

**Question for written answer E-003526/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Gerolf Annemans (ID)

Subject: Press freedom in the Netherlands

Ongehoord Nederland (ON! – Unheard Netherlands) is an aspiring broadcasting association within the Dutch public broadcasting system (NPO) where free speech is held in high regard.

The added value of this broadcaster is that it gives a voice to people who do not feel sufficiently heard in politics and the media and this was recognised as such by the former media minister and organisations such as NPO and the Council of Culture. ON! has an editorial statute that guarantees editorial independence in journalism.

This young broadcaster is now threatened with penalisation for a second time by NPO, first because of a statement by a democratically elected politician, and now because of a broadcast on anti-white racism deemed problematic.

1. Is the Commission aware of this conflict that may be seen as setting a precedent for the forthcoming European legislation on media freedom to protect media pluralism and independence?
2. Does the Commission agree with me that the threat of punishment merely because unwelcome but legitimate opinions are expressed during an interview goes against the spirit of an independent and pluralistic media?