop extradition proceedings against Catalan politicians outside Spain.

The very same day, the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed in a press release that the 'Council of Europe backs Spain's action regarding Catalan pro-independence politicians'².

On 26 May 2021, the Commission presented the Guidance on Strengthening the Code of Practice on Disinformation. Commissioner Věra Jourová said: 'threats posed by disinformation online are fast evolving and we need to step up our collective action to empower citizens and protect the democratic information space'³.

1. Does the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs press release comply with the media literacy policy promoted by the Commission?
2. Will the Commission include this case of disinformation within the EU on the 'EUvsDisinfo' portal, which is promoted by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy?
3. Does the Commission think such cases of propaganda from a Member State institution undermine the EU's efforts to demand truthful media communications in other countries?

¹ <https://static1.ara.cat/ara/public/content/file/original/2021/0603/16/l-esberrany-de-l-informe-del-comite-d-afers-legals-del-consell-d-europa-sobre-persecucio-politica-a6c3180.pdf>

² http://www.exteriores.gob.es/Portal/en/SalaDePrensa/NotasdePrensa/Paginas/2021_NOTAS_P/20210603_NOTA124.aspx

³ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/guidance-strengthening-code-practice-disinformation>