

**Question for written answer E-005182/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Demetris Papadakis (S&D)

Subject: Sexual abuse of one child every 27 hours in Cyprus

18 November has been designated as the European Day for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. It is estimated that one-fifth of children in Europe are victims of some form of sexual violence.

The statistics are particularly shocking in Cyprus, where one child is sexually abused every 27 hours. 324 such cases were reported in 2020 and 241 in the six months from January to June 2021, that is to say 83% of the number of cases reported for the twelve months of 2019.

A significant increase in cases of child abuse and sexual exploitation occurred as a result of the coronavirus pandemic owing the isolation of child victims and their continuous cohabitation with their abusers - most of the perpetrators being close family members - as well as increased online activity and the widespread dissemination of child abuse images over the internet.

In view of this:

1. Having announced the creation of a European centre for the prevention of child sexual abuse, can the Commission say when it is to be set up?
2. Has a study been carried out to identify legal loopholes, best practices and actions that can be taken by the EU to combat online child abuse and sexual exploitation more effectively?