Question for written answer E-001592/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Suspension of EU funds at the Venice Biennale because of the Russian Pavilion

The Commission has suspended some EUR 2 million for the Venice Biennale in funding allocated to the Venice Biennale, citing the Foundation's decision to allow the Russian pavilion to participate in the International Art Exhibition. This decision, made in the name of protecting European values, intervenes in an internationally prominent cultural event and raises questions about the role of EU institutions in the artistic choices of independent entities. At the same time, an apparent inconsistency is evident, as countries with controversial political systems – such as Syria (ranked 162nd in the Democracy Index), Iran, the 'warlord' regime (152nd), Saudi Arabia (147th), China (142nd), and Cuba (135th) – have not been subject to similar measures or restrictions within the framework of cultural initiatives supported or allowed at EU level.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission consider direct intervention in artistic and organisational decisions by an independent institution such as the Venice Biennale to be compatible with the EU's principle of cultural neutrality?

2. Why are similar measures not taken against other countries involved in international disputes, thus mitigating the risk of EU funds being applied in a selective and politicised manner?

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