

**Question for written answer E-000735/2024**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Eva Kaili (NI)**

**Subject:** Freedom of expression in Belgium – decisions taken by the Belgian judicial authorities to restrict the freedom of expression of individuals and politicians

Freedom of expression is among the five fundamental rights. Article 11(1) of the EU Charter on Human Rights states that '[e]veryone has the right to freedom of expression (...) and to receive and impart information'.

In the case that became known by the press as 'Qatargate', on 22 December 2023 the Belgian judicial authorities ordered a prohibition on all the defendants, including MEP Eva Kaili, and their lawyers 'having direct or indirect contact, in writing or verbally, with the press for anything relating to this investigation'. In the event of non-compliance with these conditions, 'the suspect could be put under arrest'. This order was later cancelled by a decision of the court of appeal.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the decision taken by the Belgian judicial authorities?
2. Is an EU Member State allowed to restrict the freedom of expression of individuals and politicians?
3. Does it intend to take measures to prevent such blatant human rights violations from happening again in Belgium?

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