

**Question for written answer P-005086/2012/rev.1  
to the Commission  
Rule 117  
Frédérique Ries (ALDE)**

**Subject:** Creation of the offence of Holocaust denial or revisionism in the European Union

The resurgence of extreme right-wing movements with openly racist, xenophobic and anti-Semitic doctrines, the trivialisation of their hate speeches and acts, and also their dramatic entry into certain national parliaments, such as in Hungary and Greece, require EU authorities not only to be ever more vigilant but also to have a legal response to this threat to democracy and the rule of law in the European Union.

The trivialisation of the discourse of hatred became highly topical with a speech on 13 May 2012 by the political leader of the Greek neo-Nazi movement 'Golden Dawn' that denied the existence of the Holocaust and the extermination of 6 million Jews in gas chambers. This speech openly incited hatred and violence and shocked the whole of Europe, but nonetheless is not a criminal offence under Greek law. This runs counter to the Council's Framework Decision adopted on 28 November 2008, which is intended to harmonise criminal sanctions against racism and xenophobia throughout the European Union but which evidently leaves Member States too wide a margin of interpretation when it comes to penalising hate speeches.

- On this basis, does the Commission intend urgently to propose tightening up the 2008 Framework Decision so that no speech denying the Holocaust and inciting to hatred shall henceforth escape judicial sanction within the European Union?
- Does the Commission believe that the offence of denying the Holocaust or other genocides, introduced in at least seven Member States (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Portugal, Romania and Spain), is a model of criminal law which should be generalised throughout the European Union?
- Is the Commission prepared to take an initiative to ensure that, in the 27 Member States of the European Union, denying the existence of the Holocaust and other genocides, and justifying crimes against humanity as defined by the International Criminal Court, will soon be forbidden?