

**Priority question for written answer P-004222/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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**Subject:** Disinformation campaigns and censorship in Germany

Article 11(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union protects freedom of expression and freedom of information. The German Network Enforcement Act of 2017, which is now to be tightened up and extended, forces social media network operators to censor opinions downstream and serves as a model for authoritarian states. In a move contrary to EU law – including Article 42 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights – the Commission is withholding documents relating to the Network Enforcement Act from the public.

How does the Commission assess the Network Enforcement Act in the light the Copenhagen criteria, and what is the reasoning behind that assessment?

Licence fee-funded broadcasters in the Federal Republic of Germany are increasingly becoming mouthpieces for the current government and failing in public-service duty to provide information and their obligation to remain politically neutral. By way of an example, despite clear statements denying the story by the then head of the national intelligence service, the German Government's proven false claim that the murder of a German national in Chemnitz in September 2018 had led to hunts against foreigners was broadcast unchecked and uncorrected. Private organisations funded with not insignificant amounts of taxpayers' money are playing along with the dissemination of what amounts to government propaganda. This level of media control is horribly reminiscent of the former dictatorship in the GDR.

Does the Commission regard these developments as compatible with freedom of the media, democracy and the rule of law, as referred to in Article 11(2) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights?