Question for written answer E-002808/2025/rev.1
to the Commission
Rule 144
Arkadiusz Mularczyk (ECR)

Subject: Intervention in relation to cultural goods and works of art looted during the Second World War and conflict between provisions of German national law and EU objectives

Despite the EU's repeatedly stated commitment to protecting cultural heritage, many cultural goods stolen from Poland, Greece and other countries during the Second World War have not yet been returned and remain in the possession of German citizens and German national institutions illegally. The loss of cultural goods from Poland is particularly substantial – official data shows that the country lost around 516 000 identified works of art to German war-time looting. The situation is made worse by provisions in German national law, such as a ten-year acquisitive prescription period, which are directly at odds with the spirit of Directive 2014/60 EU that aims to facilitate the return of cultural items that were taken illegally during the Second World War.

Given that higher courts such as the European Court of Human Rights apply rules and the same reasoning in their case law to ensure fairness and respect for legal frameworks:

1. What is the Commission's position on the fact that these national provisions are at odds with EU objectives on protecting cultural heritage?

2. What specific action will the Commission take to require Germany to change provisions of its national laws that hinder restitution?

3. Will the Commission present an update on the report on 'Cross-border restitution claims of works of art and cultural goods looted in armed conflicts and wars' by rapporteur Pavel Svoboda and provide information on the actions that will be taken to speed up the return of cultural items stolen from Poland and other countries?

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